

Learn with Lex: A Children's Guide to the Supreme Court

Recommended for ages 6+

Welcome to the Supreme Court of the United States! My name is Lex. This unique and important building represents the judicial branch—the third branch of government in the United States. Are you ready to learn and explore? Let's go!



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Meet Lex!

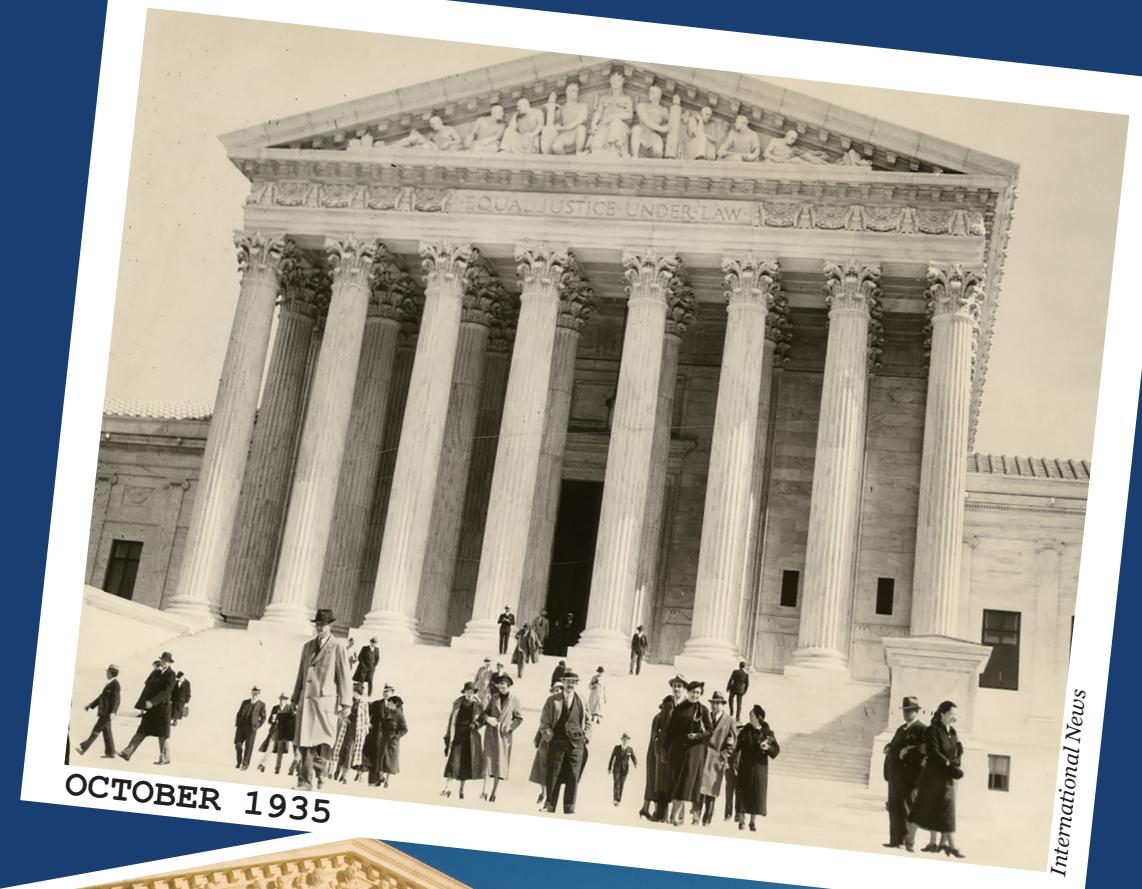


Hello, my name is Lex the Tortoise! I am 8 years old and I live in Washington, D.C. Did you know that Washington is the capital of the United States?

I love to read, swim, and make art projects. And I really like the color green.

One of my favorite things to do is explore my hometown and visit all the museums and special buildings. Today I'm going to show you my favorite, the Supreme Court!

This building was built in 1935. That was a long time ago! Can you imagine visiting the Supreme Court when it first opened?



International News



Present DAY

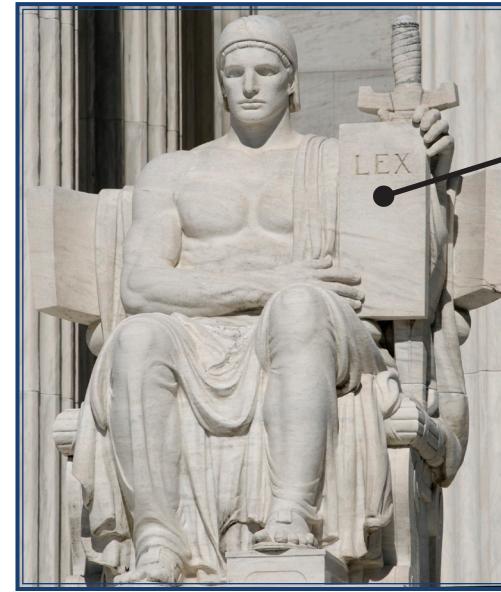
What looks the same?
What looks different?

