

Scopes Mock Trial: Should evolution be taught?

Introduction: Students will prepare for a mock trial to decide this question: Should evolution be taught in the classroom?

Part I: Using the sites below, students should review the basics of Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution. Each group should write a one-page, 3-paragraph summary essay about the theory. For the thesis statement in your introductory paragraph, you can comment in the third person about whether evolution is a viable theory and should be taught in the classroom! For the body paragraph, the essays should include explanations of the formation of gradual change in species over time due to natural selection, the evidence Darwin used to develop and support his theory, how the theory relates to the fossil record. Conclude about the theory's place in school curriculums today.

The following Web sites may be used:

[Charles Darwin](http://www.bena.com/lucidcafe/library/96feb/darwin.html)

<http://www.bena.com/lucidcafe/library/96feb/darwin.html>

[Royal Tyrrell Museum Tour: Evolution](http://tyrrell.magtech.ab.ca/tour/evoltion.html) <http://tyrrell.magtech.ab.ca/tour/evoltion.html>

[BBC Evolution Web site: Darwin -- The Man and His Legacy](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/darwin/leghist/desmond.htm)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/darwin/leghist/desmond.htm>

[The Origin of the Species](http://www.literature.org/Works/Charles-Darwin/origin/)

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***We will spend a class period with the research and another with the writing.**

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DUE IN 20 MINUTES!!!

Part II. What was fundamentalism and why was it opposed to Darwin's theory of evolution?

Directions: You and your group will read the article titled "People & Events: Fundamentalism and the Social Gospel" and quotes from "The Scopes Trial" and answer the accompanying questions for each.

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15 minutes!!! Afterwards, we choose trial roles!

Part III: All groups will look at the following Web site that deals with the infamous Scopes "Monkey Trial" of 1925, in which famed lawyer Clarence Darrow defended a Tennessee biology teacher charged with teaching Darwin's theory.

[Scopes Trial Home Page](http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/scopes.htm)

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/scopes.htm>

Use the following chart to summarize each side of the trial:

Defense attorney Clarence Darrow's arguments for teacher John Scopes: Why evolution can be taught in the classroom.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Prosecutor William Jennings Bryant's arguments against teacher John Scopes: Why evolution cannot be taught.

1.

2.

3.

4.

The Mock Trial—What we need:

Part IV. We will stage a mock trial in the classroom, having students role-play Darrow, Scopes, Bryan, the media, the judge and jury. Here's what we need, depending on the number of students in the class:

1-3 judges

1-2 attorneys for the defense (Darrow)

1 person for teacher John Scopes (maybe me?)

1-2 attorneys for the prosecution (Bryan)

1 media person (to operate the camera and report on events)

1 sketch artist (Sketch the trial!)

3-12 jury members

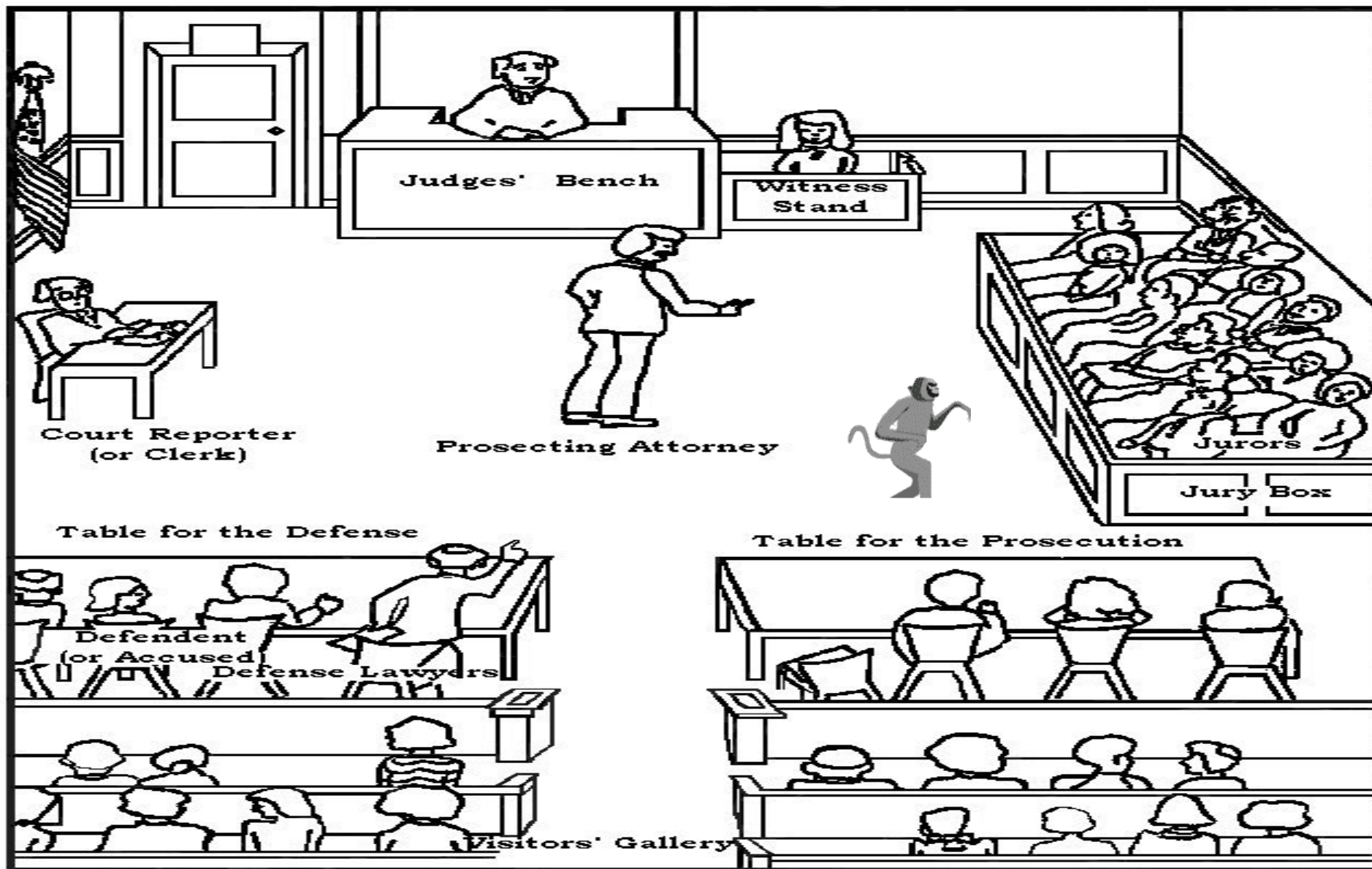
1 bailiff (optional)



