STUDENT MOCK TRIAL OF
PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN

Evaluation of the decision to use the Atomic Bomb
Was the use of the Atomic Bomb justified to end World War II?

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A Balanced Historical Investigation for High School Students

Guided Inquiry Lesson Plan Designed by
David Nelson

www.classcoffee.com
http://www.classcoffee.com/combo_mock_truman_trial.htm

Grade Level: 9-12  Social Studies
Lesson plan model is adaptable for other leaders.
Mock Trial of President Truman Preparation
Suggested Structure and Timeline

Overall Goals:

- Students will simulate a mock trial of President Harry S. Truman in a courtroom setting by taking on the roles of attorneys and witnesses to cooperatively design a case that persuades the student and adult jurors.
- Students will conduct intensive research that combines secondary and primary sources to reveal their character’s perspective on the decisions and methods used by Japan and the USA during WWII.
- Students will create their characters and trial arguments based on research of substantiated primary and secondary sources.

A note on Content Goals and Objectives: I prefer not to stress the specific content goals and traditional links to the state and national standards (although there are many), but rather I want to emphasize the mode of delivery for the Truman Trial lesson. It goes without saying that the content goals are essential for the success of the overall lesson and that the students must have a clear understanding of the historical causes of World War II in both the European and Pacific theatres, US Foreign Policy from WWI through the 1950s and Japanese expansion in the early 1900s. The success of such a trial, however, depends on a clear understanding of the mode of delivery in preparing students for such a simulation.

Model for instructional delivery for the Mock Trial of President Truman:

The delivery of this unit is based on a model of guided inquiry in which students become active participants in the learning process. I have developed this lesson based on the following premises about student learning and guided inquiry:

- Guided inquiry requires, what I call, the three Ts: Tools, Teamwork, and Time.
  Students learn effectively when...
  - Presented with an open ended problem;
  - taught tools (skill-set and knowledge base) needed in order to solve the problem;
  - teamed with a diverse group of students, in which each understands how his/her specific role directly relates to developing a solution;
  - given the time to process, collaborate, and practice.

- The Truman Trial has been successful because of the high expectations of performance. Given a public venue and the unique nature of the cross examination, all of the participants have a heightened level of concern. They work as a team to develop an effective case and they pressure one another to be properly prepared.

- To be effective, learning must develop a careful mix of challenge, work and fun! Students must be given suitable, yet demanding roles to play that push them in a realistic yet challenging way.

- Critical thinking requires the scaffolding of the students' knowledge and skills, while also demanding the right mix of both suitable to the task.

- Learning becomes more meaningful (and more often seen as fun) primarily because the students are directly involved in a process for which the outcome has not been predetermined, rather it is a result of their team's case. In this simulation, the outcome is completely uncertain; the entire process requires cooperation, but in the greater ‘trial competition’, students are empowered to create the most persuasive case through the organization and presentations of their evidence.

Truman Trial Lesson Design: David Nelson, American Community Schools of Athens, Greece
www.classcoffee.com/ Version Combo 9.0
Suggested Time-line: 

(Based on lessons of 80 minutes)

Pre-unit topics that are taught in previous American Studies units:

- Effects of World War I in Europe and America
- Roaring 20s and the Great Depression
- President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal
- American Foreign Policy Teddy Roosevelt -> Franklin Roosevelt

4 Lessons: Background to World War II

- Rise of Fascism in Europe
- Understanding the two theatres of War: European & Pacific
- Outbreak of World War II in Europe
- World War II as Total War- tactics, bombing raids and civilian casualties.

1 Lessons: USA Foreign Policy

- Neutrality, Lend-lease, Declaration of War

1 Lesson: Rise of Militarism in Japan

- History of Japanese Expansion

Teacher Task: Initial preparation for the trial. Choose Lawyers to represent two sides; I select the highest performing students as a reward, but divide them equally on two sides. I also choose two boys and two girls for each side for a total of eight lawyers. (I have had them apply to be a lawyer in the past and use a selection process, but I found that it made it too big of a deal of the decision and wasted a great deal of time.) They will draw later to see which team defends Truman and which team prosecutes.

Teacher Task: Divide remaining students into two equal teams. I begin with a random selection and then balance the teams based on the goal of finding two balanced heterogeneous groups based on academic ability, gender, public speaking ability, and leadership styles. (I teach within an integrated English/History class, so that we have two classes together for a total of 40 students. I have also done the trial with two separate classes, and within each I choose the lawyers, and the remaining students become the team.)

1 Lesson: Announcing the Teams and Drawing Roles

- The teams are announced and the sides are drawn to see which side is PROSECUTION and which side is DEFENSE. This is drawn by one representative from one side.
- The class is divided and the “Truman Trial Roles” handout is distributed.
- Students from each side draw out of a hat from the roles for their side.
- I do allow them to trade amongst themselves and sometimes ask certain students who may be most suitable for particular roles to play those roles.
- I always choose a student to play the role of Truman.
- Lawyers divide up the witnesses on both sides (Each of the lawyers chooses his/her witnesses for direct and cross examination.)
- Lawyers decide who will be giving the opening statement (6 minutes). I usually have two lawyers write and deliver the opening together.
- Lawyers decide who will be giving the closing statement. I usually have the two lawyers who did not do the opening.
1 Lesson (Optional): Library Research and Work time for background research of their characters.
- Developing a Character Sketch, Steps 1-3
- Handout: “Character Sketch Development”
- Introduction of the Binder requirement of the project

Student Task/ Homework: Begin background research of their characters at home. Developing a Character Sketch, Steps 1-3; Handout: “Character Sketch Development”

Teacher Task:
- Reserve theatre, or a large area where the trial can take place. Reserve microphones and equipment. See “Theatre Needs Request” sheet.
- Begin to prepare PowerPoint background for use during the trial. I did this for the first time last year, and the photos added a great deal to the overall effect; the pictures also became a powerful way for the lawyers and witnesses to display their evidence.
- Organize a reliable Jury pool: I’ve used IB students (Great for IB History students to review World War II if it is in their syllabus), student teachers, parent volunteers, upper-classman, and students from the standard level history class.

