

In the Courtroom: Basic Legal Terms in English

June 5th, 2025

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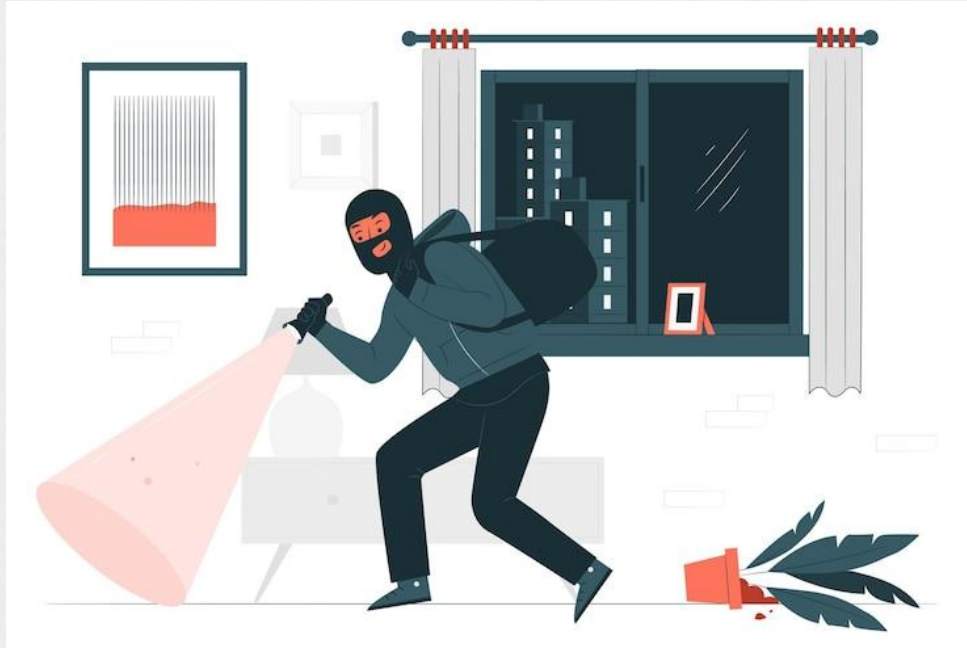
01

Crimes

Vocabulary for different types of crimes



Theft and Killing



Theft (n) – the act of taking someone's money or property illegally

“robo” in Spanish. Robar has a few different translations into English. Let's look at some...

She **stole** money from the cash register

To steal: General term for take something (money, property) illegally

Two men **robbed** a gas station

To rob: to use violence to steal **from** a person or place

Our flat was **burgled** while we were away.

To burgle: to enter a place illegally and steal (does not require violence)

He was arrested for **shoplifting** a t-shirt in Zara.

To shoplift: to steal items from a shop



Killing (n) – the act of taking someone's life

“Asasino” in Spanish. Asasinar has a few different translations into English. Let's look at some...

War **kills** many people.

To kill: General term meaning to take someone's (or something's) life

OJ Simpson was accused of **murdering** his wife.

To murder: to intentionally take someone's life illegally. Also called homicide.

The driver was convicted of **manslaughter**

Manslaughter: the act of accidentally taking someone's life.

Someone tried to **assassinate** the president.

To assassinate: to kill an important person for political or religious reasons

Gap Fill Challenge

1

Lee Harvey Oswald _____
JFK in Dallas Texas in 1963.

assassinated / killed / murdered / shot

2

A man fell from the roof while
attempting to _____ the
Prado Museum.

burgle / rob

Question 3

The Mona Lisa was
_____ in 1911.

stolen

Question 4

Jack the Ripper _____ at
least 5 women in London.

murdered / killed

Question 5

In Ocean's Eleven George Clooney's team _____ a casino during a boxing match

rob / robbed

Question 6

The 11 thieves _____
\$160m in a daring heist.

stole

Question 7

Some people _____
animals for food.

