

THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE GAME

Teacher's Guide



Paper Version

ACCESS TO JUSTICE GAME

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Under the leadership of former Chief Justice of Canada Beverley McLachlin, the Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters emerged as a national body coordinating the efforts of many individuals and organizations concerned with access to justice in Canada. OJEN became involved with one of the Committee's sub-bodies, the Prevention, Triage and Referral Working Group. This group highlighted ways in which public education strategies could support access to justice efforts by building engagement and legal capability in people. OJEN developed the game as a strategy to present the access to justice crisis to young people in an accessible way while teaching them about real civil justice processes and sources of support in the community for people who find themselves facing legal issues.

Since then, the game has become one of OJEN's most popular and effective teaching tools. The game has been run in both English and French with participants that number in the thousands and audiences comprising high school, community college and law students, but also teachers, teacher candidates, lawyers, judges, community workers, young parents, newcomers and others.

The audience response has been overwhelmingly positive. Secondary teachers and students, in particular, appreciate the opportunity to learn about a serious social issue in a way that is fun and interactive but still practical and conducive to meaningful critical thinking. OJEN hopes you and your classes enjoy it and we welcome your feedback. Please feel free to contact us at info@ojen.ca.

This project has been supported by a generous grant from the Law Foundation of Ontario, which has been an invaluable and steadfast supporter of public legal education for youth.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE CANADIAN CONTEXT

Access to Justice is the measure of how easy it is for people to get the help or resources they need to solve legal problems. In 2013, a committee of lawyers lead by Supreme Court of Canada Justice Thomas Cromwell released a report called “Access to Civil & Family Justice: A Roadmap for Change.” They found that the justice system was too complex, too slow, and too expensive to deliver good results to the majority of people in Canada. This was the start of a major shift in how the legal community thinks about legal reform and priorities.

“There is a serious access to justice problem in Canada. The civil and family justice system is too complex, too slow and too expensive. It is too often incapable of producing just outcomes that are proportional to the problems brought to it or reflective of the needs of the people it is meant to serve. While there are many dedicated people trying hard to make it work and there have been many reform efforts, the system continues to lack coherent leadership, institutional structures that can design and implement change, and appropriate coordination to ensure consistent and cost effective reform. Major change is needed.”¹

— Access to Civil & Family Justice: A Roadmap for Change

Since then, our picture of the “**access to justice crisis**” has become a lot clearer. Civil law problems - including family, employment, housing, human rights, immigration, wills and estates, health law, education law, consumer protection, contracts, business law, and more - are extremely common among the general population. Recent studies estimate that almost **half (48.4%) of Canadians over the age of 18** will experience at least one civil justice problem in a given 3-year period and just about everyone will have a civil legal problem at some point over the course of their life².

The law is complicated. In many cases it’s difficult to get a fair legal outcome without support and access to some legal advice. Yet many of those people with civil

¹ Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters. (2013). Access to Civil & Family Justice: A Roadmap for Change. Online: www.cfcj-fcjc.org/sites/default/files/docs/2013/AC_Report_English_Final.pdf

² Currie, A. (2016). Nudging the Paradigm Shift, Everyday Legal Problems in Canada. Canadian Forum on Civil Justice (CFCJ) Cost of Justice Reports. Online: www.cfcj-fcjc.org/cost-of-justice

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legal problems will not be able to get appropriate help for a variety of reasons: the cost of a lawyer, the time involved, a lack of knowledge about their options, the intimidation factor, and more.

Many of the people surveyed in recent studies tried to gather information: 61% got advice from friends and relatives, and 33% searched the internet for help. Fewer people successfully got help or advice: about 28% got help from a third-party organization, like a union or an advocacy group, while **only 19% ever got legal advice** from a professional. Only about 7% of people with a civil justice problem would eventually make it into the formal legal system (including courts, tribunals, etc.). About three quarters attempted to work the issue out directly with the other party, successfully or otherwise. About 30% never got a resolution to their issue at all.

