

## Worksheet 3.11a: Citizens' roles in the legal system

1. In your group, discuss the statements below. The words in the box will give you some ideas.

*Nobody who has broken the law should be allowed to become a police officer.*

*Most judges are white males and so our legal system must favour white male criminals.*

*Magistrates pass the most serious crimes to Crown Court because magistrates aren't intelligent.*

*I would be interested in working in the legal system.*

assess balance behaviour bias Britishness citizen community  
democracy dignity discriminate dispute diversity ensure equality  
fairness forgiveness freedom harm historical immigration impartial  
individual inequality intolerance justice language law leadership  
mutual morals obey population power prevention protect  
punishment represent respect responsibilities rights role model  
service significant society technology tolerance understanding values

2. Read the statements below. How interested would you be in taking on any of these roles? Explain.

Danny (juror): When I received my jury summons, I replied straight away. I couldn't wait to get involved! It's been the most interesting week of my adult life so far, but I can't go into details about the trial. My boss was fine about having the time off and I get expenses for food and travel.

Saima (magistrate): I didn't need specific qualifications to volunteer as a magistrate, but I did training. I also listen carefully to the legal adviser in court so that I can be fair when deciding on fines and short prison sentences. Today I've dealt with minor assault and TV licence evasion.

Pieter (special constable): I was really proud when I was sworn in at court as a 'Special'. So far, the most rewarding part of this voluntary role was arresting a woman who was being homophobic at a football match. I feel privileged that I can make society a better place.

Kelly (tribunal member): As a doctor, I help tribunal judges to make decisions about workplace tribunals linked to disability and injury. I usually work in this role for about ten days a year and am paid a fee for my input. It's a lot of responsibility so I never make decisions lightly.

Shanisha (appropriate adult): I'm a teaching assistant in a school for pupils with emotional difficulties. I act as an appropriate adult for learners who are detained in police custody. I take pride in making sure that they understand what they are hearing and signing.

Matt (parent): I see myself as part of the legal system because I've taught my teenage daughter that laws benefit us all. She not only follows society's rules, but understands why they're in place. Her 'fairness radar' is strong. She hates drink-driving, tax avoidance and happy slapping.

3. Write a statement explaining why everyone in the UK has the right to take part in the legal system.

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