

**From Courtroom to Classroom:  
Talking Points for Judges and Lawyers as They Go into the Classroom  
From the Utah State Bar, CLE Department**



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**Continuing  
LEGAL  
Education**

1. Introduce yourself, by name, tell what organization/level of court you are from.
2. Describe the courts, as layered and interacting with each other (just like a school or a family, as an analogy). Consider metaphor of a family, children, parents, and grandparents as layers of courts, with increasing levels of experience and wisdom (just a trial/district courts and courts of appeals).
3. Talk about why you wanted to be a lawyer, or a judge, or both. Perhaps share about law school too, as an option after college. Maybe you can share about knowing lawyers in your family or perhaps you might share that you only ever knew lawyers from TV or movies but not in your life. If you are comfortable, talk about what inspires you to work in the law and in government.
4. Share about your earlier school experience (elementary, junior and senior high). Maybe you went to this school or within the school district. Maybe your teacher or classroom was similar to the one you are with this day. What did you like about school? What did you study or like to learn about?
5. Share some details about what you do in your daily work. Do you write or read or interpret? These are likely skills that the students in the classroom are just learning about now, so you might want to relate to them through this learning/skill set.
6. Do you have a favorite book from the age of the students you are addressing? Or a favorite activity or sport that you worked in when you were their age? Maybe, if you are inclined, you can share about those things with the class.

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7. One of the best parts of working in the law is being asked hard or new questions that others might not have thought about before. You can share about this and consider the input of the class. Do they have something that troubles them in our community or worries them? Maybe the class could share ideas about the advancement or future of the law, depending on their age.
8. An additional mechanism to relate to the classroom you are in could be to tell the students about how the law affects their life. Do the students get online? Do they carry cell phones? There are rules that govern what you can and cannot do, can and cannot post...those rules are the law. Maybe the students download music or watch YouTube videos...there are new laws about what can be shared online and what is owned by a musical artist. Maybe the students are fans of different sports...sports teams are being encouraged to brand themselves in a conscious way, to use mascots that are respectful and inclusive...some of these changes happened because of issues brought to American courtrooms.
9. We are a diverse community. We sometimes, almost always, disagree about issues and how to govern ourselves. Maybe you feel comfortable talking about this with the class. Do they all root for the U or for BYU? Or for other Utah and U.S. schools too? Do all of the students like vegetables? Or do some prefer junk food or fast food? Well, disagreeing is not bad; in fact, it is great! It is the lifeblood of American law and can help our courtrooms and judges decide cases more effectively or in new ways. Lawyers and judges are challenged to listen to each other, perhaps even more intensely because we can disagree. We are also asked to talk to each other with civility and respect, most especially when we disagree and debate with each other. If you are inclined, talk about how challenging and how truly important this civility and listening is to the law.
10. Finally, if you are visiting a classroom, think about what you can leave there. Do you love the American flag or the National Anthem? Maybe share with the class what you want them to love and respect about our patriotic traditions. Or do you have a favorite President or a favorite historical figure? Maybe share with the students about what you admire and learned from the life of this public servant who you respect. Do you want to challenge the class to write an essay or to debate a topic with civility? Maybe you can lead the class (and include the teacher) in options to discuss an issue or a problem in the community (even something like potholes in the road or fixing up a nearby park, or climate change and national security as students age). Think about a writing prompt or a debate topic to leave as a lesson. (P.S. We can help you if you want to do this...let us know...email us at [CLE@utahbar.org](mailto:CLE@utahbar.org) if you want to get information.).