kill

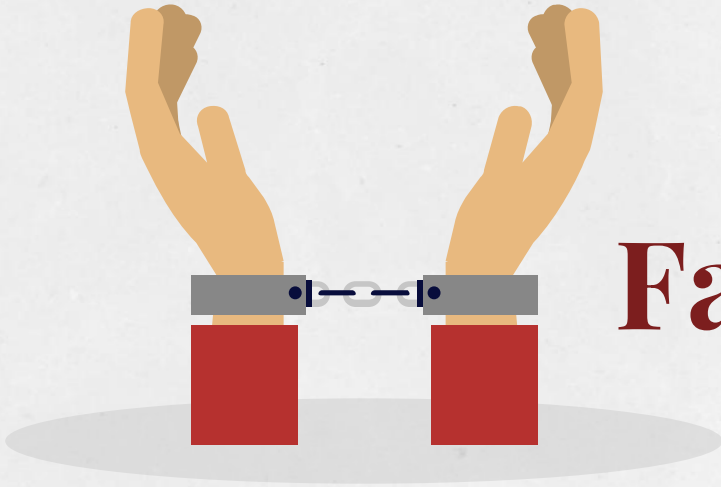
Question 8

Electronic tags on clothes
make it more difficult for
people to _____.

shoplift / steal

02

Famous Criminals



1. Burke and Hare

William Burke and William Hare ran a boarding house in Edinburgh in the 19th Century. One night a man died without paying his bill, so Burke and Hare sold his body to a doctor who needed corpses for medical students to study.



The doctor paid good money, so Burke and Hare decided to get more bodies. But instead of **grave robbing** they decided to **murder** guests who stayed with them.

They **killed** at least 16 people before they were caught. Hare told the police everything to save himself. Burke was found guilty and hanged in 1829.

Burke's body was later used for medical study, just like his victims.

2. The Kray Twins

Ronnie and Reggie Kray, were among the most notorious British gangsters of the 20th century.

Operating mainly in East London during the 1950s and 1960s, they built a criminal empire while cultivating celebrity status.



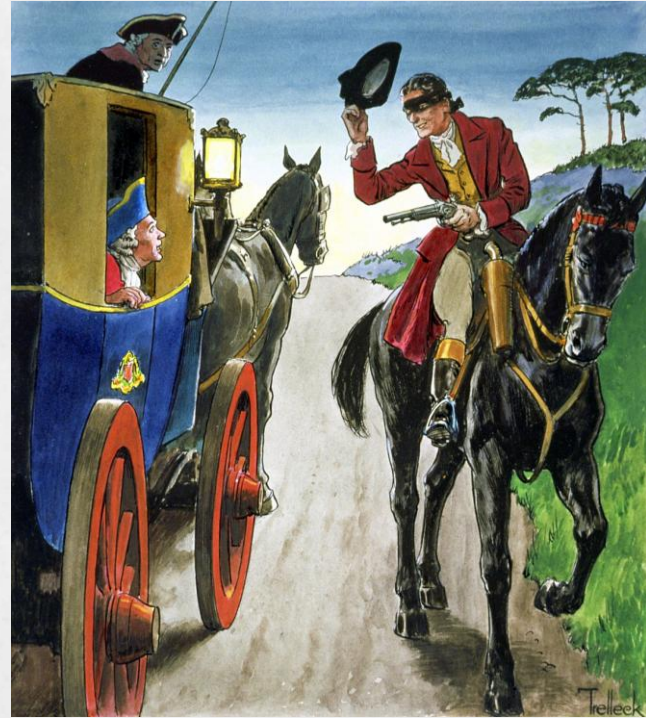
Together they **assassinated** rivals, committed **assault**, **extortion**, **raqueteeering**, **arson**, **loan sharking** and **laundered** all the profits through their famous nightclubs.

But in 1968, they were arrested and both were sent to prison for life. They are remembered today as dangerous criminals, but also as part of British history and pop culture.

3. Dick Turpin

Dick Turpin was a famous English **highwayman** in the 1700s.

He committed the crimes of **burglary, poaching, robbery, cattle rustling, and murder**. He was finally caught and executed by hanging in 1739.



Despite his violent crimes, after his death his life was romanticized and he has been made the subject of songs, films, plays, and TV shows.

Passive Voice

Subject + was/were + past participle + (by + agent)

Active

Passive

01

A judge found Burke guilty of murder.
An executioner hanged him.
Medical students studied his body.

