

Open Your Class With This Tomorrow- *The 57 Bus*

Minors in the Legal System

Individuals under 18 who are accused of crimes are generally sent through the juvenile court system. However, many states have recently changed their laws making it easier to try juveniles as adults. Currently, about 250,000 juveniles are tried as adults each year in the United States. Many juvenile detention centers are geared toward rehabilitation, whereas many adult facilities are focused on punishment.

In 2004, the Supreme Court ruled in *Roper v. Simons* that juveniles under the age of 18 cannot receive the death penalty, but this does not prevent many young people from spending the rest of their lives in jail.

Directions: Use the chart below to brainstorm why the courts would or would not try a juvenile defendant as an adult.

Factors that might lead to a case remaining in juvenile court	Factors that might lead to a case going to the adult court system

Step 2: Go back to the case of Richard from *The 57 Bus* and explain why you believe he should or should not have been tried as an adult. Explain the factors that led you to this decision.