Of those surveyed, the average person spent \$6,100 trying to solve their legal problem. That's almost as much as the average Canadian household in 2012 spent on food (\$7,739) and almost 10% of the average household expenditure.³ Indeed, cost is the most significant single factor in the access to justice crisis. A recent survey of legal fees found that the average cost of a relatively simple civil matter, including a trial that lasted 2 days or less, ranged from **\$13,000 - \$37,000**.

Everyone knows that lawyers are expensive, but most people don't know how much a legal problem can cost until they have one. While paralegals can now provide legal advice in many areas (like at tribunals and Small Claims Court), and can be a more affordable alternative to private lawyers, their fees for the same services will still typically amount to thousands of dollars. While **legal aid** is available to some Ontarians, the annual income caps are notoriously low (\$18,795 for a single person or up to \$54,289 for a family of four) and only cover a limited range of issues.⁴

Cost is not the only barrier. Fighting a legal battle takes an immense amount of **time**, in both intensity and duration. Many services are only available during standard workdays, which requires many people to take time off. Individual cases can take years to make their way through a court process or to get a decision from a tribunal. Over the course of that time, other problems may spring up that drain a person's **attention and resources**.

³ Farrow, Trevor et al. "Everyday Legal Problems and the Cost of Justice in Canada: Overview Report." Canadian Forum for Civil Justice, 2016 at 14.

⁴ Figures cited are accurate as of August 2020. See Legal Aid Ontario at www.legalaid.on.ca/en/ for current information.

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Beyond the logistical issues, many Ontarians are deterred from addressing their legal issues by the complexity, opacity, and intimidation of the legal system. Many people don't know their rights, where to get help, or when they should consider legal action. Many fear discrimination, poor treatment, or unfair results. As a result, a huge number of Ontarians are not able to assert their rights in important areas like family disputes, employment issues, housing, and debt management.

Why Teach Access to Justice?

There's a lot more to the law in Canada than cases and legislation. It's supposed to be a system that protects vulnerable people from abuse, assures us that we will be treated fairly, and helps us resolve intractable problems in an equitable way. When the majority of people can't access those guarantees, it's a social problem as much as a legal one, and we can treat access to justice as a systemic rather than an individual issue. Access to justice is as much about changing the justice system as it is about teaching people how to use it.

OJEN's broad mandate is to build **legal capability** in young people. This means providing them with opportunities to develop key knowledge and skills that will enable them to be more confident and effective when they encounter the justice system in their own lives. These encounters will range significantly in both urgency and scope. For some it might mean that they are involved in a legal dispute themselves. For others, it might mean that they are interested in using the law to impact their community and press for social change.

Teachers are uniquely positioned to support development of legal capability in their students, so teachers have a special role to play in addressing the access to justice crisis. In the growing body of international research into access to justice, many researchers have identified the role of the **trusted intermediary** as an important one.⁵ Trusted intermediaries are members of the community who people turn to for advice when they are experiencing legal problems or have questions. Teachers don't have this role in a formal sense, but countless anecdotes reveal that many teachers are approached by students about legal problems they or their families are experiencing.

⁵ See, for example, Community Legal Education Ontario Centre for Research and Innovation (2013). *Public Legal Education and Information in Ontario Communities: Formats and Delivery Channels*. Available: <https://cleoconnect.ca/resource/research/public-legal-education-and-information-in-ontario-communities-formats-and-delivery-channels-2/>

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Schools can be hubs for community information and can link people to important community resources. This is especially true when families have language and other social or economic barriers. In some cases, students bear considerable responsibility for accessing and navigating complex systems on behalf of their families.

Teachers have access to students who trust them and have this access at a time when students are most open to learning new things and developing independence. While we can't control the cost of legal services, we can help ensure that when our students (or their families) face civil legal problems, they recognize the legal dimensions of these problems and know where to go for reliable legal information and help. While most students won't ever face a criminal trial, almost all will need to understand the civil system.

In this way, teachers can help with the part of the access to justice problem that centres on the complexity and intimidation associated with the justice system. And, by encouraging students to see it as a social problem, teachers help by preparing young people to advocate for better public funding and other systemic change.