Burke was found guilty of murder
He was hanged
His body was studied by medical students

02

The police arrested the Krays in 1968.
A judge sent them to jail.
People still remember them today.

The Krays were arrested in 1968.
They were sent to jail.
They are still remembered today.

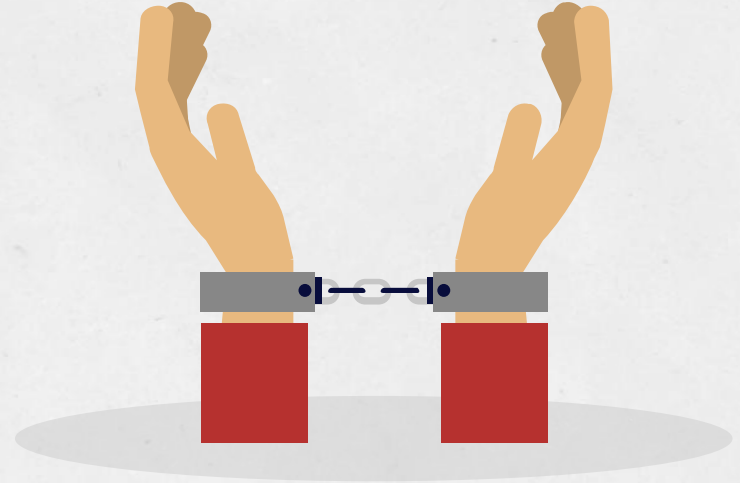
03

The police caught Dick Turpin.
An executioner hanged him.
Writers have romanticized his life.

Dick Turpin was caught
He was hanged.
His life has been romanticized by writers, poets etc

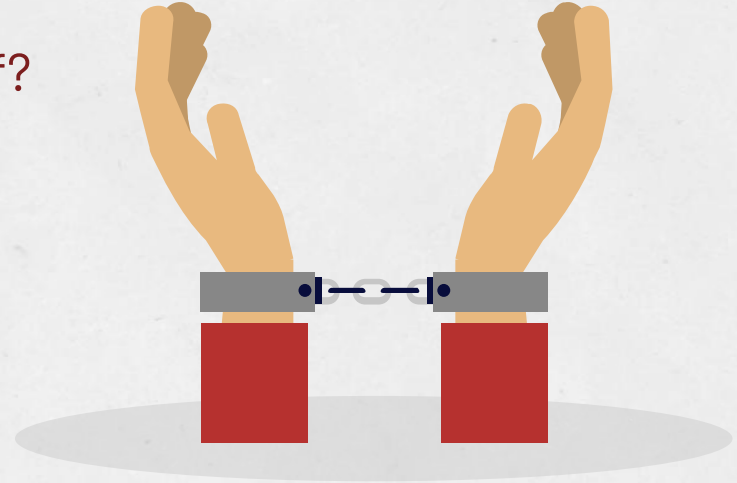
A Current Crime

03



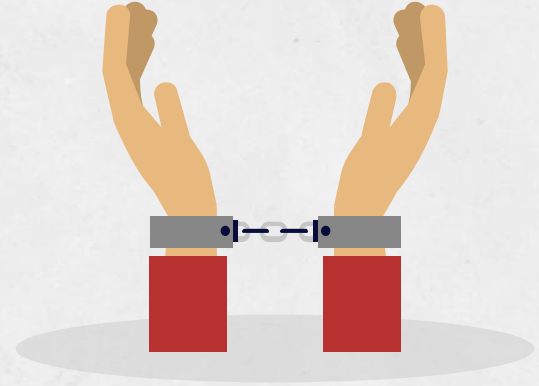
A Current Crime

1. What is Luigi Mangioni accused of?
 - a. Theft
 - b. Murder ←
 - c. Terrorism
 - d. Raqueteering



True or False?

1. Luigi Mangioni is charged with first-degree murder for killing Brian Thompson.
False. He's charged with second-degree murder
2. Attorney General Pam Bondi supports the death penalty for Luigi if he is found guilty.
True.
3. Luigi Mangioni has already pleaded guilty to the charges against him.
False. He's pleaded not guilty



Transcript

The US Department of Justice recommending the **death penalty** for alleged CEO **killer** Luigi Mangioni.

Members of the Altuna Police Department **arrested** Luigi Mangioni, a 26-year-old male,...

