

ARIAL BLACK

The Court of Typography is now in session, the Honorable Times New Roman presiding. Please rise.

Arial Black goes to a desk on the LEFT side of the judge. Comic Sans and Gill Sans go to a desk on the RIGHT side.

TIMES NEW ROMAN

Order, Order. *Gavel* Everyone may be seated. (*Addressing the audience*) Members of the jury, your duty today will be to determine whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty based only on facts and evidence provided in this case.

Today's case is the Field of Graphic Design versus Comic Sans. Is the prosecution ready?

ARIAL

(*Stands up*) Yes, Your Honor. (*Sits down*)

TIMES

Is the defense ready?

Comic Sans nods vigorously.

GILL SANS

(*Stands up*) Yes, Your Honor. (*Sits down*)

TIMES

The prosecution and defense may state their case.

ARIAL

(*Stands up*) Your Honor, members of the jury, my name is Arial Black and I am representing The Field of Graphic Design in this case. We intend to prove that over the past 24 years, the ugly font Comic Sans has assaulted eyeballs everywhere and caused grievous harm to the graphic design industry all over the world. Please find Comic Sans guilty of aesthetic cruelty. Thank you. (*Sits down*)

Comic Sans looks dejected.

GILL SANS

(*Stands up*) Your Honor, members of the jury, my name is Gill Sans and I am representing Comic Sans in this case. We intend to prove that Comic Sans is unfairly accused and an innocent victim of circumstances. Please find Comic Sans not guilty of aesthetic cruelty. Thank you. (*Sits down*)

TIMES

Prosecution, you may call your first witness.

ARIAL

(Stands up) Thank you, your Honor. I call to the stand Inspector Baskerville. (*Sits down*)

SLIDE 2: Baskerville video

TIMES

Thank you, Baskerville. Prosecution, you may call your second witness.

ARIAL

(Stands up) Thank you, your Honor. I call to the stand Helvetica Neue (*pronounced Noi-uh*). (*Sits down*)

SLIDE 3: Helvetica video

COMIC SANS

(Stands up) No way! That's not fair! What a stuck-up font!

TIMES

Mr. Sans, please refrain from interrupting. (*Comic Sans sits down*.) Prosecution, you may call your third witness.

ARIAL

(Stands up) Thank you, your Honor. I call to the stand the celebrated artist, Wingdings. (*Sits down*)

SLIDE 4: Wingdings video

TIMES

Thank you, Wingdings.

ARIAL

(Stands up) Your Honor, I have no further witnesses. (*Sits down*)

TIMES

It is now the defense's turn to present their case. Defense, you may call your first witness.

GILL SANS

(Stands up) Thank you, your Honor. I call to the stand Dr. Courier New. (*Sits down*)

SLIDE 5: Courier video

SLIDE 6: Music

COMIC SANS

Your, Your Honor, I know all these kids with dyslexia, and I just wanted to do something to help them understand the world better. I joined the CERN team because I wanted to be an ambassador and make science accessible for everyone.

ARIAL

(Slaps paper and points at Comic Sans) Objection! The CERN presentation was given in an academic setting. Such an audience would understand regardless of the font used!

COMIC SANS

Oh yeah? Well you're stupid!

GILL SANS

Comic Sans!

TIMES

(Gavel) Order! Order in the court! The defendant and the prosecution will stop sniping at each other.

Arial shakes her head.

ARIAL

You're not spreading knowledge, Comic Sans. You're only spreading ignorance. Your Honor, we have proof that Comic Sans is polluting the minds of impressionable youth and degrading the quality of their thoughts to random phrases.

TIMES

This is a very strong accusation, Miss Black. Do you have any evidence to support this claim?

ARIAL

We do, Your Honor.

SLIDE 7: Music

ARIAL

Here we have irrefutable evidence of Comic Sans appearing in *internet memes!*

Arial takes out lots of doge memes and shows them to everyone. EVERYONE acts SHOCKED.

TIMES

Oh my goodness! (*covers mouth*)

ARIAL

Comic Sans is the original font of internet memes! It's only been used to type random phrases without any semblance of logic! Such dog? Very meme? Wow? Even when used in a humorous context, Comic Sans is not comic at all. It's pure madness and unfit to belong in society!

GILL SANS

(*Horrified*) Comic Sans, did you...

COMIC SANS

(*Stands up*) Stop gatekeeping, Grandma! I'm just expressing how young people really feel! Are you saying that people can only type funny things if they use the right font? Not everyone has 57 weights of Helvetica on their machine! I'm fun, I'm friendly, and I'm default on every computer. People should be allowed to use the font they want to use!