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GOALS OF THE GAME

Game play is relatively simple. Participants are divided into two groups, with some playing the role of **litigants** (people with a legal matter) and others playing various sources of help (or “**stations**”) - like a law firm, a tribunal or even an internet search engine - for the litigants. Each litigant receives an overview of their legal issue and background information on their character’s situation and challenges. The litigants circulate between the stations, telling their story and learning what, if any, help is available to them there. Each person playing a station receives a script for how to respond to each litigant, depending on what they are told. As well, many interactions are written to provide the litigants with “chance” cards that can hinder or help them by introducing positive elements (like money) or negative ones (like falling ill). In this way, the litigants navigate community legal providers in an effort to access the justice system effectively. “Success” in this context means finding access to appropriate legal help.

In concrete terms, after playing the game students should:

- Have increased understanding of the prevalence of civil justice issues in everyday life
- Be able to identify and describe some functions of different legal providers
- Have increased awareness of sources of reliable legal information and help
- Have increased understanding of barriers to accessing the justice system

The game supports these goals by:

- Engaging them through civil justice issues. Many people think of law enforcement, criminal trials and penalties when they think of the justice system. In reality, we are all far more likely to encounter the civil justice system in our own lives than the criminal system, and relatively few of us know very much about the justice system before we find ourselves caught up within it.
- Encouraging them to see the legal dimensions of everyday life.
- Exposing them to a variety of community resources and agencies, the work these do and how this work can support individuals when they have legal issues.
- Providing them with opportunities to practice their advocacy skills as they interact with one another in character.

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- Fostering identification with the real-life frustrations and challenges people are often faced with when they encounter the justice system.
- Encouraging them to see the individual struggles with access to justice as a social, rather than a personal, problem.
- Raising their awareness with respect to a significant policy issue and motivating them to think about creative policy-based solutions.

PREPARING TO PLAY

Materials

The amount of preparation required before playing depends on the number of participants who will be playing. Each person playing a litigant will need a copy of their litigant scenario, and each person playing a station will need a copy of the instructions for that station. It has proven effective to have two students at each of the eight stations. So, if you have a class of 25 you might have sixteen students playing stations and nine playing litigants. You would therefore need copies as follows:

- 2x each set of station instructions
- 3x each of the three litigant scenarios

You will also need to prepare an appropriate number of **Chance, Success and Item** cards. The cards comprise the last five pages of the game. Copying and cutting out these cards is the most onerous part of preparing for the game, so it is a great job to pass on to your students! You will need multiple copies. OJEN recommends making three copies of each of the five pages of cards to ensure there are enough for an average-sized class.

Finally, you will need to prepare **Station Signs** corresponding to each of the 8 stations in the game. Simple pages with each station's name clearly written work fine.

In-Class Activities Prior to Play

The game is intended to be compatible with many courses offered in the Ontario Ministry of Education secondary curriculum. To ensure students have the most resonant experience from the game, use it to enrich something they are already engaged by. For example, it makes sense to use it to elaborate a unit on civil law in law classes, to illustrate available community services in civics classes and to deepen understanding of how custody works when couples separate in family studies classes⁶.

One way to link any of these to the game is to emphasize that there is a difference between understanding the law in a given area and understanding what it is like to exercise your legal rights in practice.

⁶ A full list of links between the game and the Ontario Curriculum is available in this guide as Appendix.

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Feedback from some teachers has suggested that there is merit to extending the time allotted for the game. While OJEN facilitators have typically delivered the game in 60-75 minute periods, teachers have the option of spending up to several days preparing before actually playing. When they do this they will often:

- Spend time learning about the work of the agencies/providers/resources in the game and where to find them in their own communities
- Have students generate questions about this work
- Bring in lawyers to speak about their work
- Explore how issues of socioeconomic inequality impact different people in different ways
- Allowing extra time to familiarize audience with rules of the game, scripts and issues and to raise and discuss questions they might have.

Introducing the Game

OJEN has developed a sequence of questions designed to have students focus in on the difference between civil and criminal law, the predominance of the former as an everyday reality in most people's lives, the scope of the access to justice problem and some of the factors behind the difficulty in accessing the justice system⁷. Then when they play the game, they are more able to connect their individual experience to the complex problem of access to justice. Teachers are welcome to take another approach to mentally prepare students. OJEN's questions are presented and explained below. Depending on technology available they can be presented using a digital display or chalkboard/whiteboard/flipchart.

