

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview.
The Fourth Amendment Evidence Dilemma (15–20 Minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Goal

Students weigh competing arguments about whether illegally obtained evidence should be used in court.

Instructions

1. Divide students in pairs or small groups; allow 8–10 minutes to complete the scenarios.
2. Discuss as a class. Answers will vary, but make sure those who answer give reasonable reasons for their arguments.

Debrief/Wrap-Up Questions

- Could excluding evidence allow guilty people to go free?
- Could admitting illegally obtained evidence encourage government abuse?

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview.

The Fourth Amendment Evidence Dilemma

For each scenario...

- Determine whether the evidence obtained should be admitted or excluded from the trial
- Give one reason for your decision.

Cases:

- A. Police enter a home without a warrant and find stolen jewelry hidden in a closet.
- B. Officers obtain a proper warrant and discover a kidnapping victim exactly where the warrant specified.
- C. An officer illegally opens a suitcase and finds a set of detailed plans for a robbery.
- D. An officer breaks into a suspect's apartment and claims to have "found" evidence, but there are no witnesses.
- E. Police obtain a valid warrant for a computer and find evidence of identity theft.
- F. Agents secretly hack into a citizen's email account without a warrant and discover proof of tax fraud.