TIMES

(*Having recovered from surprise, slams gavel*) Order! Order in the court, please. Mr. Sans. Miss Black, please stop interrupting court procedure or you will both be held in contempt of court.

SLIDE 8: Music

Arial and Comic Sans settle down.

GILL SANS

(*Stands up*) I apologize for the interruption, Your Honor. However... My client makes a good point. Everyday people should be able to communicate in the manner that suits them, even if they don't know how to download fonts. Comic Sans is a free default font that can be used in non-serious contexts.

ARIAL BLACK

(*Slams table and stands up*) Objection! Communication is suited to its purpose - it's ignorant to use Comic Sans for a research paper! It's ridiculously overused!

GILL SANS

You see, that's where you're wrong. (*Points at Arial*) My client, Comic Sans has its place. The written word can seem aggressive unless it's displayed in an accessible way – and so by using Comic Sans, which connotes warmth and friendliness, layman designers and the public

aren't necessarily displaying a lack of imagination, but rather an awareness of graphic design's central goal: the easy and reliable communication of information.

You who mock Comic Sans are not understanding that the person using it is not necessarily displaying poor taste, but rather trying to communicate at a rudimentary level with the tools available to them. Comic Sans is proof positive that design works, the public gets it and understands that type, and us fonts, mean more than just words.

SLIDE 9: Music stops

Comic Sans and Gill Sans look at each other.

GILL SANS

What's more, the prosecution has only told you half the story. You have to know the true background of my client.

I call to the stand, the defendant, Comic Sans. (*Sits down*)

TIMES NEW ROMAN

The accused may take the stand.

SLIDE 10: Music

Comic Sans goes to front of stage.

COMIC SANS

My name is Comic Sans. I came from a respectable family: my parents appeared in comics, advertising and newspapers. They were handwritten by comic artists. But they were never able to fit in with "serious" typography.

My maker was a Microsoft designer, Vincent Connare. He made me for a program called Microsoft Bob, which was a graphical interface for people who didn't know how to use computers. I was made to be displayed in speech bubbles on a pixelated screen. He only designed me in three days, but he wanted to make something that people could read on small monitors. That would make kids want to use computers.

But then... I never appeared in Microsoft Bob. And then people started using me out of my original context. I never wanted to be printed out on flyers, or used in big presentations. I just wanted to make kids smile. When they started using Windows for the first time, I wanted to be something they could relate to. You can't use Times New Roman for Bob!

Your Honor, please believe me. I've been used by other people for too long. I just wish there was somewhere that I could be myself.

GILL SANS

(*Stands up*) Thank you, Comic Sans. Your Honor, I have no further witnesses. (*Sits down*)

Comic Sans returns to seat.

SLIDE 11: Music

TIMES

Both the prosecution and the defense have now rested their cases. The attorneys will now present their final arguments. Prosecution, you may begin.

ARIAL

(Stands up) Thank you, your Honor. Members of the jury, today you have heard testimony about the grievous harm Comic Sans has inflicted on the graphic design industry. Comic Sans is a rushed, poorly designed font that has trespassed in countless formal notices and presentations. It makes text unnecessarily hard to read and offends the sensibility of humankind. Please find the defendant, Comic Sans, guilty of aesthetic cruelty. Thank you. *(Sits down)*

TIMES

Defense, you may proceed with your closing argument.

GILL SANS

(Stands up) Thank you, your Honor. Members of the jury, today you have heard testimony about the original purpose of Comic Sans. My client is a victim of circumstances who had good intentions from the very beginning. He didn't set out to be a popular font, but people used him and made him that way. This is because he is the only free default font on Windows with undeniably friendly character, the only font with an element of humor and fun at that time in 1994. People need Comic Sans to express themselves. What's more, he can help students and dyslexic learners retain information more easily than other fonts. Don't be a font elitist. Comic Sans has a right to exist too. Please find the defendant, Comic Sans, not guilty of aesthetic cruelty. Thank you. *(Sits down)*

TIMES

(Addressing the audience) Members of the jury, you have heard all of the testimony concerning this case. It is now up to you to determine the facts. You and you alone, are the judges of the fact. The carriage of justice rests on your shoulders.

Who here thinks that Comic Sans is GUILTY, raise your hand. (Prosecution raises hand)

Who here thinks that Comic Sans is NOT GUILTY, raise your hand. (Defense raises hand)

SLIDE 12: Music stops

The people have spoken. The jury, in the case of The Field of Graphic Design versus Comic Sans, find the defendant _____.

SLIDE 13: Music

The characters react appropriately to the verdict: laugh and cheer if they won or cry and bemoan life if they lost.

TIMES

Court is adjourned. (Gavel)

After this goes on for a short while everyone goes to the front of the stage and bows. The end.