- What do you think of when you think about the law and the justice system?
 - Student answers generally focus on criminal law like violent crime and trials.
- Those are great examples of things related to the criminal law. Can anyone tell us about the difference between criminal and civil law?
 - Cue the difference between violations of the Criminal Code and other kinds of disputes, especially those that happen between private individuals,

⁷ The figures cited below are accurate at the time of publication. For reliable, current data please visit the Canadian Forum on Civil Justice at <http://cfcj-fcjc.org/>.

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asking for or giving examples of areas of life that engage the civil law, and record or display these.

- Which do you think are more common, civil or criminal law problems?
 - For the majority of people, civil law problems are much more common. Point to the many areas of life the civil law engages and ask for examples of legal problems or matters that can arise in some of these, like wage disputes in employment law, custody issues in family law or even contracts in consumer law.
- How common do you think it is to have a legal problem?
 - Fairly common. Almost half of Canadians over the age of 18 will have a civil legal problem over any three year period.
- What would you do if you were one of those people? What options do you think you have?
 - Many students will mention lawyers or parents as sources of help. This is an important question because it asks students to identify sources of legal help in the community and a major goal of the game is to increase their familiarity with legal supports.
- Point out that most people don't live with their parents, and lawyers are really expensive. In fact, about 50% of them try to solve the problem without help and about 20% take no meaningful action. For both, they have much poorer outcomes. So why do you think they would do nothing or try to solve it on their own, without legal help? (Record or display responses)
 - Lawyers are expensive; people don't know what to do or who to ask for help; people think nothing can be done; they don't have time or they are intimidated by the justice system.
- So we can see that knowledge and time are parts of the problem, and that cost is a really big part of the problem. But how expensive do you think lawyers are, really. Can anyone guess what the cost of having a lawyer help you with a legal matter that ends in a 1-2 day trial is?
 - Get a few guesses from the participants. Depending on who you hire, it can run from about \$13000 to \$37000 on average.
- That seems like quite a lot, right? But do people have any options to get help with legal costs?

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- Give them a chance to answer, but if they don't get it, ask if anyone has heard of Legal Aid Ontario and briefly explain what it does.
- But not everyone qualifies for legal aid. If you make over a certain amount of money every year, you aren't eligible. Can anyone guess what that amount might be?
 - Get a few guesses again. In fact, the cut off for a single person is about \$19000 and about \$54000 for a family of four. Point out that in the case of the family, that's nearly the entire annual income if it's a \$37000 trial, and that in the case of the single person, this means that someone who works full time at minimum wage in Ontario is too rich to receive legal aid.
 - Highlight that the program would be more widely available if it were better funded.
 - Emphasize that this is the access to justice problem in a nutshell: Few can afford lawyers, few qualify for legal aid and the justice system is confusing and time consuming. As a result only about 7% of legal problems are resolved through the formal justice system (courts).

After any discussion, provide a summary and segue to the game: We're been learning about what the law is, how different trials have turned out and why, what a judge might say if presented with different scenarios, the rights we have and that sort of thing. But there's a whole other side of things we don't get to learn about as often: how the legal system works, how courts work, and how lawyers work, and how well they work. The access to justice problem means that a lot of people never even get to court or to a lawyer, so they don't actually get to assert their rights. We're going to play a game now to help us explore all of these issues – not just the cost, but the time, confusion, and trouble of trying to get through our legal system.

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PLAYING THE GAME

Setting Up the Classroom

Before your students arrive or before you begin play, choose 8 locations around the room that will serve as your **stations**. Place a sign at each one to show the station's name. Make sure the sign is easy to see throughout the room. For example, set up desks around the perimeter of the classroom and attach the signs to the walls behind them.

Place the **station instructions** and the associated **cards** at each station. Each set of station instructions has a list of the cards they need near the top of the first page. One popular modification is for the teacher to hold all the cards at the front of the class and have students come to them when they are instructed to get a card or to designate a student to distribute the cards as needed.

