

Literacy and the Law



Lesson Title: “No David” on Trial (Lesson 2)

Context of the lesson within the project: In this second lesson, students will discuss some of the vocabulary of the court as it relates to the case in which they will be involved. A power point helps to reinforce this vocabulary. They will also see a diagram for the courtroom, so that they may establish their own “blocking” for their depiction of the mock trial. They share their character analysis handout (homework) with one another, and discuss the way in which they plan to portray their character before performing the mock trial in their groups.

Standards Addressed:

Grade 5 Common Core Speaking and Listening Standards

1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
 - a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
 - b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
 - c. Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others.
 - d. Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Visual and Performing Arts Standards

Theatre - Creative Expression

Development of Theatrical Skills

- 2.2 Demonstrate the use of blocking (stage areas, levels, and actor’s position, such as full front, quarter, profile, and full back) in dramatizations.

Creation/Invention in Theatre

- 2.3 Collaborate as an actor, director, scriptwriter, or technical artist in creating formal or informal theatrical performances.

Essential Questions/Issues:

Should one’s “character” influence judicial decisions? Why or why not?

Objective(s):

Students will effectively analyze and portray characters in a courtroom/classroom drama by writing, speaking and enacting a mock trial.

Students will collaboratively discuss roles, consequences and ideas, and draw conclusions about the drama, giving their opinion on the same. (Evaluation)

Assessment: Teacher observation based on the following rubric:

Literacy and the Law

RUBRIC

<u>Speaking and Listening</u>	<u>Meets or exceeds all criteria</u>	<u>Meets criteria</u>	<u>Meets some of the criteria</u>	<u>Significant criteria missing</u>
<p>Collaborative discussions with clear expressions of ideas</p> <p>Builds on other's ideas, responds to others' questions</p> <p>Prepared, follows roles assigned</p> <p>Reviews key ideas from discussion and draw conclusions, shares at a reasonable pace using logical reasoning.</p>	<p>Impressive use of skills to the enhancement of the group discussion and collaboration with others.</p> <p>Extremely well prepared.</p> <p>Thorough analysis Skills when drawing conclusions and logical reasoning.</p>	<p>Uses skills to add to the group discussion</p> <p>Prepared</p> <p>Analysis through the drawing of conclusions and reasoning.</p>	<p>Uses some of the skills to add to group discussion</p> <p>Some preparation</p> <p>Some analysis</p>	<p>Uses few of the skills to add to group discussion</p> <p>Needed to prepare</p> <p>Needs analysis</p>
<p><u>Theatre</u></p> <p>Active participation in improvisation,</p> <p>Explores emotions, physical characteristics, developing character</p> <p>Effective use of blocking for the "set" of the courtroom.</p>	<p>Extremely active and creatively participates</p> <p>Very effective character development, and highly effective use of collaboration skills.</p> <p>Uses space very well during simulations in courtroom</p>	<p>Actively participates and collaborates.</p> <p>Develops believable character</p> <p>Uses space well in simulation of courtroom</p>	<p>Participates and collaborates some of the time</p> <p>Attempts to develop character</p> <p>Aware of space some of the time</p>	<p>Participation is not evident</p> <p>Little use of character development</p> <p>Ineffective use of space</p>

Materials and Resources Needed: Completed Character Analysis handout from homework, mock trial script handout. Power point for courtroom diagram and vocabulary. Suggested Props: judges robes, gavel, handcuffs, dress or scarf for Mrs. Applegate, ties for the male attorney, jacket or scarf for female attorney, bow for Suzie, Exhibit one- stickers in a plastic bag, etc. This is optional but makes it fun. Ask students to bring in their simple props/costumes.

Literacy and the Law

Learning Activities

Hook: “Close your eyes and imagine yourself involved in a courtroom drama. In the role that you play, you must “become” that character, emotionally and physically. Please listen for directions.”