2 Lessons: Go over time-line and due-dates for the process
- Background information of World War II: Civilians in World War II, expansion of Japan and attack on Pearl Harbor
- Students must take detailed notes. I always give them time to meet as a team to brainstorm how information from the lesson could be used by their side to create a more persuasive case.
- DVD/VIDEO - The Century: America’s Time with Peter Jennings, Volume 3
  - Volume 3, Part 1- “1941-1945: Civilians at War”
  - Volume 3, Part 2- “1941-1945: Homefront”

1 Lesson: Work Day in Library & Computer Lab- Each attorney meets with his/her witnesses on his/her side
- Witnesses search for primary sources directly related to their character
- Each witness must be able to explain why he/she is on the defense or prosecution and explain what he/she will be able to contribute to the case.
- Witnesses begin to research for information about the cross examination witnesses
- Reminder of binder requirements for all students

1-2 Lessons: Prosecution and Defense Teams meet separately- Introductions & Developing a Team Case-Line
- Students introduce their characters to their teams/ Using the Character sketches
- Sources due, binder check: All sources must be organized in a binder
- Each character introduces himself/herself to the team and shares the key arguments that he/she will bring to the case. Each character must explain why he/she is on that side.
- Attorneys lead the groups; one writes the ideas on the board.
- As a group the students categorize the reasons, looking for commonalities.
- Based on the categories, the attorneys lead the groups to create a Case-Line for their side.
  - The Case-Line is essentially the thesis statement for the Prosecution and for the Defense. Each side must use the case-line to demonstrate why President Truman is either innocent or guilty. Each witness must understand he/she connects to the case-line.
- We spend some time discussing word choice, tone, connotations, and other devices.
Student Task/ Homework: Preparation for Trial

- Students complete research for their own witness with emphasis on locating primary sources: letters, memos, quotes, newspaper articles, speeches, government documents, photos, etc...
- Lawyers research their cross-examination witnesses. Emphasis must be given to primary sources: letters, memos, quotes, newspaper articles, speeches, government documents, photos, etc... The primary sources can become the backbone of cross examination (especially when the witness “does not recall” what the attorney on the cross examination is asking.)
- Textbook Reading: *American Odyssey*, 1999 Edition, by Gary Nash. (This is the book that we use in the school’s curriculum.) Pages 508-520.
- Lawyers must begin writing the Opening Statement for their side.

1-3 Lessons: DVD/ Background Explanations- While viewing, students should be taking notes on arguments that will help their side, as well as recording arguments will be used by the other side. After showing segments, I always give them time for each team to discuss what they saw, and to share ways that the information and arguments can be used within the case. I also spend time with the entire class to discuss issues of validity, reliability and bias within the sources.

- **American Experience: Victory in the Pacific.** PBS Home Video (I will use this for the 1st time this year, but it provides excellent arguments for both sides, although the introduction seems to be very pro-American. There is also a fascinating primary source from 1945, narrated by Ronald Reagan, justifying the firebombing of Tokyo. Great sources for students to evaluate!) Link to sources connected to the DVD and information how to purchase on PBS: [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/pacific/filmmore/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/pacific/filmmore/index.html)

- Optional for the Defense Team:
  **DVD: American Experience: Truman, Part I and Part II.** This is a fascinating biography of Truman from most of his life. It will help provide the defense with some useful perspectives. This is also available in full length on-line at the following address: [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/video/truman_01.html#v158](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/video/truman_01.html#v158)

- Optional for the Prosecution Team:
  **DVD- American Experience The Trials of J. Robert Oppenheimer.** This is also available in full length on-line at the following address: [http://video.pbs.org/video/1174233882](http://video.pbs.org/video/1174233882)

- Optional DVD for Both Sides:
  **DVD- The Atomic Café-** A film by Kevin Fafferty, Jayne Loader, & Pierce Rafferty, 1982. (This is a powerful collection of primary sources. Great to use as an introduction to the Cold War too.)
  **DVD- Trinity & Beyond: The Atomic Bomb Movie,** Narrated by William Shatner, 2000. (Very similar to the Atomic Café, see above.)
  **DVD- Tora! Tora! Tora!- The Attack on Pearl Harbor,** Director Richard Fleischer, 1970.
**Student Task/ Homework: Preparation for Trial**

- Witnesses must finalize their questions and responses that will be used in direct examination.
- Witnesses must create a 3-4 page essay responding to the following question:
  To what extent was utilizing the Atomic Bomb justified? The essay should be written from your character’s point of view, and include source citations. They must integrate their sources within the essay and cite the sources as footnotes or endnotes. All written work must be well supported with solid explanations, sources, and historical examples.
- Lawyers must finalize their questions and plan their cross examination for all of their witnesses.
- Bibliography and Binder should be improved.
- Witnesses must find photographs of their character.
- Witnesses and lawyers must find or create a costume for the trial.
- Lawyers finalize the Opening Statement: The opening statement should set the tone for the trial, and introduce what their witnesses will demonstrate to the jury. The opening statement should also predict what the other side will attempt to prove, and begin to rebut those arguments. Above all, the opening statement must cement the Case-Line into the jurors’ minds.
- Lawyers must meet outside of class to discuss the case and to create an order for introducing their witnesses- they should create an order that will strategically build toward proving their case-line. *(This is important, and should be stressed to the lawyers. They can change the persuasiveness of their case simply by changing the order of their witnesses.)* Lawyers should also discuss their ideas for cross examination and share sources and ideas.