TRIAL PREPARATION: "I must see your completed work by the last 10 minutes of the period!" See the requirements for your group, below:

- **Warm Up--Everyone:** Reread through your materials on the Scopes case and explore the following website: The [Scopes Trial Home Page](http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/scopes.htm) at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/scopes.htm>
- **Then...**
- **Judges:** You must master court trial procedure and direct every step of the trial! You are in charge! In addition, if an attorney cries "objection!" you must decide to "sustained" (agree with the objection) or "overruled" (disagree with the objection). Prepare a two-column chart, one column with 10 fact-based questions for the defense, the other column with 10 fact-based questions for the prosecution. Which ever side answers your questions best the trial, should win the case.
- **Prosecution Team:** Prepare opening statement, 10 good arguments with evidence, fact-based questions for witnesses, closing statement.
- **Defense Team:** Prepare opening statement, 10 good arguments with evidence, fact-based questions for witnesses, closing statement.
- **Witnesses:** Become a master of your role in the trial. If you are Scopes, you must KNOW him and how he would respond to questions. You must provide factual answers! Develop 10 facts about how Scopes feels and why, especially concerning his own defense.
- **Jury:** Review the grading rubric for the court trial. Prepare a two-column chart, one column with 10 fact-based arguments for the defense, the other column with 10 fact-based arguments for the prosecution. You should expect to see some of the these arguments presented during the trial. You will unanimously reach a verdict towards the end of the trial.

The Scopes Monkey Trial will start in 5 minutes!!! Get set up and ready!



This is an approximation of what a courtroom looks like during a jury trial.

*Source: Elementary Law Related Activities. A joint project of: The Devils Lake Public Schools, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, State Bar Association of North Dakota, and North Dakota Combined Law Enforcement Council 1978.

Simplified Steps in a Trial:

1. Calling of Case by Bailiff: "All rise. The Court of _____ is now in session. Honorable Judge _____ presiding.
2. Opening Statement: First the prosecutor (criminal case) or plaintiff's attorney (civil case), then the defendant's attorney, explain what their evidence will be and what they will try to prove.
3. Prosecution's or Plaintiff's Case: Witnesses are called to testify (direct examination) and other physical evidence is introduced. Each witness called is cross-examined '(questioned so as to break down the story or be discredited) by the defense.
4. Defendant's Case: Same as the third step except that defense calls witnesses for direct examination; cross-examination by prosecution/plaintiff.
5. Closing Statement: An attorney for each side reviews the evidence presented and asks for a decision in his/her favor.
6. Jury Instructions (Jury Trials Only): The Judge explains to the jury appropriate rules of law that it is to consider in weighing the evidence. As a general rule, the prosecution (or the plaintiff in a civil case) must meet the burden of proof in order to prevail. In a criminal case this burden is very high. In order for the accused? Are some parts of the trial more important than others? Would you trust a jury of your peers to determine your guilt or innocence? Students should also explore their reactions to playing attorneys, witnesses, jurors, and the judge. What roles do each play in the trial process?