Differences between the Supreme Court Building in October 1935 and Today:

In 1935, clothing styles were different. Many visitors in the photo are wearing suits and nobody is wearing jeans. Hats were common, too!



The two large statues outside the building are missing! They were added shortly after the building opened. They are called *Authority of Law* and *Contemplation of Justice*.



Authority of Law



Can you see the word *Lex* written on the tablet? That is how you say the word law in Latin.



Contemplation of Justice

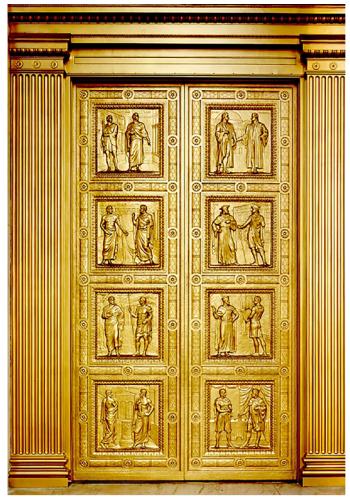
That's where my name comes from!



An **ARCHITECT** is someone who designs buildings. The architect Cass Gilbert designed the Supreme Court Building. He added lots of special details to make the building stand out.



CAN YOU MATCH THE WORDS BELOW WITH THE CORRECT PICTURE?



STATUE



BRONZE DOORS



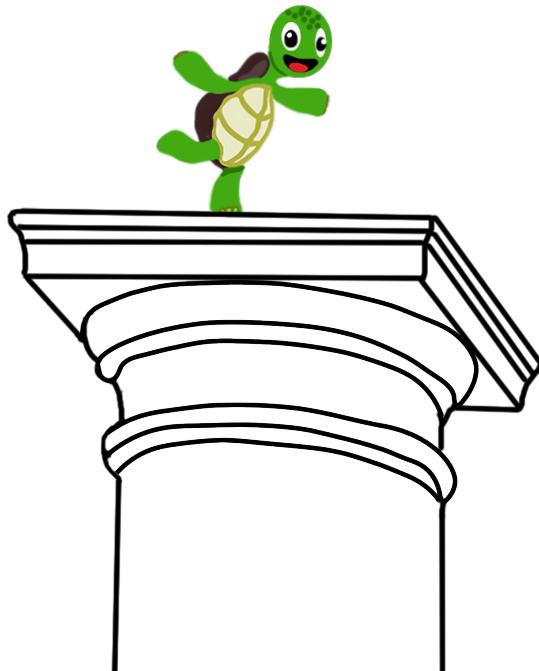
COLUMNS



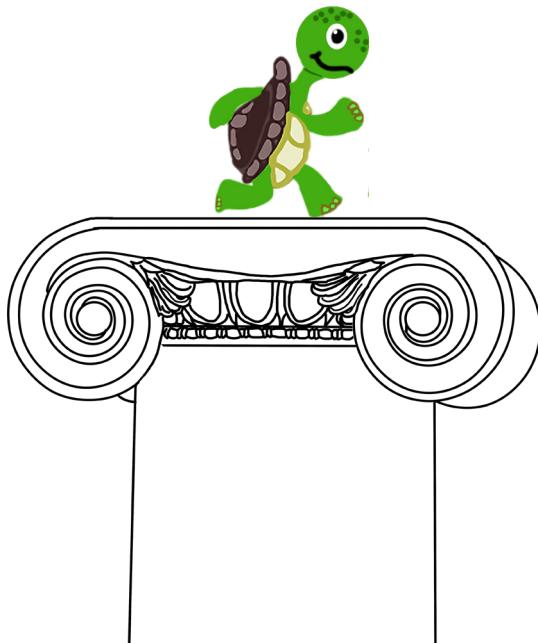
FOUNTAIN

Columns are some of the special details Cass Gilbert added!
There are three types of columns:

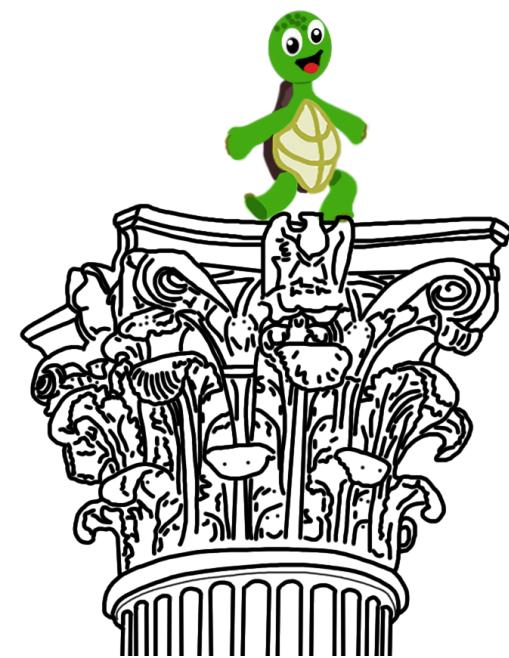
DORIC COLUMNS
are the most common.
They are plain and sturdy.



