**How Courts Work  
Steps in a Trial**

**Pleadings**

Answer the following questions after completing the readings:

Vocabulary

*parties: those on each side in a court case.  
plaintiff: a person who brings a case against another in a court of law.  
prevail: win ( a court case)  
allegations: a claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong, typically one made without proof.*  
  
  
1. How does a lawsuit begin?  
2.  What are "pleadings?"  
3. What two things does a complaint do?  
4. Once a complaint is filed, how does the defendant respond?    
5. If new allegations are brought up in the case, how do the parties respond?  
6. What is a counterclaim?

Read the following story and identify these pleadings:

* complaint
* answer
* reply
* counterclaim

*Karen is shopping in a local market  (Acme Grocery) when she slips and falls on a wet floor.  The floor was wet due to a spill.  After a visit to the hospital for a broken ankle and advice from a  lawyer, Karen decides to sue the Acme Grocery company.  She lists all the facts of her case against them.*

*A week later, her lawyers hear from the Acme Grocery company.  They tell her lawyers that a sign was posted which read "wet floor. please be careful."  Apparently, the store manager mopped up the spill but the floor had yet to dry.  The Acme Grocery store claims that Karen had been drinking before she came into the store as the store cameras caught he n video and she appeared drunk.*

*Because Karen had given an interview on local radio where she told the listeners "the Acme Grocery Store does not care for its customers...in fact it tries to hurt them."  Since she gave her interview, business at the store has dropped.  The store has decided to bring a lawsuit against Karen for making these outrageous statements*