



Discussion Questions

The following questions are based on remarks by Judge Myron Thompson, Judge Emily Marks, and Judge Keith Watkins in the Johnson Institute's Law Day 2023 video. **Watch the video here:** https://youtu.be/xsxU2SqyF_0.

1. What is the rule of law? Why is it important?
2. What is the role of law, and how does it differ from the rule of law? Can you give an example of each?
3. If a judge doesn't agree with the law, can he change it in his or her courtroom?
4. How do Judge Marks, Judge Thompson, and Judge Watkins explain the rule of law differently? Are they making the same point?
5. What does the rule of law affect, according to Judge Thompson?
6. What is an example of the failure of the rule of law?
7. Can laws be changed? How? Can you give an example of why you would want to change laws?
8. As a student, how can you be involved in the rule of law?
9. What rights do you have on social media? Where do those rights end?
10. As a student, where are you interested in engaging with the rule of law to change and make it better?
11. Judge Watkins shares that he thinks the First Amendment allowing free speech is the most important rule of law. In your opinion, what is the most important rule of law? Why?
12. What role does civility play in our society? Why is it important?
13. What is a rule of law that you sometimes disagree with but is good for our society?

14. Judge Marks mentioned that tensions exist in our society. Have you seen where the rule of law has helped improve your society even though those tensions exist?
15. Further research: The rule of law has shaped our nation in many ways, and it continues to do so today. Can you find an example of this?

Need an Essay, Reflection, or Conversation Prompt?¹

The following are questions about this year's Law Day theme developed by the American Bar Association.

1. In your view, what are the "cornerstones of American Democracy?" Are they, indeed, civics, civility, and collaboration?
2. Why is it important that our Constitution can be changed? In your opinion, when in our nation's history has constitutional change been most critical?
3. How can individual citizens use their voices to fulfill the promise of the Constitution?
4. Where does power reside within our constitutional democracy?
5. What does that phrase, "a more perfect Union," mean to you? What do you think it has meant to our nation?
6. What do you think about when you hear "rule of law?"
7. How have civics, civility, or collaboration shaped your community? How might they help shape your community in the future?
8. Is there someone who you admire as an upholder of the rule of law?
9. How does being a lawyer allow you to protect individual rights in your community?

¹"Write or Talk About the Law Day Theme," American Bar Association, <https://abateacherportal.org/have-a-conversation-about-the-law-day-theme/>, Accessed April 23, 2023.