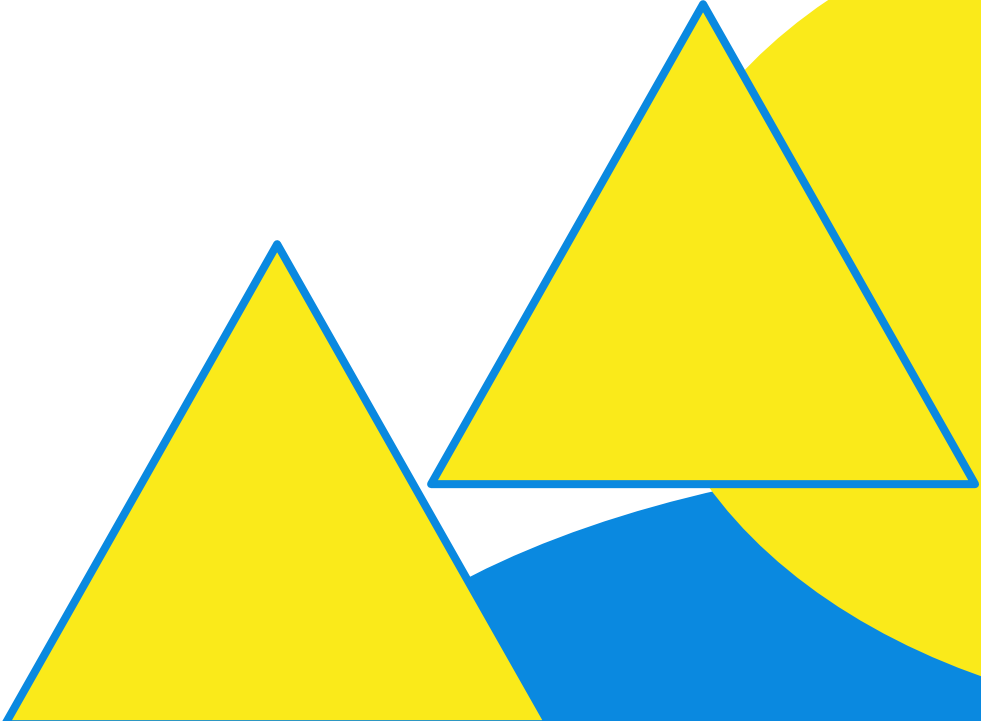


Sorting Out the Courts



Benchmarks

SS.7.C.3.11: Diagram the levels, functions, and powers of the courts at the state and federal levels.



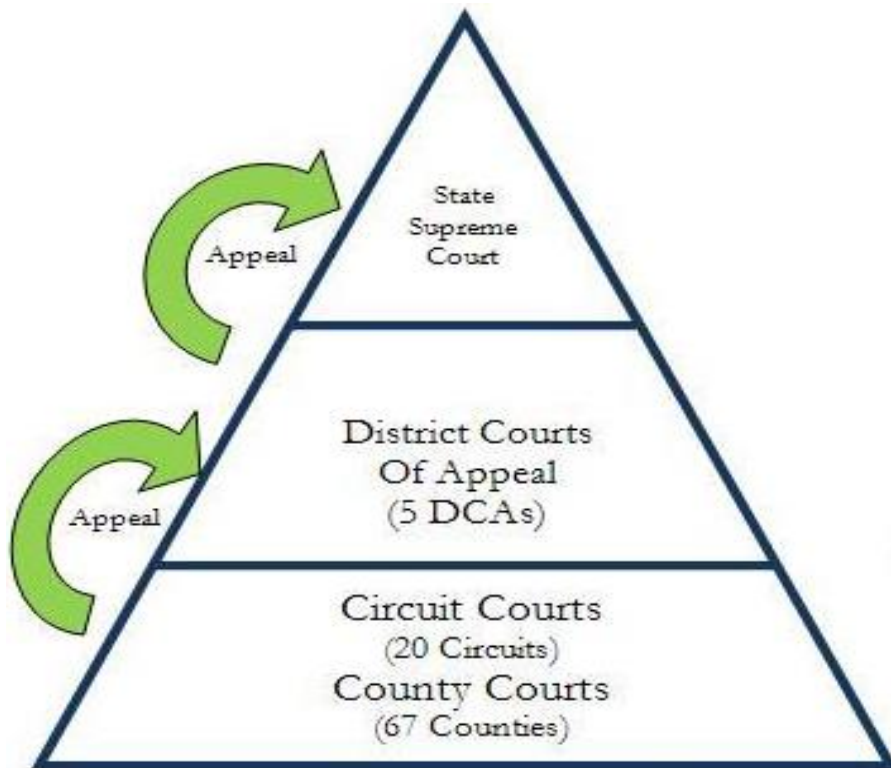
Using the clues on the
pieces, assemble the
puzzles!

