

Trials of the Centuries

Purpose

- To understand the role of the individuals and their impact on history
- To understand the complexity and multiplicity of the cause/effect relationships in history.
- To role play and defend a point of view
- To use historical data for arguments, defend them and convince others of the viewpoint.

Process

1. This activity will take the form of a mock trial
2. Each trial will consist of:
 - a) 4 attorneys: 2 prosecution and 2 defence
 - b) 4 witnesses: 2 for the prosecution and 2 for the defence
 - c) judges
 - d) the remainder of the class will be the Jury
3. Students will sign up to participate in the trials and will decide amongst themselves who will represent prosecution attorneys, defence attorneys, witnesses, and judges
4. Role playing an attorney is mandatory. Students will have the opportunity to role play a witness or judge at least once.

The Trial

1. The Judge addresses the court, announcing the rules of procedure and setting the tone, establishing the purpose of the trial.
2. An Attorney for the Prosecution presents an Opening Statement to the Court (3 mins.)
3. An Attorney for the Defence presents an Opening Statement to the Court (3 mins.)
4. The Prosecution calls its witnesses; each witness is questioned by the Attorneys for both parties (4-5 mins per Attorney).
5. The Defence calls its witnesses; each witness is questioned by the Attorneys for both parties (4-5 mins per Attorney).
6. An Attorney for the prosecution presents a closing statement to the court (3 mins.)
7. An Attorney for the prosecution presents a closing statement to the court (3 mins.)
8. Clarification questions from the jury (5 mins)
9. Jury meets to establish verdict based on EVIDENCE presented during the trial.
10. Judge presents the Verdict at the end of the class.