**1 Lesson: Trial procedures and etiquette**

- Review of the trial vocabulary
- Brief Attorneys on Objections- Handout “Attorney Objection Procedures”
- Trial day procedures, order- Prosecution first, Defense second
- *I have brought in guest speakers here many times, parents who are lawyers and who have had courtroom experience, to present their experiences and to present methods of persuasion, questioning strategies, and identifying logical fallacies. Students enjoy hearing stories from experienced lawyers and are intrigued by the “Hollywood” sense of courtroom dramas.

**1-3 Lessons: Final Preparation and work Time- Teams should meet separately**

- Students should be given the “Final Check-List” to follow to make sure that they are ready for the trial.
- Essays due from the witnesses- Binder Check
- Order of witnesses presented to the team, and witnesses give input until everyone can agree on the final witness order.
- Practice and rehearse the direct examination and possible cross examination
- Lawyers should deliver the opening speech for the entire side and allow for critique and addition of ideas. Every witness must understand how he/she connects to the opening speech.
Trial Day-

Last year I organized an “in-school fieldtrip” for the students and arranged to hold the trial over the entire day. Social Studies classes from the high school and middle school were also invited to the theatre to observe the trial. The jury must be able to participate in the entire trial. In the past the trial was done over several days. I really preferred doing it in one day.

9:00-9:20 Set-up, dress-up and final organization.
9:20-9:30 Introduction: Judge speaks, swearing-in of all witnesses by the bailiff.
   (I act as the Judge and the English teacher, the Bailiff.)
9:30-9:40 Opening Statement Prosecution
9:40-9:50 Opening Statement Defense
9:50-12:20 Case of the Prosecution- Prosecution calls each of their witnesses for direct examination, and the Defense lawyers cross-examine each witness immediately after the direct examination is complete.
   --- If time permits, I usually allow the lawyers to recall one or two witnesses, and I usually allow for the Prosecution to redirect one-two witnesses after the defense completes their questioning.
   *5 Minute Break during the case of the prosecution (usually in the middle).
12:20-1:00 Lunch Break
1:00-3:00 Case of the Defense- Defense calls each of their witnesses for direct examination, and the Prosecution lawyers cross-examine each witness immediately after the direct examination is complete.
   --- If time permits, I usually allow the lawyers to recall one or two witnesses, and I usually allow for the Defense to redirect one-two witnesses after the prosecution completes their questioning.
3:00-3:15 Closing Statement of the Prosecution
   Closing Statement of the Defense
3:15-3:45 Jury Deliberates- Often the verdict is announced the following day.

1-2 Lessons- Follow-up and Evaluation

- Students complete a self evaluation and a team evaluation
- See handout, “self evaluation”
- Teams meet together to complete a group evaluation of the process and final delivery
- The entire class meets together to debrief and evaluate
- Collect all binders, essays, bibliographies

1 Lesson- In-Class Essay Test (I have also done this as a take-home essay.)

- Trial Follow-up: In a 60 minute in class essay, students are required to explain in their own opinion the extent to which utilizing the Atomic Bomb was justified. (I allow them to use their binders and notes during the in class essay.) The essay must be supported with details from the trial, classroom lessons, readings, etc... The essay is graded based on argumentation, organization, evidence, and word choice.
# POST WORLD WAR II MOCK TRIAL OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN

## Prosecution and Defense Teams

### PROSECUTION OF TRUMAN

1. Prosecuting Attorney (Prosecution)
2. Prosecuting Attorney (Prosecution)
3. Prosecuting Attorney (Prosecution)
4. Prosecuting Attorney (Prosecution)
5. Emperor Hirohito (Prosecution)
6. Stalin, USSR Party Boss (Prosecution)
8. Leo Szilard, Physicist of the Manhattan Project (Prosecution)
9. Citizen of Nagasaki (Prosecution)
10. Pilot of the Enola Gay (Prosecution)
11. Albert Einstein, Scientist (Prosecution)
12. Colonel Saburo Hayashi, Secretary to the Japanese War Minister (Prosecution)
13. Ralph E. Bard, Undersecretary of the Navy (Prosecution)
15. Japanese Emergency Relief Coordinator (Prosecution)
16. Japanese/American imprisoned in the Nisei Relocation Camps (Prosecution)
17. Adolf Hitler, German Dictator (Prosecution)
18. Otto Frisch author of the *Frisch- Peierls Memorandum*, (1940) (Prosecution)
19. Colonel Lyle E. Seeman, (Prosecution)
20. Father John A. Siemes, Professor of Philosophy, eyewitness in Hiroshima (Prosecution)
21. Chinese Chairman Mao Zedong (Prosecution)
22. Albert Camus, Author (Prosecution)

### DEFENSE OF TRUMAN

1. Defense Attorney (Defense)
2. Defense Attorney (Defense)
3. Defense Attorney (Defense)
4. Defense Attorney (Defense)
5. USA President Truman (Defense)
6. Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Sir Winston Churchill (Defense)
7. Machiavelli, Author of *the Prince* (Defense)
8. Widow of a U.S. Navy Officer from Pearl Harbor (Defense)
9. Former President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (Defense)
10. Harry Stimson, Secretary of War (Defense)
11. Leslie R. Groves, General in Charge of the Manhattan Project (Defense)
12. James F. Byrnes, Presidential Advisor (Defense)
13. Marshall, George Catlett, Commander for implementation of the Marshall Plan (Defense)
14. First Lady, Mrs. Harry S. Truman (Bess)
15. Karl Compton, Atomic Scientist (Defense)
16. Female Survivor of the Nanking Massacre (Defense)
17. Sir George Paget Thomson, Chairman MAUD Committee of the British Government (Defense)
18. Robert Oppenheimer, Scientist (Defense)
19. General Douglas MacArthur (Defense)
20. Japanese Admiral Matome Ugaki (Defense)
22. Kim Gu, President of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea (Defense)
23. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (Defense)
POST WORLD WAR II MOCK TRIAL OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN

Procedures

Charges:  President Truman is hereby charged with crimes against humanity.