IONIC COLUMNS
are a little fancier. They have a scroll on top.



CORINTHIAN COLUMNS
are the fanciest. They have flowers and leaves on top.



There are **36** columns in the Great Hall, the large, beautiful space outside the Courtroom.

Take a close look!



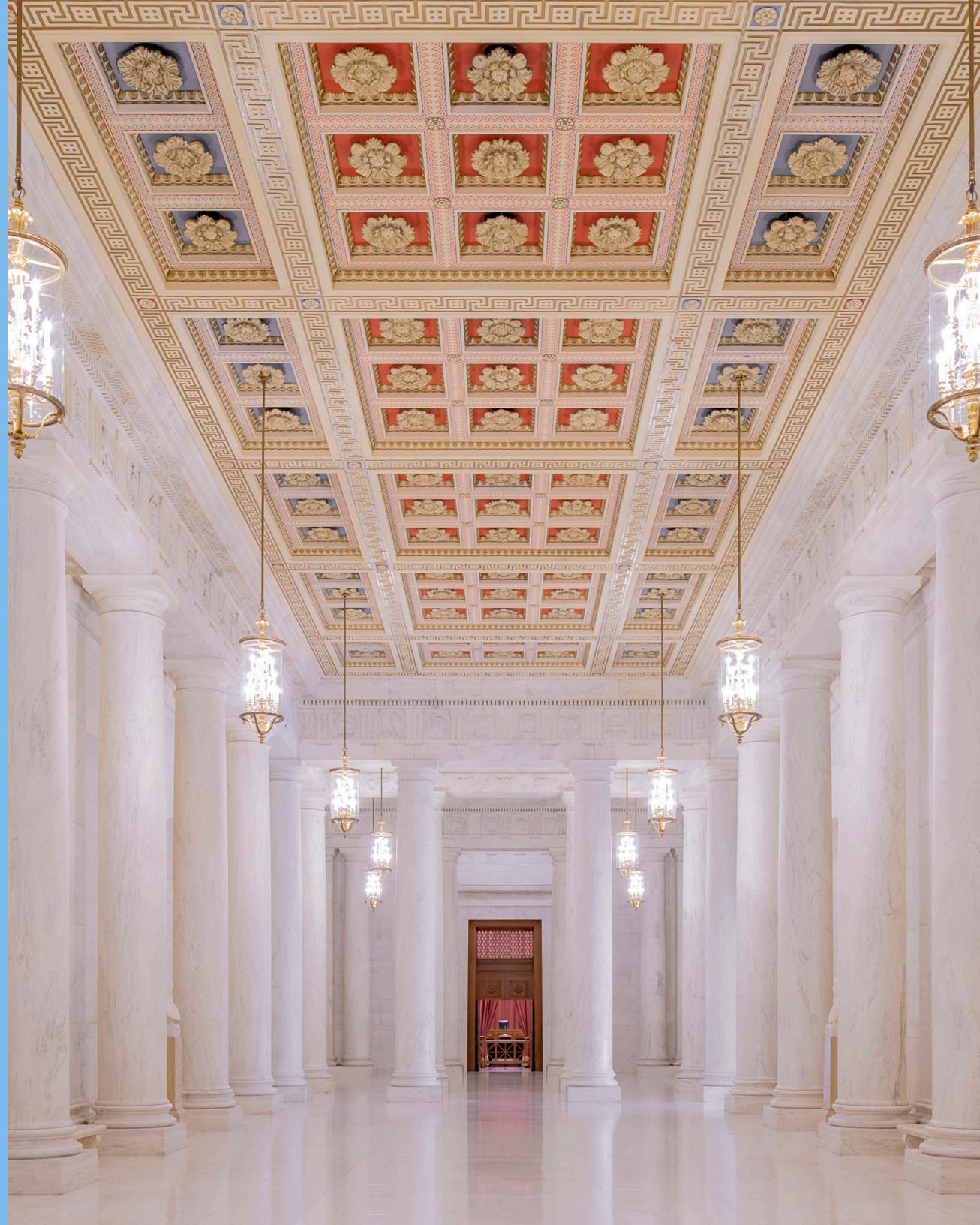
Can you guess
— which type of
columns these are?