If you plan to put two students at each station, include two copies of the station instructions.

The Community Legal Clinic station will also need a coin to use in coin flips.

Have multiple copies of the **litigant scenario(s)** handy. With many classes, it will be necessary to have more than one student playing each litigant role and each will need their own copy of the scenario for reference.

Instructions to Students

Tell your students that they are going to play a game that explores access to justice issues. They are going to be moving around the classroom and doing a little bit of roleplaying.

Some of them will play **litigants** - people with an everyday legal problem that they need to solve. One litigant has a family law issue, one is being evicted from their apartment, and one has an employment law issue. Litigants will get a scenario sheet that tells them who they are and what their problem is. Their goal will be to get legal help and/or to get the court or tribunal to give them a hearing.

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They will do that by visiting the **stations** - take some time to point out where each is for students. Point out that these stations represent real places in the community where people can go to get legal information or help. The remaining students (who aren't playing litigants) will be assigned to these stations, where they will play people working at those places. Explain that each station will get a sheet that will tell them what to do and say when the litigants ask them for help. Give all students time to review their litigant or station instructions and then time to ask questions if they aren't sure what to do.

Tell students that when the game starts, each litigant will be free to visit whatever stations they want, in whatever order they want. They can go to the same station more than once, but have to visit a different station in between. The person working at the station might suggest somewhere to go next - they can follow their advice if you want, but they don't have to.

Sometimes the instructions will say that the person at the station should give the litigant a card. There are **Chance Cards** and some other kinds as well. Some Chance Cards give money or take money away - students should keep track of how much money they have! Some Chance Cards will tell a student to wait one or two minutes before continuing on - they can wait at the front of the class or somewhere out of the way of traffic. Other cards might give you an object that you need to use elsewhere in order to progress.

A student playing a litigant wins the game when they have gotten help with their legal problem and made it into court or into a tribunal. When they do, they will receive a **Success Card**.

Before starting play ask students from each station to explain what their station is and what it does. They can read the brief summary provided at the top of the first page. Ask one student representing each of the litigants to summarize the legal problem they are trying to solve.

SAMPLE PLAY-THROUGH: JAMIE (EMPLOYMENT LAW)

A student has been assigned the role of Jamie, who has an employment law problem involving illegal pay deductions and wrongful dismissal. The student reads their scenario and makes a note of how much money Jamie has.

The student ("Jamie") decides to visit the "Community Legal Clinic" station first. They approach the station. The student who is role-playing as a worker at the clinic asks him who Jamie is and what they need. Jamie says they got fired and need a lawyer. The clinic student asks if Jamie has an appointment. Jamie says no. Following the instructions on their sheet, the clinic student flips a coin. The outcome is unlucky - the clinic student tells Jamie that the lawyers at the clinic are too busy today, and to make an appointment and come back another day. (This means Jamie can return after visiting at least one other station.)

The clinic student also gives Jamie a Chance Card. The Chance Card says that Jamie got sick and couldn't take action for a few days. It says Jamie must wait one minute before proceeding, so Jamie waits by the teacher's desk and uses the classroom clock to tell when a minute has passed. Jamie then decides to try the Lawyer Referral Service, which will provide a free 30-minute consultation with a lawyer. Jamie goes to the station and the student working there, playing a lawyer, asks Jamie to describe their legal problem. Jamie says, again, that they got fired and need help. The student says that Jamie has some options, but will need a copy of his employment contract. Jamie does not have one. The student says that 30 minutes is up, and Jamie can hire them to take his case for \$2000. Jamie only has \$120 on hand, so they can't accept. The student, following the station instructions, suggests that Jamie take the employer to Small Claims Court by asking at the Courthouse. They also give Jamie another Chance Card.

This Chance Card says that Jamie gained \$200. Jamie notes that they now have \$320 on hand - better, but still not enough to hire the Lawyer Referral Service lawyer.