(15 minutes)

Whole Group: Show the courtroom diagram (on power point), using vocabulary, for example: the plaintiff and prosecuting attorney are sitting closest to the jury (power point notes for teacher before showing may be helpful), and talk about “blocking”. Blocking is the position actors take on stage; in this case the positions will simulate a courtroom trial. What will the “blocking” look like (description in theatre standard 2.2): full front, quarter, profile, and full back). For example, the defense and prosecuting attorneys ask questions of the witnesses by looking at them, with a quarter toward the jury (which isn’t there, but imaginary!). Ask students to identify where each member of the trial would be seated. Be sure to use the proper vocabulary (only some is introduced here) as you talk about the diagram and “blocking” for the courtroom.

Continue with the power point. Lesson 2 discussing some of the vocabulary with a Quiz Show giving definitions for some of the vocabulary for the unit.

See vocabulary handout below for all vocabulary (note: only some are on the Quiz Show).

10 min:

In the groups, facilitated by “David” as director (he has the fewest lines in the mock trial) have each group share their homework: the completed Character Analysis forms, and discuss their plans for the portrayal of each character Discuss rationale and give examples.

30 min:

The director leads his team as they set up the blocking and courtroom scene in their area of the classroom. (put the power point diagram of the courtroom up on the screen). The producer (Bailiff) can check with the group to see that the Judge, Plaintiff, Plaintiff/Prosecuting Attorney, Defendant, Defense Attorney, and Witnesses all have their correct “name-signs” visible. (This is to reinforce the correct vocabulary).

Each group of eight performs the mock trial in different areas of the room

10 min:

Closure: Student oral reflection and drawing conclusions: Pair/Share: If I were to perform this role again, I would be sure to change _____. I found _____ to be effective in the way we developed the characters in the mock trial as a team.

Have some share their conclusions regarding their performance of the trial with the whole group. Tell them not to forget the details of this trial, as the jury needs to meet very soon! (You may want to have students “perform” the trial a few times in ELA block, maybe portraying different characters)

Special Needs of students are considered in this lesson: (Differentiation can be addressed in the assignment of the roles. Large and small group instruction and careful grouping assignments will be useful for ELL and also GATE students.

Extension Ideas: Have students make a video of the mock trials, and each group further evaluate their portrayal of the roles.

References: Common Core State Standards, California VAPA/theatre standards

Handouts: Homework: Character Analysis Form, power point, Vocabulary page, name-tags

Literacy and the Law

Vocabulary

***Rule of Law** – Decisions based on the law, applies to everyone fairly; judges and jury must be **impartial**. Justice is for all people.

***Burden of Proof** – the defendant is “innocent” until proven guilty. The Plaintiff has the “burden” to prove the guilt of the defendant with clear evidence.

***Beyond a Reasonable Doubt** – Jurors must be almost positive using their own common sense of the guilt or innocence of the defendant.

***Due Process** – Legal rights for all persons.

***Impartiality** – (Impartial) Personal opinions cannot influence judges and juries.

Judge – Responsible for the trial, acts as a referee and a guide.

Jury – Twelve citizens like you who must work together to decide on the case.

Court Clerk – Handles the judges papers and assists the judge.

Court Reporter – Types every word said in court during the trial

Bailiff – The policeman in the court to keep order and make sure every one is safe.

Bailiff – A policeman who makes sure that everyone remains safe.

Defendant- The person who is accused of a crime and is “defending” him or herself.

Plaintiff – The one who brings the “complaint” to the court.

Lawyer/Attorney/Counsel – Represents and guides people with legal issues. The defendant (defense attorney) and/or plaintiff (prosecuting attorney).

Witness - Answers questions that the attorneys ask about what he or she saw heard, felt and touched when he or she witnessed the crime.

Guilty– The defendant *did* commit the crime.

Innocent – The defendant *did not* commit the crime.

Verdict - 12/12 Jurors must agree in a criminal case or it is a “Hung Jury”.

Exhibit- Evidence presented in the trial, for example: a gun, emails, or a picture.

Objection – The attorney “objects” or questions whether the admission of an “exhibit” can be used in a trial, or if the way the other attorney is questioning someone is within the rules.

Overruled – The judge does not think a rule has been broken.

Sustained – The judge agrees that a rule has been broken.

***most important to stress for concept development**

Literacy and the Law

Handout #1 Vocabulary

Name tags

Bailiff

Judge

David

Suzie

Mrs. Applegate

Stevie

Defense Attorney

Prosecuting Attorney