CIRCLE THE ANSWER:

DORIC

IONIC

CORINTHIAN



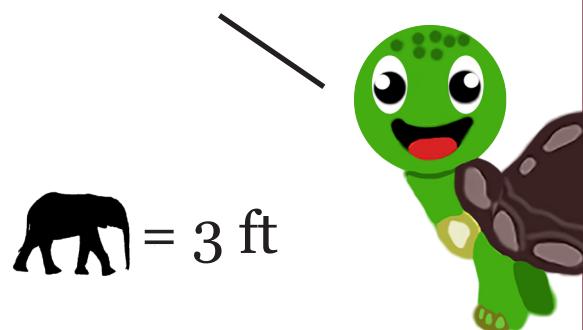


Each column is just over **24** feet tall.

A baby elephant is about **3** feet tall.

Let's count!

How many baby elephants can we stack next to just one Great Hall column?



CIRCLE THE ANSWER:

6 7 8 9



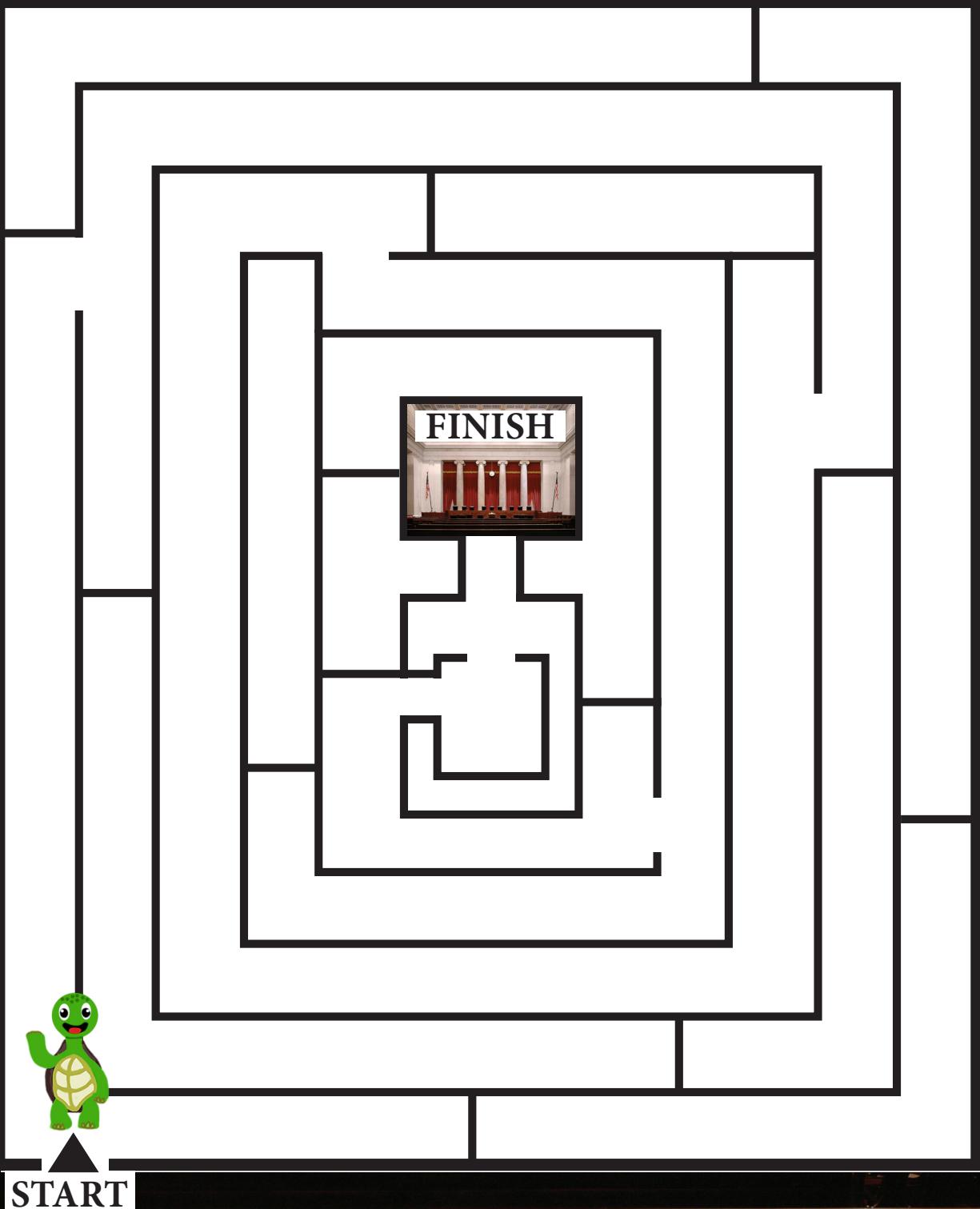
Look at the two lions! Lions are part of the decoration in the Great Hall.

