

# Common Law-Related Education Strategies

## Case Study

### *Teacher Instructions*

Case studies take many forms. They include legal cases, based on court opinions, hypothetical situations concerning the topic being taught and real stories taken from personal experience or current events. Most case studies include five steps and can be done in large group or small teams.

### **Procedure:**

1. Discuss the facts. What happened? Who is involved? What are their motives? Where did it happen? What facts are important? What facts are not relevant? What facts are missing?
2. Identify the critical issue. In other words, what is the question that needs to be answered? For example, in a murder case, did the defendant intend to kill the victim or was it an accident?
3. Discuss the arguments. What facts support each side? What law supports each side? Do other reasons exist that might help in the decision?
4. Determine the stage the case is at or the decision made. If it is a court case, what is the decision of the court? If it is a news article, has an arrest or a charge been made, a lawsuit filed? If it is a hypothetical situation, what do you think would happen next? What has happened in similar cases?
5. Evaluate the case. What is the impact of the case? What will happen in future similar cases? Was the problem solved for the parties? Is there a better way (i.e., mediation, community conferencing)?