

Twelve Angry Men: Essential Terms

Justice: fairness; the justice system refers to the court system, which helps resolve disputes and ensure that every is treated justly

Defendant: another name for “the accused” person (his job is to defend himself)

Prosecution: the person or persons who are bringing the lawsuit

Impartial jury: one of the protections in our justice system; “impartial” means not biased or unfairly prejudiced; this means that none of the members of the jury can have an unfair stigma about the person on trial

Pre-meditated homicide (murder): pre-meditated murder is the worst kind of murder (first degree murder) according to the courts; pre-meditated means the person *planned* the murder beforehand; people who are found guilty of pre-meditated murder often get harshly punished (in some states, this means the death penalty)

Charge: if you are “charged” with a crime that means that the police have formally written you up for committing a crime; being “charged” doesn’t necessarily mean you did it—it just means you are a suspect in the crime

Convicted: If you are convicted of a crime, it means the jury has found you guilty

Sentence: the judge determines your sentence or punishment

Testimony: a formal statement or speech; in a trial, witnesses are supposed to give a testimony of what they know about the crime

Deliberate: to debate; in a trial, the twelve jurors must go to a separate room to deliberate and reach an agreement

Verdict: the final decision of the jury (guilty or not guilty?)

Reasonable Doubt: On page 6 the judge tells the jurors, “If there is **reasonable doubt** (or “reason to doubt that the evidence proves guilty”), then you must bring me a verdict of ‘not guilty.’”

Unanimous verdict: this is one of the protections in our justice system; unanimous means that everyone must come to the same conclusion—all twelve jurors must deliberate until they agree whether the charged person is guilty or not guilty