Can you circle 9 differences?



Can you help
me find my way
to the Courtroom?

The Courtroom is
found at the heart
of the Supreme
Court Building!



The Courtroom

The Supreme Court is often called “the highest Court in the land” because it makes decisions all other courts in the country must follow. The Courtroom is where the Supreme Court Justices sit to hear oral arguments and announce their decisions.



ORAL ARGUMENT is when lawyers argue their case in front of the Justices. These arguments help the Justices make their decisions.





Courtroom Seek & Find

The American Flag: There are two—one on each side of the Bench. ➤



The Lectern: Lawyers stand here, directly in front of the Bench, and face the Justices during oral arguments.

Ionic Columns: There are columns all around the Courtroom. Each one has a scroll at the top. ➤

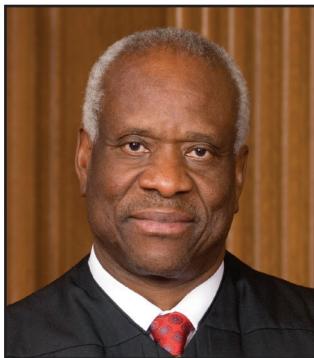


The Bench: This is where the nine Justices sit when they hear oral arguments in the Courtroom. The Bench is angled so they can see and hear each other better.

There are **9** Supreme Court Justices.
The Justices make important decisions about our country's laws.



Chief Justice Roberts



Justice Thomas



Justice Alito



Justice Sotomayor



Justice Kagan



Justice Gorsuch



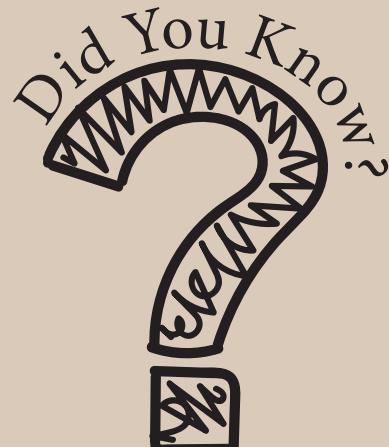
Justice Kavanaugh



Justice Barrett



Justice Jackson



There is no rule or dress code that says each Justice has to wear a black robe. It is a **TRADITION**, something the Justices have been doing for more than 200 years.

Does your family have any traditions?



DRAW YOUR OWN PORTRAIT!

Draw yourself as you look now or use your imagination and draw yourself all grown up.



A **PORTRAIT** is a painting of a person, often someone famous. This is a portrait of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman to become a Supreme Court Justice.