Jamie decides to go back to the Community Legal Clinic station for the appointment. This time they can talk to a lawyer, played by the same student. The student lawyer tells

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Jamie they need a copy of their employment contract in order to help. Jamie does not have a copy. The student lawyer tells them that once Jamie has it, they can either file a complaint with the Ministry of Labour or take the employer to Small Claims Court. They tell Jamie to come back for help after finding the contract and give Jamie a Chance Card.

The Chance Card says that Jamie has run into a friend who used to work at the same place as Jamie. Jamie is able to get a copy of the restaurant's standard employment contract. The Chance Card certifies that Jamie now has the employment contract on hand.

Jamie can't go back to the Community Legal Clinic before first visiting another station, so they go to the law firm. The student working there tells Jamie that they can help, but it will cost \$2500. Jamie does not have that much money and has to leave, but gets another Chance Card.

The Chance Card says that Jamie has gotten sick with the flu and has to wait 1 minute before continuing. Jamie waits until a minute has passed.

Jamie returns to the Community Legal Clinic. This time, the student there says that they can help because they have the employment contract and Jamie is eligible for their services. They explain the options: Jamie can either file a Ministry of Labour complaint or take their former boss to Small Claims Court. Jamie opts to file a Ministry of Labour report and receives a Success Card. The game is over.

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Rules for Play

- Everyone gets the chance to read their scenario or instruction sheet before the game begins.
- If there is already a litigant at the station you want to visit, line up behind them and wait for your turn.
- Keep track of how much money you have.
- Students playing stations must follow the instruction sheet.
- There are no limits on where litigants should go, the order they can go in, or how many times they can go to one station - they just have to visit at least one other station in between.
- The game ends for a litigant when they get a Success Card.

Options and Lessons Learned

The Access to Justice Game has been used in different ways to suit different audiences. What follows are some of the most common modifications or practical tips teachers and OJEN facilitators have used to ensure that students get the most out of playing the game.

- Using only one scenario in a class focused on that particular type of law (e.g., using only the “Jean” family law scenario in a family studies class or the “Jamie” employment law scenario in a business class).
- Rather than having students circulate individually, discuss one or more of the litigant scenarios as a class or in small groups. Have students vote or otherwise reach a consensus as to where the litigant should go. Then the teacher can act as the station worker for whatever station they chose, reading out responses based on the station instruction sheets. Repeat until the students achieve success. This modification can help relieve the “text-heavy” aspect of the game, which can be challenging for many students. It has also proven effective when working with small groups or with students who are reluctant to participate.
- For a more kinetic variant on the above, have students “vote” by running to a place around the classroom where you have placed the sign for a given station.
- Making players wait, as per the “negative” Chance cards, is optional. It is a game mechanic designed to increase frustration to better emulate the experience of

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trying to navigate a complex justice system, but this may not be appropriate for all audiences. If you do have students waiting, you can consider shortening the times by half or designating an area of the space just for this.

- Similarly, having students record their steps is optional.
- Rather than each station having its own supply of Chance or Success cards, the instructor may hold all the cards at the front of the room and require students to come to them in order to receive cards.
- Have other teachers, classroom assistants, or older students play the stations so that your learners can all play as litigants.
- Some students may find success much more quickly than others, or you may find that the whole group finished more quickly than expected. One way to deal with timing issues is to have students who finish swap roles so that litigants become the station workers and station workers get to play as litigants.
- Similarly, students who finish their litigant paths before others can play through other litigant scenarios.
- Since there are at least two different paths to success for each litigant, students can also keep playing as their original litigant to try to figure out other routes to success.
- It is important to remember that students have real lives outside of school – it is likely that some of them may have been through issues similar to those raised in the game. Be cautious of triggers and encourage all to speak respectfully about legal problems. Although the game is a simulation, elements may be real for some participants.

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AFTER PLAY

Game Take-Up

Leave time in the lesson plan to discuss the game's outcomes as a class.

Frustration is an intentional part of the game design. It can be helpful to give students a chance to vent their frustration and to highlight central themes by asking them what they found frustrating and to connect this to the real experience.