It's been nearly four months since Luigi was arrested, **charged** with **second-degree murder** for allegedly shooting United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson outside a New York City hotel.

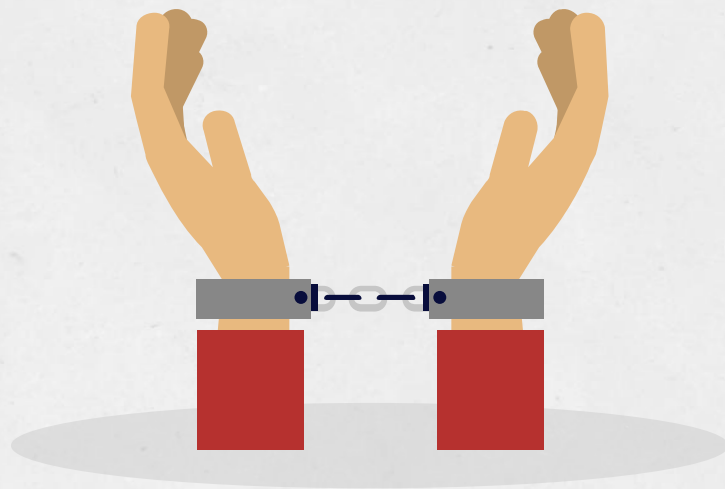
Now Attorney General Pam Bondi is directing **federal prosecutors** to seek the death penalty, should he be found guilty. Calling Luigi's alleged crime "a **premeditated, coldblooded assassination**". She says this is part of President Donald Trump's agenda to stop **violent crime**, and make America safe again. The president signed an **executive order** in January asking that the penalty be used whenever possible.

"Luigi why did you kill Brian?"

Luigi **pleaded not guilty** to all 11 **state charges brought against** him. His next **court appearance** is set for April 18th

The presumption of innocence

04



Presumption of innocence

Cautious Reporting Expressions

Alleged (adj) / Allegedly (adv)

- *The death penalty has been recommended for **alleged** CEO killer, Luigi Mangioni.*
- *Mangioni **allegedly** shot the CEO outside a hotel in New York.*

Meaning: Describes something that is claimed or reported but has not been proven or confirmed yet.

It's often used in legal or news contexts to indicate that something is still under investigation or accusation.

Presumption of innocence

Cautious Reporting Expressions

Apparent (adj) / Apparently (adv)

- The **apparent** motive for the crime was political.
- The suspect **apparently** left the scene on foot.

Meaning: Something that seems to be true based on the available evidence but may not be confirmed.

Presumption of innocence

Cautious Reporting Expressions

Reportedly (adv)

- The company has **reportedly** been involved in illegal activities
- **Reportedly**, the man was last seen leaving the building at 8 PM."

Meaning: Used to describe something that has been reported but is not confirmed or may not be accurate.

Presumption of innocence

Cautious Reporting Expressions

Claim (n + v)

- The **claim** made by the witness was their biggest piece of evidence.
- The **claim** that the company was involved in illegal activity has not been verified.
- He **claimed** to have been at home during the robbery, but the security footage suggests otherwise

Meaning: A statement or assertion that something is true, but which has not yet been proven or verified. "Claim" can refer to both accusations or personal statements, and it's often used to indicate that there is uncertainty about the truth of the statement.

Presumption of innocence

Cautious Reporting Expressions

Believe (v)

- The police **believe** the victim was alone in the house.
- The defendant is **believed** to be the mastermind behind the plot

Meaning: Something that people think is true but may not be proven yet.

Presumption of innocence

Other Cautious Reporting Expressions

- Presumed - presunto
- Supposed - presunto
- Unconfirmed - no confirmado
- So-called - llamado

Presumption of innocence

- **Cautious Reporting Expressions – passive voice**

- **is believed to**

The suspect is believed to have fled the country.

- **is alleged to**

He is alleged to be part of a criminal gang.

- **is claimed**

It is claimed that she helped plan the robbery.

- **is reported to**

He is reported to have threatened witnesses

- **is accused of**

She is accused of committing murder.

- **is charged with**

They have been charged with fraud.

- **is suspected of**

The man is suspected of arson.