Date of Mock Trial:  May 8, 1946

DIRECTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS:

1. _____ Research a wide range of information for your side. (You must create a detailed binder of all of your sources to assist you during the trial.) Your binder should include at least twenty sources.

2. _____ Maintain a detailed bibliography of your sources & include it in your binder. Use www.easybib.com to create your bibliography. (I will collect the binder after the trial.)

3. _____ Take notes from the videos, handouts, lectures, and class activities. (Save to include in your binder).

4. _____ Collaborate with your team of attorneys and witnesses to create an effective case-line and trial structure; what will your side prove during the trial? What arguments will you run in your case? How can the witnesses connect to your case?

5. _____ Divide the witnesses from your side among the attorneys.

6. _____ Work with each witness to help him/her to create questions and answers. (The witnesses must do the writing of the questions & answers, but you should review all questions and help with strategy.)

7. _____ Divide the witnesses from the other side among the attorneys.

8. _____ Complete more in-depth research of the witnesses from the other side.

9. _____ Prepare cross-examination questions for the witnesses. Remember, you must listen very carefully to each witness’s testimony and adjust your cross-examination accordingly. Be careful with asking questions for which you do not know the answer.

10. _____ Meet as a team of attorneys to decide upon the order that you will call your witnesses to the stand.

11. _____ Decide how to divide the introduction to the case… (6 minutes maximum) Make sure to pre-write and rehearse your speech.

12. _____ Decide how to divide the conclusion to the case… (3-5 minutes)

13. _____ Rehearse your lines and prepare to look professional.

14. _____ Dress professionally for your role on trial day in the theatre.

15. _____ Trial Follow-up: In a 60 minute in class essay, you will be asked to explain in your own opinion the extent to which utilizing the Atomic Bomb was justified. (You will be able to use your binders and your notes during the in class essay.)

16. _____ Hand-in your research binder and materials with essay.
DIRECTIONS FOR WITNESSES:

1. _____ Each witness must thoroughly research his/her character/subject and find at least six related sources: three sources must be primary sources and three must be secondary sources. Make sure to keep copies of all of your sources in a binder that you can use during the trial.

2. _____ Maintain a detailed bibliography of your sources & include it in your binder. Use www.easybib.com to create your bibliography. (I will collect the binder after the trial.)

3. _____ Annotate and take notes on all of the sources, even if the material is not necessarily directly related to your character. Organize your notes within your binder.

4. _____ Create a detailed character sketch for your witness: see ‘Character Sketch Worksheet’- Follow steps 1-3 on the character sketch worksheet.

5. _____ Take notes from the videos, handouts, lectures, and class activities. (Save to include in your binder.)

6. _____ Be able to introduce yourself to your team and explain how you can help your team with its case.

7. _____ Collaborate with your team of attorneys to help create an effective case-line and trial structure. You must understand what your side will try to prove during the trial. How will you connect to the overall case?

8. _____ Create 4-6 questions for your attorney to ask you while you are on the stand. Your questions must connect so that the jury makes a specific conclusion that directly relates to your side’s case-line.

9. _____ Create realistic and accurate responses to the questions that you created. Remember your responses must be based on reliable sources that you have obtained and have included in your binder.

10. _____ Discuss your questions with the lawyer who will be representing you so that you both can agree on the goals and direction of your testimony.

11. _____ Rehearse for the trial by predicting and practicing your answers to questions from the opposing side. Remember you are graded based on the “truthfulness” of your testimony; you goal and grade depends on your being true to your character, even if it means that the opposing side uses information from your past against you.

12. _____ Submit your 3-4 page essay responding to the following question: To what extent was utilizing the Atomic Bomb justified? The essay should be written from your character’s point of view, and include source citations. You must integrate your sources within your essay and cite the sources as footnotes or endnotes. All written work must be well supported with solid explanations, sources, and historical examples.

13. _____ Dress for the role on the day of the trial.

14. _____ Listen, take notes, and make detailed observations during the trial.

15. _____ Trial Follow-up: In a 60 minute in class essay, you will be asked to explain in your own opinion the extent to which utilizing the Atomic Bomb was justified. (You will be able to use your binders and your notes during the in class essay.)

16. _____ Hand-in binder and materials with essay.
POST WORLD WAR II MOCK TRIAL OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN
Assessment Outline

Part I Pre-Trial Expectations:

1. Attendance & work ethic during the Preparation Days, Research Days & Trial
   50 Points Total (Recorded under class work & approaches to learning.)