You should have two
triangles when you are
finished.

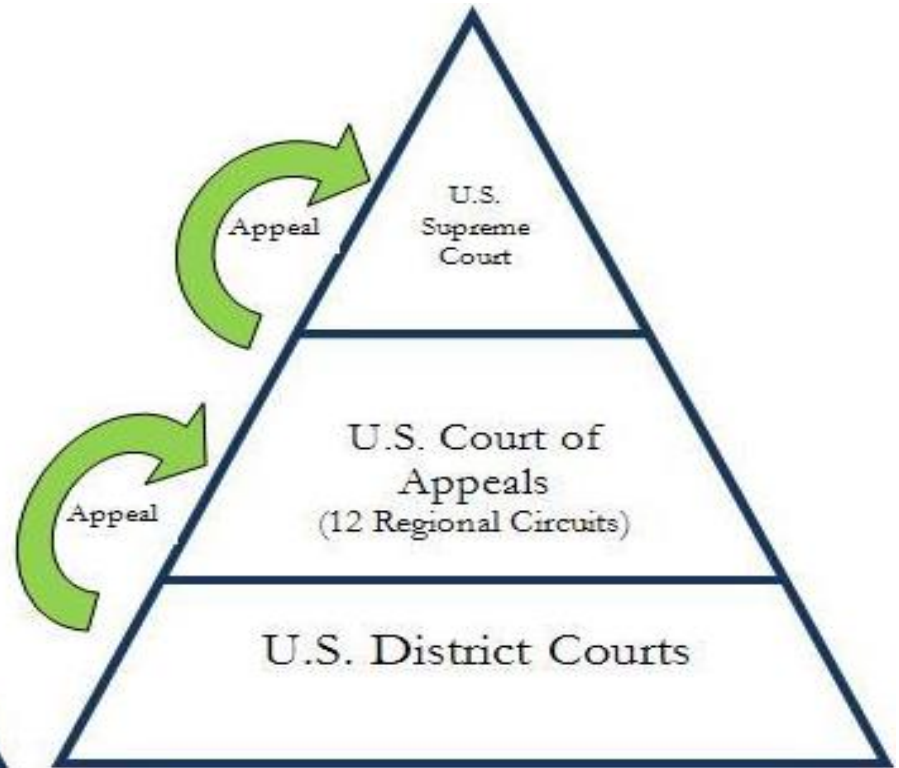
PUZZLED!

Puzzled

Structure of Florida State Courts*



Structure of Federal Courts





THE ROLE OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

Three Branches of Government



Legislative Branch – Makes the law

Executive Branch – Enforces the law

**Judicial Branch – Interprets and applies
the law**

The Role of the Judicial Branch (courts)

The Constitution
outlines our rights...



...and the courts
protect our rights.



