

HERE COMES THE JUDGE

PREPARATION:

Your children will be acting out a courtroom scene. If you do not have enough family members, recruit neighbor children or other family members to help you.

1. Supply props to help children get into their roles as follows:
 - a. Dark robe for the judge
 - b. Mallet or rubber hammer for the judge
 - c. A CD case for “evidence.”
2. Copy and cut the character instructions from the “Here Comes the Judge” role-play, or write out on 3 x 5 cards (see below).
3. Put all the cards in a container. **LEAVE OUT THE CARD THAT SAYS “JUDGE RESPONSE #2”.**
4. Have children draw a card to see what part they play - (judge, defendant, lawyer for the defense, prosecutor or audience.)
5. OPTIONAL: “Paid in Full” stamp (may purchase at office supply store.)
6. Copy and cut out the verse for the week.
7. Bring glue, tape, colored pencils and/or crayons
8. Set the room up as follows:
 - a. A table and chair in front for the judge
 - b. Row of chairs for the jury
 - c. Separate tables (TV trays) for the defense and the prosecution.

We’re going to act out a courtroom scene. Pick a piece of paper from the container. You will play the role that’s explained on the paper. If you draw the paper with the #1, come to me and I will personally give you your instructions.

(NOTE: Show everyone where to sit. Have the person with the #1 sit in the back, apart from the courtroom. If you have another adult helping, have the adult sit with #1 and tell him/her when to run up to the judge.)

Setting The Scene...

1. The defendant is on trial for stealing a music CD from a store in the Mall.
2. Here are the facts of the case:
 - ❖ At 3:30 p.m. on August 12th the security alarm went off in the Music Store at the Mall.

- ❖ The defendant was asked to wait until all bags could be checked for stolen items.
- ❖ A music CD was found in the defendants' bag which had not been paid for.

Actual Role-Play...

1. The Judge will hear both sides of the case and then decide whether the defendant is innocent or guilty.
2. The prosecution will have 3 minutes to make the case for a guilty decision. Then the defense will have 3 minutes to make the case for a not-guilty decision. Then we will all listen to what the judge decides.

(NOTE: HAVE CHILDREN ROLE-PLAY AT THIS POINT)

What Do You Think?

1. What do you think of the judge's decision? Was it just and fair? How do you know?

"I think the person who had #1 is coming..." (Child runs in and delivers new evidence. Read the evidence out loud. The judge still sticks to the original verdict.)

2. What do you think now about the judge's decision? Was it fair and just? Why not?
3. What prevented the judge from making a just decision the first time?
(He didn't have all the evidence)
4. What prevented the judge from making a just decision the 2nd time?
(The law wouldn't allow for evidence after the decision.)

It's almost impossible for a judge to be just 100% of the time? He/she may not have all the facts or may be pressured to make the wrong judgment by someone more powerful. Judges are also sinners – which means they aren't perfect!

This week we will talk about the best Judge ever! Listen to what the Bible says in Deuteronomy 32:4:

He is the rock; His deeds are perfect. Everything He does is just and fair. He is a faithful God Who does no wrong; how just and upright He is! (Discover God Bible-NLT)

Prosecutor

Arguments for the prosecution:

1. The CD was found in the defendant's bag. How did it get there if he/she didn't put it there?
2. Witnesses in the store say that they saw the defendant in the CD section of the store.
3. The main security camera shows the defendant in front of the section where the CD in question is kept.

Defense Lawyer

Arguments for the Defense:

1. The defendant doesn't even like the music on the CD so there is no motive to steal it.
2. No one actually saw the defendant put the CD in the bag.
3. The defendant testifies that someone else must have put the CD in the bag because he/she did not. It is possible that someone could have done it.

Judge

After hearing both sides present the case I find the defendant **Guilty** of stealing the CD from the Music Store and sentence him/her to 1 year in prison.

#1

Surprise Evidence

Run up to the judge and say:
Your honor, we just found a new security camera tape that recorded the crime from a different angle and it clearly shows someone else putting the CD in the defendant's bag when he/she wasn't looking!

(Give the judge the Response 2 paper)

Judge Response 2

This evidence was presented too late. My first decision stands. The defendant must go to jail.

Audience Member

Listen to the evidence and the decision. You will decide if the judge is good or bad.