2. Binder: Research, sources, written notes from the DVDs, handouts & classroom activities.
   100 Points (Recorded under homework & approaches to learning.)
   -Minimum of six sources total: three primary sources & three secondary sources
   -Detailed bibliography using www.easybib.com

3. Character Sketch (Witnesses only) 30 Points under homework/class work. (Attorneys: Case outline)

4. Essay from your character’s perspective (Witnesses only): 50 Points under homework. (Attorneys: Introduction, CX Prep materials)

Part II Trial Day Assessment:

1. Testimony: Questions & Answers within the presentation (50 Points under Assessment Grade)

2. Testimony: Knowledge & Content within presentation (50 Points under the Assessment Grade)

3. Dress as your character (30 Points under Assessment grade)

4. Performance & Knowledge in Cross Examination (50 Points under Assessment grade)

Due Dates:

Introduction to the case………………… __________
Library Research: ……………………… __________
Character Sketch Due: ………………… __________
Introductions to your side:……………… __________
Work Day for prep on your side: ……… __________
Questions due to your attorney:……… __________
Work Day for prep on your side:……… __________
Final Binder Prep:……………………………… __________
Trial Date/s:……………………………… __________

In- class essay:……………………………… __________
Step #1

The basics… knowing the **general biography** of your character-

(This information is only for you to understand your character better; you will probably not use these details within your testimony, but they will help you to create your stage personality.

**Find the following information:**

- Name:
- Race/ gender:
- Date of birth and death:
- Place of birth and death:
- Nationality:
- Places where you lived:
- Your family - marriage, children:
- Occupation (s):
- Education:
- Religious background:
- Political affiliation:
- Status in the community:
- Physical description:
- Typical clothing/ outfit:
- Greatest Accomplishment:
Developing an Actor’s Character: The Self-Interview

Questions an Actor Can Ask His/Her Character to Get to Know Him/Her Better
By Diana Nygard

When you are given a character to play, you need to develop it. To do this, you need to probe into the character’s past, learning things about him/her to get to know him/her better so you can play him/her.

We can organize an interview between you and the character, in which you will be both the interviewer and the character answering the questions. Remember, the character is answering the questions, not the real life you.

Some questions can’t be asked of your particular character, so you may have to write your own appropriate questions. After you “get” the answers to your questions, think about who your character really is and see if you can “be” him/her.

You will probably not use all the information in the script you are using, but those little things in the back of your mind about the character will make him more real to yourself and to the audience.

Here are some sample questions. You can think of many more. Just choose the ones that you think will help you develop your character. Ignore any that don’t fit.

(Truman Trial- Answer at least eight of the following on a separate sheet of paper)

- What is your earliest memory?
- What sort of a child were you, when you were little?
- What is one action you regret?
- Did you feel that one or the other of your parents favored you over your brothers or sisters?
- Have you ever had a serious illness? What was it like?
- Why do you live where you live?
- Why did you pick your job?
- What was the happiest time of your life?
- What kind of things do you think are funny?
- What sort of person did you think your husband or wife was when you first met?
- Have you ever spoken any words of anger that you wish you could take back?
- What is your very favorite food?
- How do you spend your holidays?
- Where have you traveled in your life?
- Was there ever a time when you began to think that life might not turn out as well as you hoped it would?
- What makes you cry?
- Are you a vengeful, forgiving, or indifferent person?
- What were you doing last week?
- What was the best news you ever got?
- What was the worst news you ever got?
- What path in your life do you wish you could have found out where it lead?
- What choice in your life are you glad about?
- How did you meet the people you are with now?
- ...

...?
Sketch Idea 1: Solo

After asking yourself the "interview questions" above, create a short situation that you can improvise in a sketch by yourself. You will not show all the answers to the interview questions in your sketch. They are for your own reference for character development.

Sketch Idea 2: With a Partner

After asking yourself the "interview questions" above, create a short situation that you can improvise in a sketch with another person. Do not work out the script or action with your partner. Rather, quickly decide the situation between yourselves and begin. Each of you will already have privately answered your own interview questions. Do not share the answers with your partner. Remember - you will not reveal or demonstrate all the answers to the interview questions in your sketch. They are secret parts of your character that only you know - kind of like how real people are.

Source: Adapted from the following article:


Step #3- Complete the final Character Sketch in paragraph form.

- Describe yourself as a person, professional or leader.
- You should give a detailed description of yourself and your personality.
- The Character Sketch should be written in first person and must reflect the tone of your personality.

Download the form at the following address:

Writing a character sketch

In the box below are some adjectives that you might use to describe a person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>grumpy</th>
<th>wild</th>
<th>lively</th>
<th>unhappy</th>
<th>scruffy</th>
<th>stern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>funny</td>
<td>entertaining</td>
<td>loving</td>
<td>lazy</td>
<td>mischievous</td>
<td>kind</td>
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<td>sensible</td>
<td>honest</td>
<td>disorganized</td>
<td>tall</td>
<td>plump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fair</td>
<td>frightening</td>
<td>helpful</td>
<td>busy</td>
<td>talkative</td>
<td>friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quiet</td>
<td>reliable</td>
<td>cruel</td>
<td>interesting</td>
<td>sly</td>
<td>fickle</td>
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<td>weak</td>
<td>smart</td>
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<td>curious</td>
<td>bright</td>
<td>short</td>
<td>unsmiling</td>
<td>stubborn</td>
<td>stocky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>cowardly</td>
<td>brave</td>
<td>patient</td>
<td>irritable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Which words would you choose to describe your character? Why? Which words would you not use? Why? (Think of examples from the text to explain your choices)

2. Can you think of any more words or phrases to describe your character? Write them in the box below. Be prepared to say why you have chosen these words and phrases!

3. Your final task is to write your character sketch. You could write about

- his / her appearance
- his / her strengths and weaknesses
- his / her feelings and behaviour towards the other characters
- how the other characters feel about him / her
- his / her personality at the beginning of the story
- what happens to change his / her personality
- your own opinions about the character

Try to use examples from the text to back up your comments.
Writing a character sketch

Name of text

Name of character

Character sketch
Pre-Trial Vocabulary:  

Mock Trial

Prosecution Team

Defense Team

Defense

Plaintiff

Attorney

Witness

Testimony

Expert testimony

Case line of the Prosecution-

Case line of the Defense-

Opening statement-

Direct Examination-

Cross Examination-

Objection

Beyond a responsible doubt-

Fifth Amendment-

Burden of proof-
Truman Trial Final Check-List

Countdown to the Trial: 5 Days to go…

As a group, prosecution & defense teams separately, complete each of the following steps:
(The attorneys from each side of the case should lead the discussion.)

