

## Introduction to the Program: The Rule of Law

<b>Framing Question:</b>	What role does law play in society? Why study law?
<b>Materials:</b>	No Vehicles in the Park Handout
<b>Opening Activity (10 Minutes):</b>	<p>Start with “10 Things I’d Rather be Doing” in which you challenge the students to answer the hardest question they will ever be asked—can the students think of ten things they would rather be doing than listening to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make a lists of things students would rather be doing (pick some students to write on the Board or have members of the Legal Team write on the Board).</li> <li>▪ Go through each item and show how the law is connected to everything they have thought of (sleeping, from the tags on pillows to laws about who you can and cannot “sleep” with; shopping, from implied warranties to the “legal tender” on the money). This underscores why they need to know about the law as they prepare to move forward with their lives.</li> <li>▪ Challenge the students to come up with new ideas that they think are unconnected to the law. Throw the challenge back to the class and see if they can think if anything unconnected to the law.</li> </ul>
<b>Class Activity (25 Minutes):</b>	<p>The “No Vehicles in the Park” lesson involves a simple mock statute. Read the summary of the situation and the Rule from the top of the attached worksheet to the class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the students whether they understand the rule “No Vehicles in the Park.”</li> <li>▪ Ask opinions about what makes up a good rule. Suggested answers: clarity, enforceability and fairness.</li> <li>▪ Put the students into groups of five or six and ask them to serve as participants in city council hearing petitions involving several disputes over the interpretation of the law “No Vehicles in the Park.” Will they allow exceptions to the law?</li> <li>▪ The attached worksheet sets forth some scenarios (please feel free to copy the worksheet for your students). Keep in mind that there is no correct answer; the power of the activity is in the discussion explaining each answer.</li> </ul>
<b>Closing Activity (5 Minutes):</b>	Tell the students plans for the year. If time allows, tell them more about yourselves. Wrap up by discussing with students what role law plays in society and why it is important to study law.
<b>Enrichment Activity (For extended class periods):</b>	You might want to reference the <a href="http://www.palawhelp.org">www.palawhelp.org</a> website Activity for a wealth of information about civil law.

## **NO VEHICLES IN THE PARK**

A Philadelphia neighborhood had a park that was being overrun by vehicles of all types. To make the park a place where residents might find peace and enjoyment, the city leaders enacted a law that simply reads: "No Vehicles in the Park."

While the law seems clear, some disputes have arisen over the interpretation of the law. Please decide the cases listed below, keeping in mind both the letter of the law as well as the intent of the law.

\* \* \*

### **Cases to be decided:**

- A. John lives on one side of city and works on the other side. He will save 10 minutes if he drives through the park.
- B. To keep the park clean, there are many trash barrels in which people may deposit all litter. The sanitation department wants to go into the park with trash trucks to collect the trash.
- C. Two police officers are chasing a suspected bank robber. If one officer cuts through the park, he or she can get in front of the suspect's car and trap it between the patrol cars.
- D. An ambulance has a dying car-accident victim in it and is racing to the hospital. The shortest route is through the park.
- E. Some of the children who visit the park want to ride their bikes in the park. What about the skateboarders?
- F. Mr. Thomas wants to take his baby to the park in a baby stroller.
- G. A monument to the city's citizens who died in the Gulf Wars is being constructed. A tank, donated by the government, is to be placed beside the monument.
- H. Several of the city's citizens have made a living for several years by driving people around scenic spots in the city in an old-fashioned horse and buggy. They want to drive people through the park.