The courts also:

- Review laws
- Explain laws
- Resolve disputes
- Decide if a law goes against the Constitution

The Role of Judges and Justices

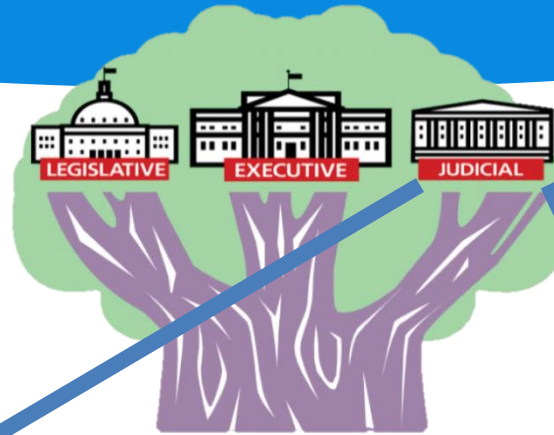
- Judges and Justices interpret and apply the law
- Decisions have to be based **on facts & law.**
 - Constitution
 - Statutes
 - Legal reasoning
 - Precedent: prior cases
 - Higher court decisions
 - And more



State and Federal Courts

TWO COURT SYSTEMS

Two Court Systems: Federal and State



The judicial branch
is divided into two
parallel court
systems:
federal courts
and state courts.

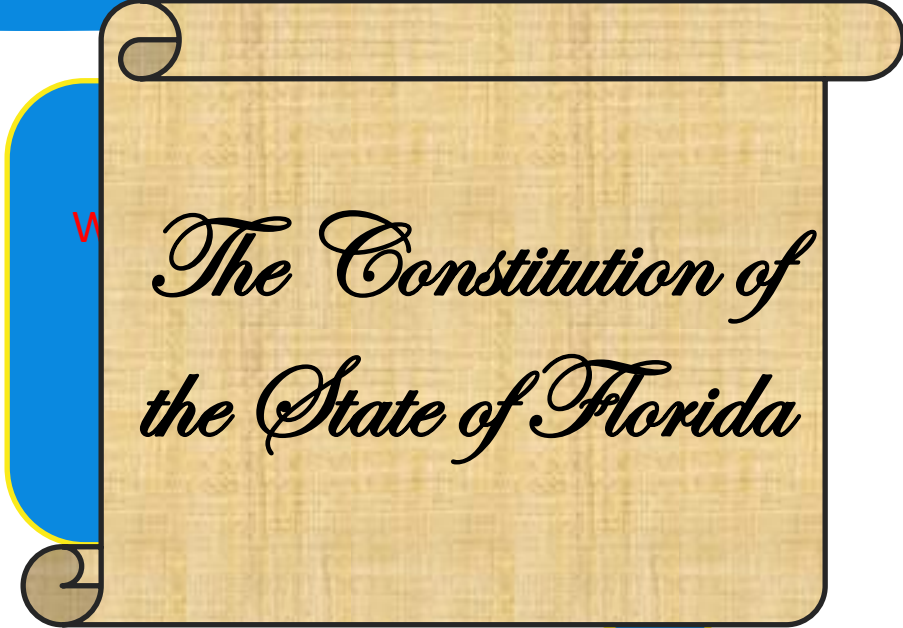


Where do **courts get their power and jurisdiction***?



United States Constitution

Federal courts deal with issues granted to them by the U.S. Constitution and federal law.



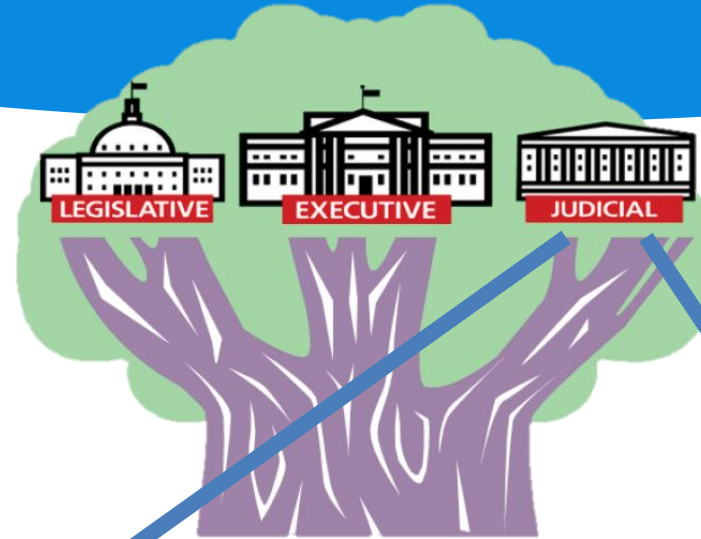
The Constitution of the State of Florida

State courts deal with issues granted to them by their constitutions and state statutes. They also handle legal issues not granted to the federal courts or denied to the states.