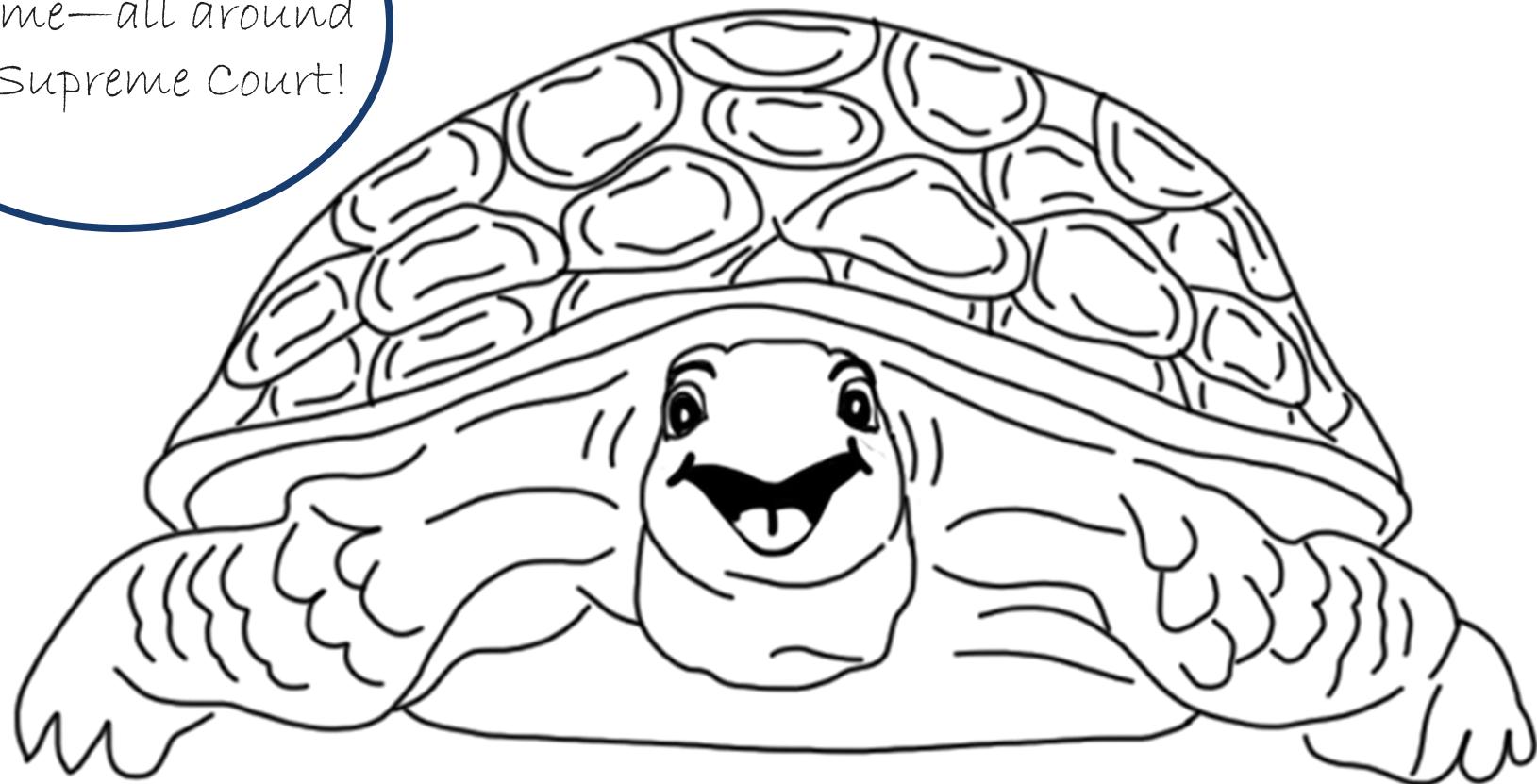
LET'S COLOR!

A **SYMBOL** is an image or object that is used to stand for something else. At the Supreme Court, tortoises are a symbol for the slow and steady pace of justice. Do you know the story *The Tortoise and the Hare*? Do you remember who won the race?