- **is being investigated for**

The company is being investigated for tax evasion

05

People in the Justice System



The O.J. Simpson Trial

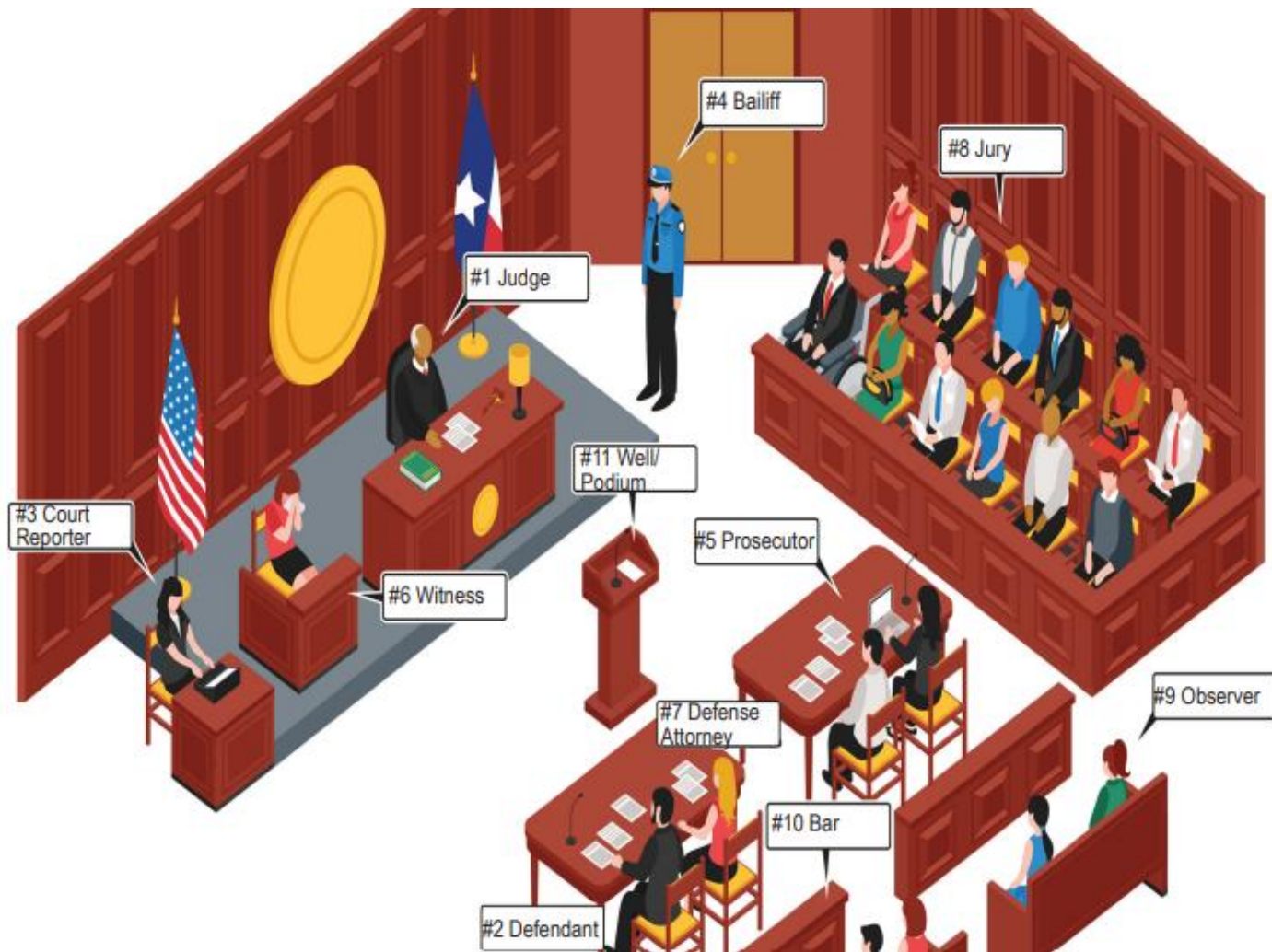
In 1994, O.J. Simpson, a former football star and actor, was **arrested** and **charged** with the murder of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend, Ron Goldman. O.J. became the **defendant** in a very famous **case**.



