THE CONSTITUTION WITH CARL

Volume 8 - The Seventh Amendment - Juries in Civil Disputes

Juries in Civil Disputes

Central question: When does the Constitution protect a jury in a civil dispute?





Rights are God given and protected by the Constitution. They are not granted by government. This book reads the Seventh Amendment the careful way: the words first, then the history, then what courts have said, and only then what is still debated. Those four parts stay separate on every page.

Volumes 6 and 7 covered criminal trials, where the government accuses a person of a crime. This volume covers the other great kind of case: a civil dispute, where one person or business says another owes something, often money for harm or for a broken agreement. The Seventh Amendment says that in the kind of civil case the common law knew, a jury of ordinary people, not a judge alone, decides the facts. Read the central question carefully. It does not promise a federal jury in every neighbor dispute. It protects the jury in a defined setting, and this book keeps that setting in view.

For ages 7 to 11. Level Up boxes reach to age 13.

START HERE

Meet Carl and the Four Strands

Carl the Cardinal is Juror Carl in this volume. He sits upright in a wooden jury box, wings folded, listening. A juror does not argue a side. A juror hears both sides, weighs the evidence, and decides what happened. That listening pose is the whole job in one picture.

The four strands, kept separate

Strand	What it is
THE WORDS	The amendment itself, in ORIGINAL WORDS, plus a PLAIN LANGUAGE EXPLANATION set apart from it.
THE HISTORY	Evidence from before and around 1791 about why the words were added.
COURTS HAVE SAID	Named cases with years. This is interpretation by judges, labeled as interpretation.
STILL DEBATED	Real disputes that remain. Stated fairly, never as settled fact.

How to use this book

- Read the words aloud first. Then read the explanation.
- Write, draw, point, or dictate your answers. All of those count.
- Keep two courts straight. This amendment speaks to courts of the United States, meaning federal courts. State court jury rights usually come from state law and state constitutions, as page 13 explains. A federal statute can also give a jury right for certain claims heard in state court. No Seventh Amendment incorporation is not the same as no federal rule of any kind.
- Activities are document based. Every dispute in the activities is fictional and written on the page.
- Family Talk is where the family viewpoint lives. It is never presented as a court holding.

MEET CARL BOX

Carl in this volume is Juror Carl. Twelve neighbors in a jury box may sound slow next to one expert judge. A note on numbers: twelve was the common law size, but a federal civil jury today does not have to have twelve people. Court Rule 48 starts with a jury of 6 to 12 members. Source listed on Pages 20 and 21.

The founding generation counted that slowness as a strength. Facts about everyday life, work, and property were exactly the facts ordinary people were trusted to judge.