What is the difference?

TRIAL AND APPELLATE COURTS

Trial and Appellate



In addition to being divided into federal and state courts...



Trial

Appellate

...courts are then broken down into trial and appellate courts.

Trial

Appellate

Trial Courtroom Courtroom A

Appellate Courtroom Courtroom B



**On your Sorting the Courts Chart, make notes about the pictures above.
What items do you see in one that might be missing in another?**

Trial Courts

- 1 Judge
- Jury
- Witnesses
- Attorneys
- Plaintiff/Prosecution –
Defense/Defendant
- Introduction of evidence



The Role of the Jury (Trial Court)

- The jury is to prevent government oppression of the accused.
- The jury listens to the **evidence** during a trial, decides what **facts** the evidence has established, and **draws inferences from those facts** to form the basis for their decision.
- The jury decides whether a defendant is "guilty" or "not guilty" in criminal cases, and "liable" or "not liable" in civil cases.

What if there were no
such thing as jury trials?

What would the justice
system look like in the
United States?

THINK ABOUT IT

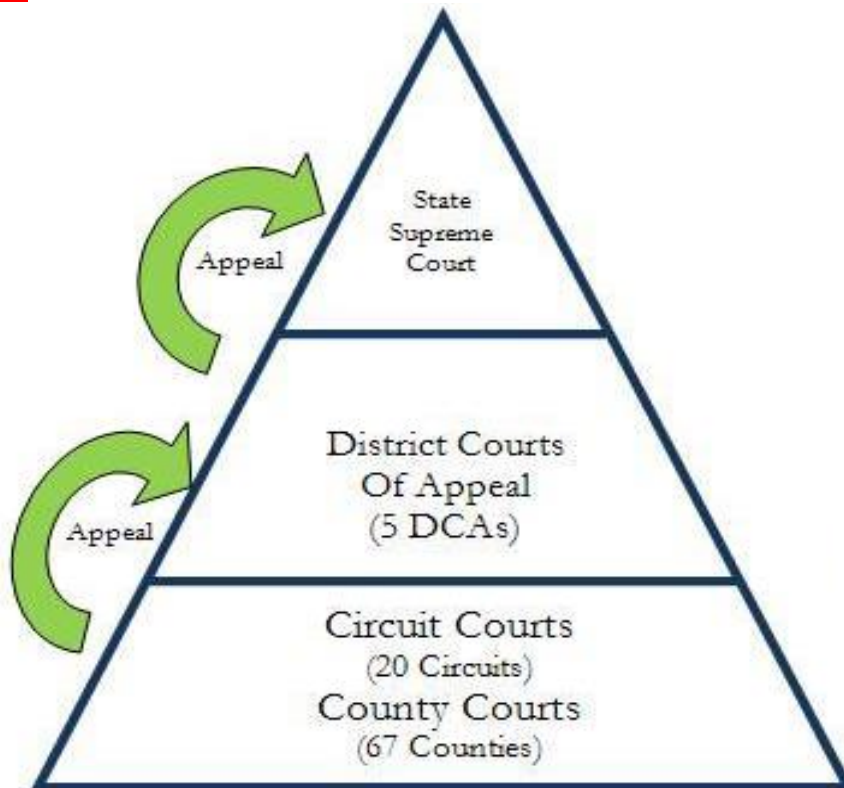
Appellate Courtroom

- Panel of judges
- No juries
- Petitioner/Respondent or Appellant/Appellee
- Attorneys submit briefs and present oral arguments on legal or policy issues; no witnesses or presentation of evidence.
- Determines if the law was applied correctly and/or if the trial was fair.

