



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# CLASSROOM LAW PROJECT

## OREGON PUBLIC DEFENDER SHORTAGE

### VOCABULARY

**Directions:** Frontload (introduce and review) these vocabulary words with your students to facilitate their understanding of the topic and coinciding resources:

1. **Defendant** (n.) - An individual, company, or institution sued or accused in a court of law.
2. **Public Defender** (n.) - A lawyer appointed to represent people who otherwise cannot reasonably afford to hire a lawyer to defend themselves in a trial.
3. **Pro Bono** (adj.) - Denoting work undertaken without charge, especially legal work for a client with a low income.
4. **Indigent** (n.) - An individual who is suffering from poverty, having no to very little money and resources.
5. **Legal Counsel** (n.) - A person legally qualified to represent an individual or entity in a legal matter.

### CURRENT EVENT ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

**Directions:** As you read through news and other resources about TOPIC, consider the following questions:

- Which United States Constitutional amendment(s) grant the right to counsel?
- What is meant by 'right to counsel'?
- How did Gideon v. Wainwright change the right to counsel under the law?
- Who are public defenders? What is their role within the judicial system?
- What are some of the reasons given for the current shortage of public defenders in Oregon? Do these reasons sound credible? Explain.
- The public defender shortage has been labeled as a 'public safety crisis'? Do you agree or disagree with this assessment? Explain.
- In your opinion, how should Oregon approach solving the issue of lack of legal representation for the hundreds of people currently charged with crimes? Explain.