It's likely that some students will have finished the game quickly, but the majority will have taken around 6-8 steps in order to get to the conclusion. If a student has finished quickly, ask them to describe what enabled them to get legal help, and compare that to the experiences of other students and/or consider how likely those events are to happen in real life. For example, there is a very slim chance that a player will gain a large amount of money through a Chance card and simply be able to hire a lawyer. Highlight how seldom it is in real life that one gains a few-thousand-dollar windfall unexpectedly.

Here are some questions to consider asking during the debriefing conversation:

What was frustrating about trying to get help?

What if these steps took weeks rather than moments to work through?

What if following them meant complications with arranging child care or time off of work?

Would you have fought for this long if you were in this situation in real life?

It can be interesting to compare different paths as well. For example, Dallas often finishes quickly because their income means they can get help at the legal clinic and there is a quick way to meet with duty counsel for free. Jean often has a more difficult path because there are multiple and intersecting legal issues at play and their income means they do not qualify for legal aid or clinic support.

Comparisons like this can be tied to bigger questions and issues. Although Dallas might succeed in the game, in reality their financial and health situation has not

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changed and there is a good chance the legal problem and eviction will reappear in subsequent months. The big idea to connect to is that the law is a vital part of democratic society because it provides an impartial and fair means of resolving disputes. If it is not accessible, it is less successful in this regard. One successful finishing activity has been to ask students to work in groups to respond to two questions:

1. What could we do to improve this problem as a society?
2. Would you be willing to pay more in taxes to support a more accessible justice system?

Game Follow-Up

Contact OJEN at info@ojen.ca for information on resources that support learning about the civil justice system, having lawyers speak to your students about their work, coach civil mock trial activities or about visiting the courts in your community to see civil justice matters in action.

Excellent resources on access to justice are available from the Canadian Forum on Civil Justice (cfcj-fcjc.org) and from The Action Group on Access to Justice (theactiongroup.ca).

For a very fulsome extension activity, visit the Steps to Justice website maintained by Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) at stepstojustice.ca. This resource provides detailed walkthroughs of the steps needed to resolve many of the most common legal problems and explains the processes and roles of key legal services in plain language.

OJEN is available to provide professional development and training on the Access to Justice Game and the Steps to Justice website for groups of teachers at no cost. Contact info@ojen.ca for more information.

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APPENDIX - LINKS TO THE ONTARIO CURRICULUM

The game can support teachers' efforts to meet curriculum expectations in many secondary courses. The focus on civil justice and community resources fit seamlessly with the law and civics courses. As well, the specific legal issues raised mean that it works in other courses in which learners can explore the legal dimensions of everyday life. Respectively, the three litigation scenarios focus on child custody and access in a family dispute, wrongful dismissal in an employment dispute and potential eviction in a landlord-tenant dispute. All three of these can be used to support delivery of Family Studies courses, particularly *Exploring Family Studies*, Grade 9/10 Open, (HIF1O/2O), *Housing and Home Design*, Grade 11, Open (HLS3O), *Dynamics of Human Relationships*, Grade 11, Open (HHD3O) and *Personal Life Management*, Grade 12, Open (HIP4O).

The table below demonstrates links between the Access to Justice Game and core courses in the Ontario curriculum⁸.

Course	Selected Overall and Specific Expectations Reached
Civics and Citizenship, Grade 10 Open (CHV2O)	A2. Developing Transferable Skills A2.4 identify some careers in which civics and citizenship education might be useful B1. Civic Issues, Democratic Values B1.1 describe some civic issues of local, national, and/or global significance C1. Civic Contributions C1.3 explain how various actions can contribute to the common good at the local, national, and/or global level
Understanding Canadian Law, Grade 11 University/ College Preparation CLU3M	A2. Developing Transferable Skills A2.2 apply in everyday contexts skills and work habits developed through and relevant to the study of law B1. Legal Principles B1.1: explain categories of law, areas of law and the role of law in Canadian Society

⁸ Examples reflect the Ontario Secondary Curriculum as of August 2020. Expectations may change.

