

Suggested activities to accompany the Youth Court Virtual Tour

http://www.courts.sa.gov.au/Virtual_Tour/youth_court/content/index.html



One strategy may be to have learners **THINK** about some of the questions that follow, **PAIR** up with another student to discuss their views and then **SHARE** that information with the rest of the class.

- 1) The Youth Court is generally closed to the public. Why do you think it is a 'closed court'? Can you think of arguments for and against closing the court?

- 2) Click on the overview and the link that says 'Youth Court'. You can see that the court has three main jurisdictions (areas of law in which it can make rules). What are these 3 areas? Can you think of any other areas the Court should have responsibility for?

- 3) The Court was created by the *Young Offenders Act*. What is an Act? Which body is responsible for the creation of Acts?

- 4) Start the tour by clicking on "Cautions". The text in the box on screen refers to different types of cautions. Try to develop arguments for having different types of cautions.

- 5) Police have very broad powers. They often ask people in the street for their name and address. Is this an invasion of your rights or are they justified in seeking this information?

- 6) Click on "Formal Caution", read the text box describing a formal caution and view the short video where a police officer outlines what is happening.

- a) What does this process suggest about admitting to the committing of an offence?

- b) The officer reminds the offender that he is "entitled to go to court". This is a "right" of everybody in Australia. What does this mean and why is it important?

- c) The officer describes possible consequences for the young offender. These are called "undertakings". Identify the three undertakings referred to. Which of these do you think is the most important? Why? Can you think of other options that should be included?

7) Click "next" until you see the "Conferences" screen. Read the information in the text box and then click on the "Family Conference" link in the flow chart. View the video and complete the following table.

Participant	Role in the conference	How the conference might affect them

a) Why do you think each of the participants is involved?

b) Approximately 80% of all the young people who attend a Family Conference never re-offend. Why do you think this is the case? Consider advantages and disadvantages of this process. (You may also like to develop an advertising campaign that focuses on the benefits of such a process for young people.)

Click on the link "Court". A flow chart identifies a number of different pathways for young offenders. They may admit the offence and if they agree, be sent by the Youth Court to a Family Conference. They may decide themselves to go to court, or because the offence is a serious one, they may not be given the option of a Family Conference and in court will have to plead "guilty" or "not guilty" to the charges.

8) Click on "Arrested or Summoned". You will see a short video of a person being arrested. The text to the left tells you that the arresting officer must do four things. Which of these things reflect Australia's general adherence to principles of Natural Justice, and which specifically relate to the treatment of young people by the Justice System?

9) Click on "Next" from this page or on "Pleading" from the flow chart.

a) Accused persons can plead guilty or not guilty? Suggest another alternative response by an accused.

b) The Judge reads the charges to the defendant and then asks two questions. What is the first question he asks and why is it important?

10) Click on "Next" from this page or on "Prosecution allegations" from the flow chart. What is the role of the police officer in this stage of the proceedings?

11) Click on "Next" from this page or on "Defence submissions" from the flow chart. Listen to what the defence lawyer says. Why might the magistrate or judge be interested in whether or not the accused person "pleaded guilty at the first opportunity"?

12) The representative from Families SA provides input in the matter and refers to an "obligation". She requests that there be three elements to the obligation. Describe these in your own words.

13) Click on "Next" from this page or on "Sentence" from the flow chart.

a) List the 4 things that the Judge says he takes into account when deciding on the penalty. Can you list other factors that should be included? Rank them in order of importance and prepare to justify your rankings to other class members.

b) Why does the judge think the offence "warrants" imprisonment?

c) Why does the judge suspend the imprisonment? Can you see any connection between this action and the aim of the Young Offenders Act that is to provide for young offenders the care guidance and correction to turn them into useful community members?

d) In what way might the committing of another similar offence within the next nine months affect the offender?

e) Return to "Pleading" and listen to the charges again. Give your opinion of the sentence and suggest any changes.