___ **Procedural Questions:** How will the trial proceed? 1st half of day Prosecution’s Case, Defense Cross Examination. 2nd half of the day Defense Case, Prosecution Cross Examination

___ **Attorney Procedures for Objections:** Under what grounds can you object?

___ **Case Line:** All witnesses must know and understand the case-line and how it connects to them as witnesses. What is the main thesis and basis for your case? This may involve multiple points, but should be strongly emphasized during the intro and should logically connect with each witness.

___ **Additional photographs of evidence must be submitted two days before the trial:** Bring them on a disc or USB Stick.

___ **Order of Presentation:** Attorneys present the order in which the witnesses will be called to the stand.

Meet with your individual attorneys and complete the following:

___ **Witness Prep:** Each witness must be able to explain how he/she connects to the case-line. What is he/she trying to prove through the testimony? Is the testimony effective?

___ **Witness Dress:** Explain how you will dress.

___ **Rehearse Questions:** Practice your questions with your attorney. As a group, predict what the other side will ask you, and practice responses.

___ **Binder prep:** Prepare all of your research and place in a well-ordered binder, so that you can bring it to the stand with you. You will hand this in at the end of the trial. It should include all of your materials, as well as a bibliography of all sources.

Witnesses, on your own, complete the following:

___ **Do you see any gaps in your research?** Try to find additional information to fill the gaps.

___ **Re-read the grading rubrics:** Re-read the grading rubrics and see where you stand. What do you still need to work on in order to get the grade you want?

___ **Memorize your responses:** Now practice… How will you act? How will you make your character even more convincing?

___ **Prepare your clothes:** Get your clothes ready days before the trial. You will dress for both days of the trial.

___ If you have additional time, assist the lawyers with research.

Attorneys complete the following together:

___ **Rehearse the opening statement with all witnesses:** Prepare to read the opening to your side.

___ **Do you see any gaps in your research?** Try to find additional information to fill the gaps.

___ **Re-read the grading rubric:** Re-read the grading rubric and see where you stand. What do you still need to work on in order to get the grade you want?

___ **Organize all materials:** Organize your materials in folders so that they are accessible to your team of lawyers.

___ **Discuss the Cross Examination Witnesses:** Discuss the key witnesses in cross-examination, and share your team’s plan for each witness. You should have several questions prepared for each cross-examination witness, but more importantly, you should have primary sources that can be used against them. Which witnesses are crucial to the case? Which ones can you pay less attention to? The most important thing is that you are prepared to listen carefully to the question, and apply what you hear to your cross-examination.
## MOCK TRIAL OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN

### Assessment Rubric

**Student’s Name:** _____________________  
**Character:** _____________________

Circle One: Prosecution / Defense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trial Witness/ Attorney Organization and Presentation Assessment</th>
<th>(50 Points Testimony/ 30 Points Dress &amp; Character)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **A+** | _Spoken expression is clear, concise, and effective._  
| **A** | _Costume is over the top & realistic, enhancing the audiences’ understanding of the character._  
| **A-** | _Student communicates information that is always relevant to the context of the trial._  
| **B+** | _Pre-prepared questions are confidently communicated with rare reference to notes._  
| **B** | _Spoken expression is clear._  
| **B-** | _Clothing is carefully and accurately prepared to portray the character._  
| **C+** | _Student communicates information that is mostly relevant to the context of the trial._  
| **C** | _Pre-prepared questions are communicated with occasional and limited use of notes._  
| **C-** | _Spoken expression is generally clear._  
| **D+** | _Costume is accurate, but does not significantly enhance understanding of the character._  
| **D** | _Student communicates information that is relevant to the audience and context of the trial._  
| **D-** | _Pre-prepared questions are communicated with frequent references to notes._  

**Knowledge and Content During the Testimony**  
(50 Points/ Assessment Grade)

| **A+** | _Student shows evidence of having analyzed 5 or more sources relevant to their character._  
| **A** | _An extensive range of relevant facts and examples are used in the questions and cross-examination. which show thorough understanding of the historical context of the trial._  
| **A-** | _Appropriate information is used to strongly support their character and the claims of the prosecution or defense._  
| **B+** | _Questions are well formulated to further the overall goals of your side._  
| **B** | _Student shows evidence of having analyzed 3 or more sources relevant to their character._  
| **B-** | _A range of relevant facts and examples are used in the questions and cross-examination which show understanding of the historical context of the trial._  
| **C+** | _Appropriate information is used to support their character and the claims of the prosecution or defense._  
| **C** | _Questions are formulated to contribute to the overall goals of your side._  
| **C-** | _Student shows evidence of having used 3 or more sources._  
| **D+** | _Relevant facts and examples are used in the questions and cross-examination which show general understanding of the historical context of the trial._  
| **D** | _Information is used to generally support their character and the claims of the prosecutor or defense._  
| **D-** | _Questions are relevant only to your specific character & do not further the overall goals of your side._  

Comments/ Notes:

Truman Trial Lesson Design: David Nelson, American Community Schools of Athens, Greece  
[www.classcoffee.com](http://www.classcoffee.com)  
Version Combo 9.0
## Cross Examination Performance during the Trial
### (50 Points/ Assessment Grade)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Provides exceptional and historically accurate witness testimony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Responds to questions quickly and decisively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Very convincing and emotional portrayal of historical personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exceptional detail and evidence applied from the witnesses’ research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Provides proficient and historically accurate witness testimony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Provides clear answers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Student effectively portrays the historical personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ample detail and evidence applied from the witnesses’ research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Witness testimony is mostly accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Witness requires some coaching or corrections by attorneys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>Student tries to get into character but presentation is largely flat and unemotional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfactory detail applied from the witnesses’ research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>Much of witness testimony is inaccurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Witness requires excessive coaching and is unprepared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>An unconvincing portrayal of the historical personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lacking details from the witnesses’ research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comments/ Notes:

### Truman Trial Binder Assessment
#### Research Component will be evaluated separately after the trial:

You must have a well-organized binder with all of your research, clearly annotated, and outlined. The research should demonstrate extensive preparation and an ability to think beyond your own character. The research should stretch your knowledge of the issues related to the entire trial.