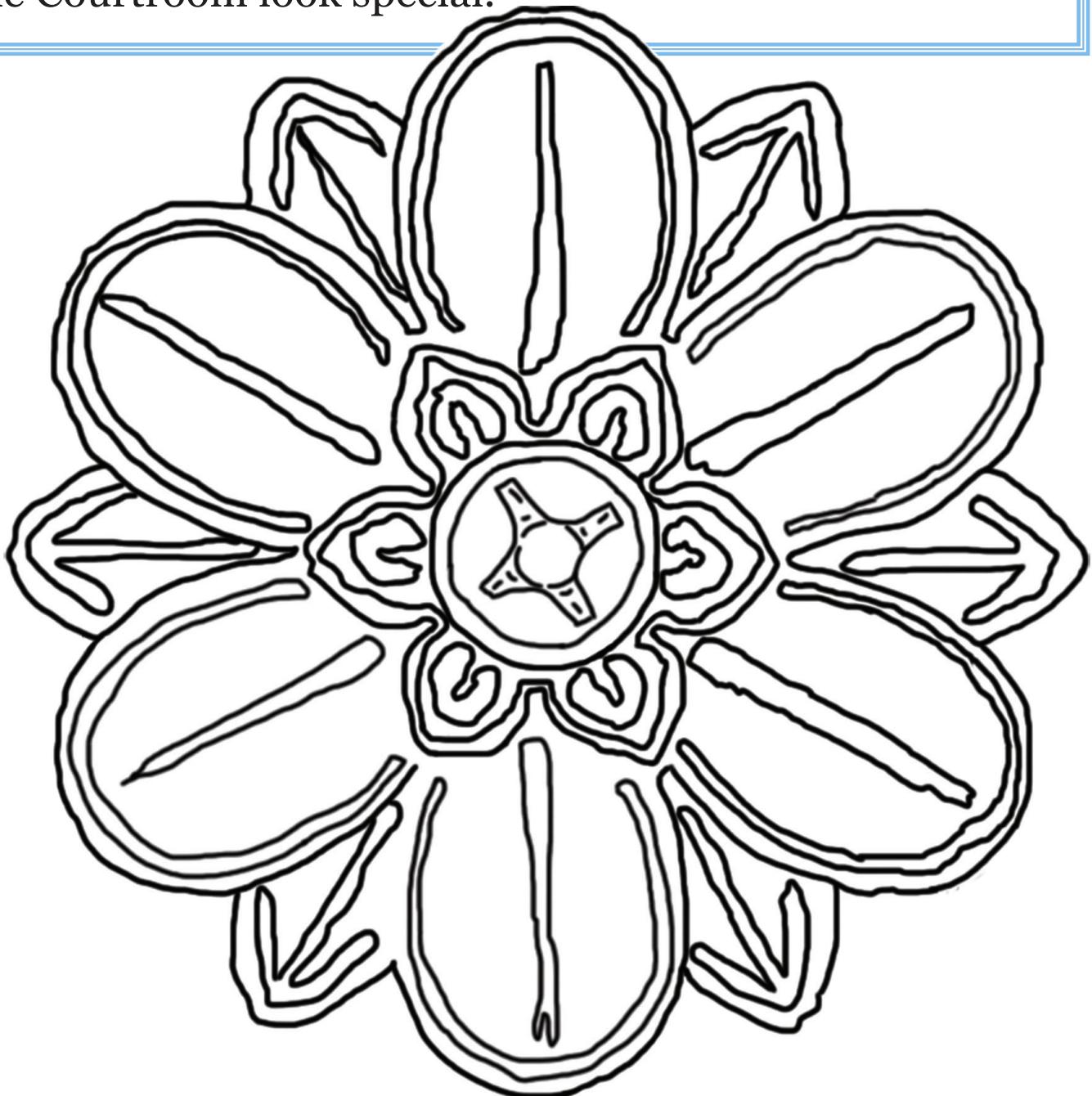
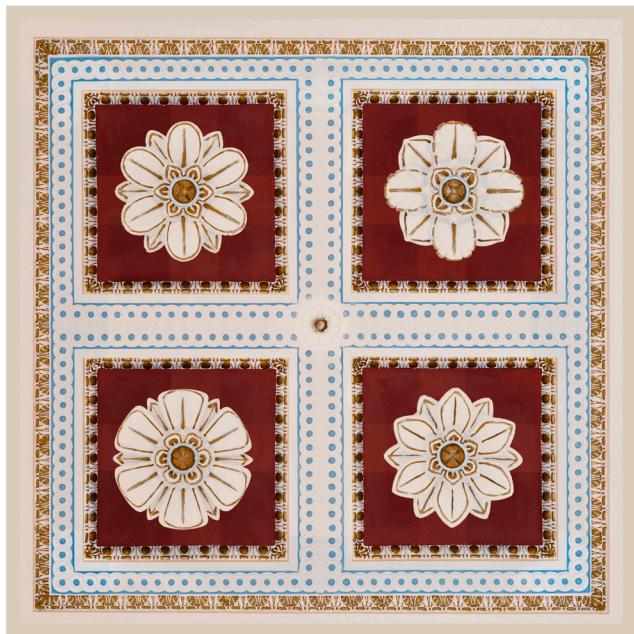
Can you name any other symbols?



There are tortoises—
like me—all around
the Supreme Court!



There are beautiful flowers on the ceiling in the Great Hall and the Courtroom called **ROSETTES**. These flowers are not symbols. The rosettes were added to make the Great Hall and the Courtroom look special.



ANSWER KEY

Matching Game Answers



BRONZE DOORS



FOUNTAIN

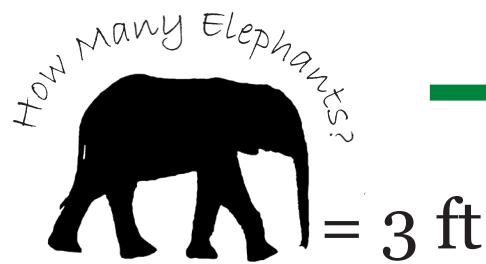


STATUE



COLUMNS

The columns in the Great Hall are **Doric Columns**.



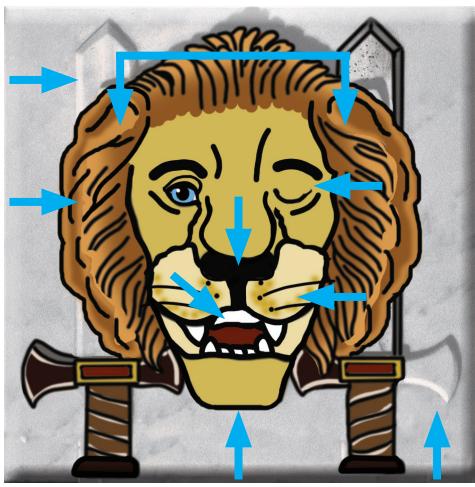
Each column is just over **24** feet tall. One column is almost the same size as **8** baby elephants!

Good counting!