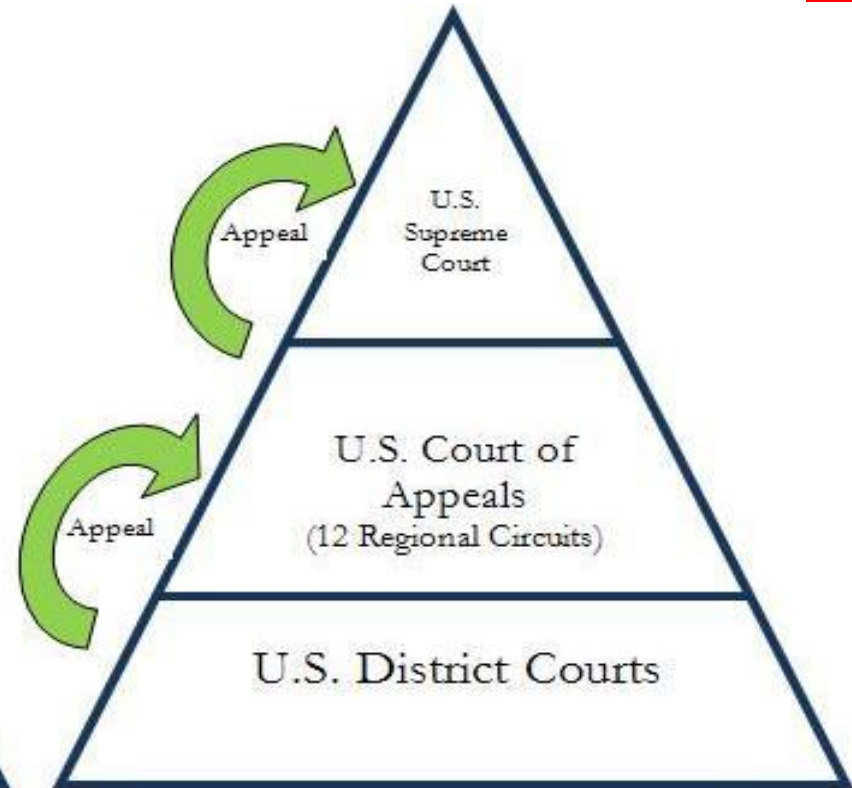


What is an appeal?

Structure of Florida State Courts*



Structure of Federal Courts



Court Structure



Appeal

Appeal

Florida Supreme Court

Circuit Courts of Appeal
13 U.S. Circuit Courts

Appeal

Appeal

District Courts of Appeal
5 Districts

District Courts (Trial Courts)
94 District Courts

Appeal

Appeal

Trial Courts

Circuit Courts
20 Judicial Circuits
County Courts
67 Counties

Florida's Courts

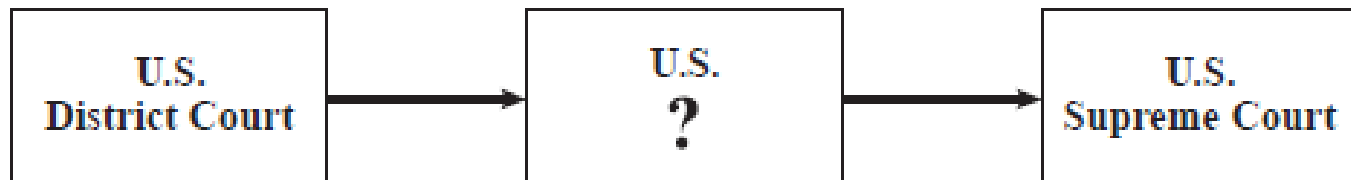
Federal Courts

- Work in a small group
- Read the two case scenarios provided.
- Diagram how the case moved through the courts

SORT IT OUT!

Checking for Understanding

The diagram below provides details about the U.S. court system.



Which court completes the diagram?

- A. Court of Veterans Appeals
- B. Court of Appeals
- C. Military Courts
- D. Claims Courts