

TRIAL

PREPARATION

Terminology

❖ **TESTIMONY:**

Terminology

❖ **TESTIMONY:**

- ❖ A formal written or spoken statement, especially one given in a court of law (e.g.: “the *testimony* of an eye-witness”).

Terminology

❖ **EVIDENCE:**

Terminology

❖ **EVIDENCE:**

❖ The available body of facts or information indicating whether or not a belief or proposition is true or valid:

(1) **Physical**: Any physical object that played a role in the matter that gave rise to taking legal action (e.g.: Carlson's Luger).

(2) **Circumstantial**: Used to establish guilt or innocence through reasoning. It combines different facts that the prosecution uses to infer the defendant's guilt (e.g.: the behavior of the defendant around the time the crime took place - if a person is charged with robbing a bank and the money is nowhere to be found, the fact that he/she suddenly bought a \$100,000 car would act as circumstantial evidence).

Terminology

❖ **VERDICT:**

Terminology

❖ **VERDICT:**

- ❖ A decision on an issue of fact in a civil or criminal case (e.g.: “the jury returned a verdict of ‘not guilty’”).

Murder Laws in The United States

- ❖ **FIRST DEGREE:** Any murder that is willful and premeditated (planned in advance).
- ❖ **SECOND DEGREE:** Any murder that is not premeditated (planned in advanced).
- ❖ **THIRD DEGREE:** A murder committed without justification or excuse. Results from negligence or indifference.

Voluntary Manslaughter: Any intentional killing that involved no prior intent to kill, and which was committed under such circumstances that would “cause a reasonable person to become emotionally or mentally disturbed”.

Your Research

- ❖ **YOUR GOAL:** Find information that will help you better act out your role in the upcoming trial.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- ❖ Find examples of murder cases/trials similar to that of George. What were the verdicts? What were the sentences?
- ❖ What would the sentence for each degree of murder be (**in California**)?
- ❖ Depending on what the verdict is, will George be eligible for the death penalty?
- ❖ Research the general proceedings of a trial during the 1930's - How would such a trial be different from today?