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Understanding Canadian Law, Grade 11 University/ College Preparation CLU3M	D2. Introduction to Family Law D2.3 explain the differences between the legal rights of married spouses and the rights of common-law partners in Ontario upon the dissolution of the marriage or common-law partnership (e.g., rights related to division of matrimonial and/or common property, alimony, child custody, child support, parental visitation rights)
Understanding Canadian Law in Everyday Life, Grade 11 Workplace Preparation CLU3E	A2. Developing Transferable Skills A2.1 describe ways in which investigations related to the law help them develop skills, including the essential skills in the Ontario Skills Passport D4. Introduction to Contract Law D4.2 identify various types of contracts in contemporary society (e.g., mobile phone contracts, loan agreements, leasing agreements, product warranties, credit card contracts, landlord-tenant agreements) and explain their legal and/or economic importance
Canadian and International Law, Grade 12 University Preparation CLN4U	B1. Principles of Law B1.4: explain how different types of law affect people's everyday lives B2. Legal Theory and Procedures B2.4: assess the relative effectiveness of various legal or political means used by individuals and groups to advocate for legal reform C4: Contemporary Legal Issues C4.1 analyse from a legal perspective contemporary circumstances in which individual or group rights and freedoms are threatened
Legal Studies, Grade 12 College Preparation CLN4C	B1. Purpose and Processes of Law B1.3: describe the legal structures (...) associated with civil actions... D2. Legal Structures and Processes D2.2: describe various types of procedures that may be used to resolve different types of disputes (...) outside the official court system E1. Law and Careers E1.3 describe the type of work, codes of professional conduct, potential employment opportunities, and potential earnings associated with various careers where an understanding of law is important

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Exploring Family Studies, Grade 9/10 Open, (HIF10/20)	A1. Exploring A1.1 explore a variety of topics related to individual and family needs and resources B2. Relating to Others B2.3 identify resources and strategies that can be used to help develop healthy relationships and resolve conflict in a variety of human interactions C2. Managing Resources C2.4 identify resources within their community that are available to support the needs of individuals and families D2. Family Responsibilities D2.2 identify family functions that are common to all cultures
Housing and Home Design, Grade 11, Open (HLS30)	A1. Exploring A1.1 explore a variety of topics related to housing and home design B2. Homelessness and Inadequate Housing B2.3 assess the laws and policies that protect the housing rights of individuals and families in Canada C3. Economic and Legal Considerations C3.4 describe the legal obligations associated with buying and renting housing
Personal Life Management, Grade 12, Open (HIP40)	A1. Exploring A1.1 explore a variety of topics related to personal life management B3. Communicating Effectively B3.6 identify common causes of conflict in interpersonal relationships C2. Managing Financial Resources C2.1 explain factors that affect the use of money as a resource D1. Personal Responsibilities D1.4 identify personally relevant legal documents, records, and areas of law E1. Economic Influences E1.2 analyse the impact of employment changes on personal finances

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In addition to these core areas, the next table shows a full list of courses that may be supplemented through the game, depending on the emphasis of the teacher.

Business Studies Introduction to Business, Grade 9 or 10, Open (BBI1O)
Economics The Individual and the Economy, Grade 11, University/College Preparation (CIE3M) Making Personal Economic Choices, Grade 12, Workplace Preparation (CIC4E) Analysing Current Economic Issues, Grade 12, University Preparation (CIA4U)
Politics Politics in Action: Making Change, Grade 11, Open (CPC3O) Canadian and International Politics, Grade 12, University Preparation (CPW4U)
Equity Studies Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice, Grade 11, Workplace Preparation (HSE3E) Equity and Social Justice: From Theory to Practice, Grade 12, University/College Preparation (HSE4M)
General Social Science Introduction to Anthropology, Psychology and Sociology, Grade 11, University/College Preparation (HSP3U/C) Challenge and Change in Society, Grade 12, University/College Preparation (HSB4U)
Guidance and Career Education Career Studies, Grade 10, Open (GLC2O) Designing Your Future, Grade 11, Open (GWL3O) Leadership and Peer Support, Grade 11, Open (GPP3O) Advanced Learning Strategies: Skills for Success After Secondary School, Grade 12, Open (GLS4O/GLE4O/GLE3O) Navigating the Workplace, Grade 12, Open (GLN4O)