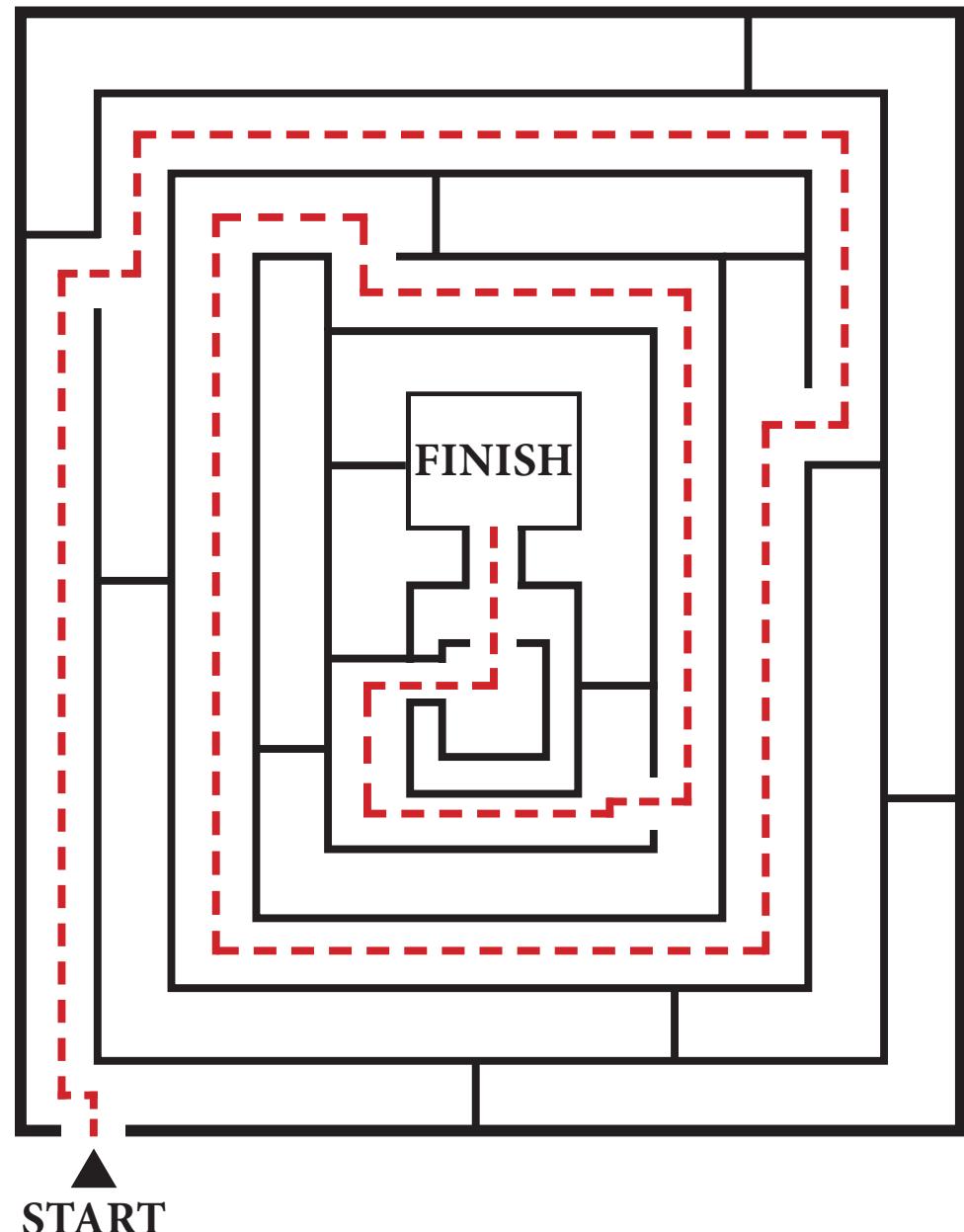
ANSWER KEY

Did you spot the differences?



1. Sword on the left has no black outline
2. The mane is fuller
3. Ears are hidden
4. One eye is winking
5. The nose is completely black
6. Four whiskers on the lion's face instead of six
7. Only three teeth in the top of the lion's mouth
8. The chin is straight instead of curved
9. The hilt (handle) of the sword on the right is not fully colored in

Lex found the Courtroom!



WE LEARNED NEW WORDS TODAY!

Architect: A person whose job is designing buildings.

Doric Column: Plain and sturdy columns.

Ionic Column: A fancier type of column that has a scroll at the top.

Corinthian Column: The fanciest type of column. They have leaves and flowers at the top.

Oral Arguments: Cases the Justices hear at the Supreme Court.

Tradition: Something that is passed down from one person to another.

Portrait: A painting of a person, often someone famous.

Symbol: An image or object that stands for something else.

Rosette: A fancy word for a flower decoration.

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs are from the Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States.



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