The **case** was held in **court**, with a **judge** overseeing the process. The **prosecutor** tried to prove O.J. was **guilty**. O.J.'s **defense** team argued that the **evidence** was not clear and that O.J. was **innocent**.

Several important **witnesses** were called to **testify**. Some gave evidence that seemed to support the prosecution's case, but the defense questioned the reliability of the evidence and said O.J. had a strong **alibi**.

The **jury** listened to all the facts during the trial. After months of testimony, they delivered their **verdict**: not guilty. O.J. Simpson was not **convicted** of the crimes.



06



Legal Scenes



Objections (1)

1. What is improbable in these two scenes?

Objections (2)

1. What is a more common objection type:
 - a. Badgering the witness? (acosar el testigo)
 - b. Hearsay? (testimonio de oídas)
2. What mistake is made again and again in this scene?

Witness Outburst (1)

1. What 2 mistakes does Elle make during the cross examination?
2. How many witness outbursts has the expert seen in her career?

Witness Outburst (2)

1. True or False. The rules in a military court are different to the rules in a standard court.
2. What does the expert find unusual in the scene?

Hostile Witness

1. What is a hostile witness?
2. How accurate is the scene? Why?

Continuance

1. What is a continuance?
2. How accurate is the scene?
3. How realistic is it?

Plea Negotiations

1. Would plea negotiations take place on during a trial? Would the lawyers use post-it notes?

Defendant representing himself

1. True or False. Defendants who are representing themselves are given more leeway (freedom) in the courtroom than a professional lawyer.
2. How realistic is it?

07

Idioms and Expressions



Justice is blind

To be caught **red** handed

Examples:

- He was caught red-handed taking money from the donation box.
- She was caught red-handed cheating on the exam.
- They were caught red-handed sneaking into the movie theater.



Explanation :

To be *caught red-handed* means to be caught while doing something wrong or illegal.

To be caught in the act

Examples:

- He was caught in the act of stealing a bike.
- The kids were caught in the act drawing on the wall.
- The employee was caught in the act of lying on his time sheet.



Explanation :

To be *caught in the act* means to be caught **while** doing something wrong or illegal.

To lay down the law

Examples:

- The principal laid down the law: no phones in class.
- You have to lay down the law and tell them being late is not acceptable.
- She laid down the law and told her team to meet the deadline or face consequences.

Explanation :

To *lay down the law* means to clearly state the rules and expect others to follow them.



Under the table (adj)

Examples:

- He was paid under the table to avoid taxes.
- They hired workers under the table with no contracts.
- The bribe was given under the table.



Explanation :

If something is done *under the table*, it's done secretly and usually illegally (often about money).

The jury's still out

Examples:

- The jury's still out on whether the new app is successful.
- The jury's still out on who will win the election.
- We tried the new restaurant, but the jury's still out.



Explanation :

If *the jury's still out*, it means a decision hasn't been made yet.

On the case

Examples:

- The tech team is on the case now.
- As soon as the problem came up, she was on the case.
- We need to find out who sent the email—I'm on the case.

Explanation :

If someone is *on the case*, they are actively working to solve a problem.



Case closed

Examples:

- He apologized and paid for the damage—case closed.
- We found the missing files, so it's case closed.
- The argument was settled. Case closed.

Explanation :

Case closed means the issue has been resolved and no further discussion is needed..



Above the law

Examples:

- The P Diddy case shows that no one is above the law—not even celebrities.
- He acts like he's above the law and never gets punished.
- Being rich doesn't make you above the law.

Explanation :

If someone is *above the law*, they act like they don't have to follow rules.



A slap on the wrist

Examples:

- The fine was just a slap on the wrist for the company.
- She cheated and only got a slap on the wrist.
- His negligence cost the company millions, but he got a slap on the wrist and wasn't even demoted.

Explanation :

A *slap on the wrist* is a very mild punishment for something serious.



To throw the book at somebody

Examples:

- The judge threw the book at him for repeated theft.
- They'll throw the book at anyone caught with drugs.
- If you lie to the court, they'll throw the book at you.

Explanation :

To *throw the book at someone* means to punish them as much as the law allows.



Thanks!

Does anyone have any questions?

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