

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview.
Sixth Amendment Rescue Mission (10–15 Minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Goal

Students apply the Sixth Amendment to criminal cases, identifying when an accused person’s rights are protected—or violated.

Instructions

1. Read the instructions together.
2. Have pair/groups complete the handout (allow 8–10 minutes).
3. Review the answers as a class.

Suggested Key

1. Maria is arrested and waits three years for a trial while prosecutors repeatedly delay the case.
Violated – Speedy trial
2. A judge closes a courtroom and refuses to allow family members, reporters, or spectators inside.
Violated – Public trial
3. During jury selection, a potential juror says, “I already know he’s guilty” and is removed from the jury.
Protected – Impartial jury
4. A defendant from Arizona is tried by a jury made up entirely of people from another state.
Violated – Jury from area where crime occurred
5. Police tell a man he is charged with “breaking the law,” but refuse to explain further.
Violated – Know the accusation
6. The prosecution presents a witness who testifies from a hidden room and cannot be questioned.
Violated – Confront witnesses
7. A defendant asks a witness to testify that he was elsewhere during the crime, and the court orders the witness to appear.
Protected – Obtain witnesses
8. A poor defendant asks for a lawyer, but is forced to defend himself.
Violated – Assistance of counsel
9. The prosecutor secretly meets with jurors during lunch and discusses the case.
Violated – Impartial jury
10. A defendant is allowed to question every witness who accuses him.
Protected – Confront witnesses
11. A trial begins two weeks after an arrest and is open to the public.
Protected – Speedy and public trial
12. The government refuses to let defense witnesses enter the courthouse.
Violated – Obtain witnesses

Debrief/Wrap-Up Questions

- Which right seems most important?
- Which violation would be easiest for corrupt officials to abuse?
- Why might innocent people especially need these protections?

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Sixth Amendment Rescue Mission

Turn to the section “Amendment 6: An Accused Person’s Rights” to see the entire text of the Sixth Amendment. For each scenario below, decide whether the accused person’s Sixth Amendment rights are being protected or violated. Identify the specific right involved, and explain why.

1. Maria is arrested and waits three years for a trial while prosecutors repeatedly delay the case.
2. A judge closes a courtroom and refuses to allow family members, reporters, or spectators inside.
3. During jury selection, a potential juror says, “I already know he’s guilty” and is removed from the jury.
4. A defendant from Arizona is tried by a jury made up entirely of people from another state.
5. Police tell a man he is charged with “breaking the law,” but refuse to explain further.



6. The prosecution presents a witness, but the witness testifies from a hidden room and cannot be questioned.
7. A defendant asks a witness to testify that he was elsewhere during the crime, and the court orders the witness to appear.
8. A poor defendant asks for a lawyer, but is forced to defend himself.
9. The prosecutor secretly meets with jurors during lunch and discusses the case.
10. A defendant is allowed to question every witness who accuses him.
11. A trial begins two weeks after an arrest and is open to the public.
12. The government refuses to let defense witnesses enter the courthouse.