

## FUMC ESL Low Intermediate Lesson 15: A Jury Summons

Read these paragraphs and discuss the meaning of the bold words.

If someone "**summons**" you, they call you to appear. If you get a summons from a court, you have to appear in that court. You might have to appear as a **witness** in a **trial**. Or you might have traffic tickets or **fin**es that you must go to court to take care of. The summons in this story is for jury duty.

A **jury** is a group of 12 people who decide the **guilt** or **innocence** of someone. You must be a **citizen** of the United States to serve on a jury. You must be at least 18 years old. You must be able to read and write. You must be of **sound mind**. This means you can't have a **mental disability** of any kind. You cannot be a **convicted criminal**. You must be a **resident** of the area where you were called to serve on a jury.

You may be **excused** from jury duty if

- you are over 70 and do not want to serve
- you have legal **custody** of a child under 12
- are a student
- are an employee of the legislative branch of government
- are the **caretaker** of an invalid
- are a member of the armed forces on active duty

You **commit** a crime. You are caught. You have a trial. The jury says you are guilty. You are convicted of a crime. The judge will decide your **punishment**. You might go to jail. You might have to pay a fine.

Tell what would happen in your country if you were caught committing a crime.

A serious crime that involves **violence** is a **felony**. A felony is a very serious crime with serious punishment. A smaller crime is a **misdemeanor**. If you are convicted of a misdemeanor, you might pay a fine. Or you might get **probation**. Probation means you don't have to go to jail, but you have to report to a probation officer each week or month. You must have good **behavior** while you are on probation. You cannot carry a gun. You cannot be with convicted criminals. You must not use drugs. If you do these things while you are on probation, you can be sent straight to jail.

Read the story on page 88-89.

1. Who is Amalia's father? Describe him.
2. What is he doing right now?
3. What is in the mailbox for Octavio?
4. Is Octavio qualified to serve on a jury?
5. Is Amalia happy her father got a jury summons?
6. How does Amalia think Octavio can avoid jury duty?

7. Why is Amalia relieved?
8. Amalia tells Octavio he can get out of jury duty, but Octavio says:
9. Do you think Octavio will serve on the jury?
10. Do you think Amalia is surprised that Octavio wants to perform his civic duty?

Discuss:

1. Have you ever served on a jury?
2. Would you serve on a jury if you were qualified?
3. If you had an excuse to get out of jury duty, would you use it?
4. Does your country use juries to decide guilt?
5. Who can serve on a jury in your country?

Use the words in the table to fill in the blanks in the sentences.

deserves	can avoid	understands	remembers
prove	serve	perform	convicted

1. It's true that Octavio is qualified to \_\_\_\_\_ on a jury.
2. He is a U.S. citizen. He speaks, reads, and \_\_\_\_\_ English.
3. He has never been \_\_\_\_\_ of a felony.
4. Octavio is retired now and \_\_\_\_\_ to relax.
5. Amalia is sure that Octavio \_\_\_\_\_ jury duty.
6. Then Amalia \_\_\_\_\_ the rule about age.
7. Octavio is over 70 years old. He simply needs to \_\_\_\_\_ his age.
8. Octavio says, "I want to \_\_\_\_\_ my civic duty."

Read this conversation with a partner. Then read aloud in class. Ask about any words you don't understand.

**Pete:** I got a summons in the mail. I have to go to court.

**Shannon:** Why? Did you do something wrong?

**Pete:** No. I saw a man break a store window. I called the police. The police caught the man. They took my name and address. They said I might have to be a witness at the trial.

**Shannon:** What will you have to do?

**Pete:** The policeman said that I would have to tell what I saw. I saw the man pick up a rock. He threw it through the window. That's all I have to say.

**Shannon:** Did you see what the man looked like? Can you identify him?

**Pete:** Oh, yes. I was very close to him. He had long, red hair and a red beard. He was very tall, over 6 feet. But he was very skinny. He was also missing his front teeth. I can identify him.

**Shannon:** You will be a good witness. You observe things carefully. You are an observant man.