

HANDOUT 1: Court of Appeal for BC

Preview the Court of Appeal video segment on the Courts of BC website. (Go to www.CourtsofBC.ca and select Court of Appeal. Watch the video (about 7 minutes). Read the information below about the Court of Appeal, then answer the questions on the back of this handout.

The Court of Appeal of British Columbia, established in 1910, is the highest court in the province. This court hears appeals from civil cases appealed from BC's Supreme Court, criminal cases appealed from the Provincial Court, as well as certain appeals from administrative tribunals.

In this court, at least three judges and in some cases five, hear appeals together. (This is different from the lower courts, where there is always just one judge.) In this courtroom, you will usually see only judges and lawyers, although individuals may argue their own case. When an appeal is heard, the judges review the written records of the original court and subsequent appeals and listen to the lawyers for each

side, who make arguments based on these records. The court is composed of the Chief Justice of British Columbia and 21 Court of Appeal judges. All are federally appointed.

The Court of Appeal of British Columbia is the final level of the court process in British Columbia. However, a convicted person or the prosecutor in a criminal case, or a party in a civil case, may still believe that justice has not been done. Another step remains — an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, which sits in Ottawa.

Courts of British Columbia



Court of Appeal for B.C.

- Reviews decision of the lower courts when requested to do so
- Normally three judges hear an appeal
- Not a trial court



Supreme Court of B.C.

- Civil cases involving money over \$25,000
- Divorce and custody matters
- Serious criminal cases

Provincial Court of B.C.



Name: _____ Block: _____ Date: _____

1. Jurisdiction refers to the type of case and the physical area over which the court has legal authority. What is the Court of Appeal for BC's jurisdiction?

2. How is filing for an appeal in a criminal case different from filing an appeal in a criminal case?

3. Why do we have an appeal court?

4. What are the Court of Appeal judges looking for?

5. Does the court hear new evidence?

6. Why do some appeals have three judges on the bench while other appeals have five judges on the bench?