100 Points Possible (Under homework & ATL)

- Minimum of Six Sources Total:
  - Three primary sources ______/20
  - Three secondary sources ______/20
  - Detailed bibliography using [www.easybib.com](http://www.easybib.com) ______/20
  - Notes from the DVDs, handouts & classroom activities. ______/20
  - Overall neatness and Organization ______/20

**Total:** ______/100
“Objections are used in courtroom procedure to prevent the introduction of prejudicial evidence, to insure a fair trial by excluding evidence that is irrelevant, speculative, violates legal privilege, or improperly impugns a defendant’s character. Objections are also used to expedite the trial and avoid a waste of the Court’s time by excluding needlessly cumulative evidence.

And, finally,

objections are used to protect witnesses from harassment, intimidation and misleading questions.”

— May It Please the Court

~

**Objection**: Act of objecting; that which is, or maybe, presented in opposition; an adverse reason or argument, a reason for objecting or opposing, a feeling of disapproval.

-Black's Law Dictionary
# Important Objections at a Glance

prepared by Eric Trivett, team member
South Gwinnett High School, Snellville

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Objection</th>
<th>Possible Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To the competency of a witness</td>
<td>Witness lacks personal knowledge (also see hearsay)</td>
<td>Witness saw, smelled, tasted, heard subject of testimony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the form of a question</td>
<td>Requests a narrative response</td>
<td>Break question down (ask permission to re-phrase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asked and Answered</td>
<td>Explain how the questions are different, if they are in fact different (or move on)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Argumentative/Vague</td>
<td>Re-phrase if necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assumes facts not in evidence</td>
<td>Explain when the fact was admitted, or ask permission to lay foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compound question</td>
<td>Break the question down (ask permission to re-phrase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leading (direct only)</td>
<td>Re-phrase as a non-leading question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Misquote (witness or exhibit)</td>
<td>Either argue that sufficient foundation has been laid (that the witness has knowledge), or lay the foundation for the witnesses knowledge about the testimony or exhibit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| To testimony/exhibits (substantive) | No foundation established | 1. Argue not hearsay: i.e. not out of court statement, not offered for the truth of the matter asserted (show state of mind, fact that words were uttered, etc.)
2. Find the exception! |
| | Hearsay | 1. Argue not hearsay: i.e. not out of court statement, not offered for the truth of the matter asserted (show state of mind, fact that words were uttered, etc.)
2. Find the exception! |
| | Irrelevant | Explain the relevance to prove/disprove the essential fact |
| | Opinion (without basis – expert) | Explain why/why not layman can/cannot testify to this |
| | Reading from document/exhibit not admitted into evidence | Move document into evidence |
| | Cross exceeds scope of direct; re-direct exceeds scope of cross | Explain how related to direct; "thorough and sifting cross examination" |
| | Improperly calls for character evidence | Find how rules let evidence in (see Rules 404; 602) |
| To testimony – Move to strike | Testimony improperly relates to character evidence | Find how rules let evidence in (see Rules 404; 602) |
| | Witness has lapsed into a non-responsive answer | Witness may give a full response to the question in own words (on cross, should give yes/no and then may give a brief explanation). |
| | Witness has lapsed into a hearsay response | Respond as above (hearsay) |
1. IMMATERIAL

I object on the ground that the question calls for an immaterial answer.

Evidence having slight relevancy is immaterial. Evidence that is relevant but has little or no probative value and is therefore immaterial.

2. ARGUMENTATIVE

I object on the ground that the question is argumentative.

When the purpose of the question is to persuade the trier of fact rather than to elicit information. Questions which call for an argument in answer to an argument contained in the question. Questions which call for no new facts, but only asks the witness to agree to conclusions drawn by the questioner.

The court, in its discretion, can allow argumentative questions on cross-examination.

3. ASKED AND ANSWERED

I object on the ground that the witness has already answered that question.

This objection is a form of the immateriality objection in that it attempts to prevent a waste of time by unnecessary repetition and to avoid giving evidence undue emphasis.

4. AMBIGUOUS AND UNINTELLIGIBLE

I object on the ground that the question is ambiguous (or unintelligible,) in ...........

Questions which are equivocal, uncertain; capable of being understood in to or more possible senses.

5. COMPOUND QUESTION

I object on the ground that the question is compound and calls for one answer to two different questions.

The compound question confuses the jury because it will be uncertain as to whether the answer is to one on the compound parts or to both parts.

6. IMPEACHMENT

I object, this is an attempt to impeach the witness is improper because ......

Prior contradictory statements, interest of the witness, bias, conviction of a felony, relationship, poor character for honesty or veracity, lack of opportunity to observe are some of the ways in which a witness may be impeached, but the form of the question must be articulated in such a way as to comply with the rules of evidence.

7. INCOMPETENT

I object on the ground that this person is incompetent to be a witness because she has no personal knowledge concerning the matter.

I object on the ground that this person is incompetent to be a witness because there has been no foundation laid showing ......

I object on the ground that this person lacks the mental competency (because of age, infancy, insanity) to testify as to the matter.

8. IRRELEVANT

I object on the ground that the question calls for an irrelevant answer.

Evidence which influences the issues, having probative value in proving a fact; that which tends to render probable a certain inference important in the case is relevant. Any evidence which does not perform these functions is irrelevant. A matter of logic and experience. All evidence must be relevant.
9. LEADING QUESTIONS

I object on the ground that the question is leading.

A question that suggests the answer is leading. (test: Whether a reasonable person would get the impression that the examiner desires one answer rather than another.)

Permissible Leading Questions:

To refresh recollection: Hazy recollection goes to the weight of the testimony, not its admissibility.

Hostile Witness: Where party has to call a hostile witness.

Cross-Examination: Leading questions are allowed on cross-examination, unless it can be shown that the witness is biased in favor of the cross-examiner.

10. MISQUOTING A WITNESS

I object on the ground that counsel is misquoting the witness. What the witness stated was .........

11. NARRATIVE ANSWER (QUESTION IS TOO GENERAL)

I object on the ground that the question calls for a narrative answer (or, is too general).

This objection is in the nature of an "irrelevance" objection in that a question inviting a narrative answer or that is too broad, general or indefinite and allows the witness to inject irrelevant and otherwise inadmissible matter (such as incompetent evidence where no proper foundation has been laid). Each question should limit the witness to a specific answer.

12. OPINION TESTIMONY

I object on the ground that: (a) question calls for an, inadmissible opinion; (b) a sufficient foundation has not been laid showing that the witness is qualified as an expert; (c) not a proper subject for expert testimony; (f) the witness is basing her opinion on improper matter.

Basically, inadmissible opinion evidence is incompetent evidence (lack of sufficient foundation). (The objection to the effect that the answer would invade the province of the trier of fact or calls for an opinion on an ultimate fact is obsolete.)

13. PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS

I object, the question calls for disclosure of a privileged communication between (attorney, psychiatrist, psychologist, priest, wife, husband) and on behalf of ________, I assert that privilege.

Communications in the course of protected relationships are presumed to be confidential.

14. SPECULATION

I object on the ground that the question calls for speculation, by the witness.

A witness may testify to facts based on his or her own personal knowledge or, in some instances, the witness may give an opinion. The witness may not base an answer, in any event, on speculation.

15. HEARSAY

I object on the ground that the question calls for hearsay.

Hearsay is testimony as to what someone said, other than while testifying in court (an extra-judicial statement), offered as proof of the truth of the matter asserted. As a general rule hearsay statements are not admissible unless the statement is within one of the recognized exceptions.

16. ASSUMING FACTS NOT IN EVIDENCE

I object on the ground that the question assumes a fact not in evidence.

A question that assumes unproved facts to be true is objectionable as it seeks to bring before the trier of fact facts that have not been proved and may not be true. Further, such a question attempts to trap a witness into impliedly affirming the truth of the assumed fact without, in many cases, the witness meaning to affirm that fact.

MOCK TRIAL OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN
SELF/ TEAM EVALUATION

Name: _________________________ Character: ____________________________

Prosecution___ / Defense___

1. What was the **greatest challenge** for you in completing this project? How did you overcome it? How would you overcome it better next time? Explain.

2. With regard to the **process** of preparing for the Trial, what did you do especially well to assist in the group’s success? Explain and be specific.

3. With regard to the **process** of preparing for the trial, what could you and your group have done differently to be better prepared? Explain and be specific.

4. With regard to **content and argumentation**, what would you have changed to increase the effectiveness of your character in the trial?
5. Complete the following prompts and explain your thoughts:

   a. This activity helped me to realize that....

   b. In the court setting, it was interesting how....

   c. Based on the decision of the Jury, I feel....

6. The person on my side whom I would most like to thank is _____________________
   because ____________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

Other comments, feelings or suggestions:
Date of Event:

Title of Event: Combo Class- Mock Truman Trial Enactment

RE: Work-order for Theatre Set-up & Equipment

Contacts: Email:

Needs:

- (a) Podium- stage center
- (b) Microphone at the podium
- (c) Two large rectangular tables (one on each side of the stage)
- (d) Two table microphones (we will set up tables on both sides of the stage.)
- (e) Wooden platforms to elevate the judges’ table and chair.
- (f) One table microphone, center stage, at judges table.
- (g) One portable microphone with stand, center stage front.
- (h) Screen Projection ability from laptop on stage.
- (i) Wiring for sound projection from the same laptop that will be on-stage.
- (j) 8-10 Black clothes to create the courtroom on stage (All furniture will be covered in black.)
- Students will dress in the changing rooms backstage (8:45-9:15)
- (k) Nine black wooden chairs.
- (m) One stool (n) Two small tables

Stage Set-up:

![Diagram of stage set-up with labels for Audience, Stage Right, Defense, Stage Left, Prosecution, Front Four Rows, and Audience: Stage Center Front two rows- Jury Members]
On behalf of President Truman and the ACS Combo, THANK YOU for your support!

By the way.... The Combo Class of 2010 has found me guilty/innocent of the charges! I am appealing in 2011!

ACS Academy
COMBO!
Integrated 10th Grade Honors Class Nelson/ Papatassos

HARRY S. TRUMAN
The 33rd U.S. President
1945–1953
On behalf of President Truman and our class, THANK YOU for your support!

By the way…. Our class has found me __________ of the charges! I am appealing next year!
Mock Trial of President Truman

The Verdict is in.....

What did you think?

Send ideas, adjustments, sources, and critiques so that I can improve the website for everyone who may use this model.

Send email to: trial@classcoffee.com