

Unit 5, Lesson 11: Massachusetts Bay and Mock Trial of Mary Dyer

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students will engage in a scripted mock trial of Mary Dyer to draw conclusions about her guilt/innocence and whether the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay were hypocrites. This lesson requires thoughtful pre-planning that involves assigning students to play roles in the scripted mock trial.

Delaware Content Standards

- **History Standard 1, 4-5 [Chronology]:** Students will study historical events and persons within a given time frame in order to create a chronology and identify related cause-effect factors.
- **History Standard 2a, 4-5 [Analysis]:** Students will draw historical conclusions and construct historical accounts from primary and secondary source materials
- **History Standard 2b, 4-5 [Analysis]:** Students will examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; chronologically arrange them; and analyze change over time.
- **History Standard 3, 4-5 [Interpretation]:** Students will explain why historical accounts [conclusions] of the same event sometimes differ and relate this explanation to the evidence presented or the point-of-view of the author.
- **History Standard 4, 4-5 [Content]:** Students will develop an understanding of selected themes in United States history, including...important people in American history

Big Ideas: cause, effect, change over time,

Essential Question:

- Why might there be different conclusions drawn about the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay?

Enduring Understandings:

Conclusions about what happened in the past must be supported by evidence. People might draw different conclusions because they used different evidence to support their conclusions.

Resources:

- [Google Slides](#)
- [Resource 1: Inferring Vocabulary in Context](#)
- [Resource 2: Background - The Story of Mary Dyer](#)
- [Resource 3: Checks for Understanding](#)
- [Resource 4: Script - Mock Trial of Mary Dyer](#)
- [Resource 5: Role Assignments](#)
- [Resource 6: Drawing Conclusions](#)
- [Resource 7: Post Trial Reading - What Happened to Mary Dyer](#)

Procedures:

Pre-Planning

The scripted mock trial requires students to play roles. They are provided scripts for the roles to be played. Prior to the day of implementing the lesson, you will need to assign the roles to students and provide them with the relevant scripts. The 18 roles and scripts are provided in [Resource 4](#). The teacher may want to play the role of the judge.

You may want to give students some class time to work in attorney-witness groups to rehearse for their parts.

Students without roles can play the role of jurors. You may want to invite parents or other school personnel to be jurors as well.

1. **Introduce the Lesson:** Tell students that, in this lesson, they will engage in a scripted mock trial to learn about a famous woman in American history and to draw conclusions about her and the people (Puritans) who settled the Massachusetts Bay colony.
2. **Development Vocabulary in Context:** Distribute copies of [Resource 1](#) to students. This involves completing a “ReaDiWrite” (Read, Discuss, Write). Have students read the paragraph and try to determine the meaning of the word hypocrite from the context of the paragraph.
 - a. Hypocrite - a person who does the opposite of what (contradicts) he or she believes
3. **Present the Essential Question:** Were the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay hypocrites?
4. **Building Content Knowledge:** Distribute copies of [Resource 2: The Story of Mary Dyer](#). Read aloud with students as they follow along. There are “Pause” points in the reading where students will be asked to underline or highlight sections of the text (reading) that provide important information for the scripted mock trial of Mary Dyer.
5. **Checks for Understanding:** Distribute copies of [Resource 3](#). Have students answer the questions.
6. **Roles:** [Resource 4](#) (page 2) describes the charges against the defendant Mary Dyer and the roles for the mock trial. Use [Resource 5](#) to insert the names of students who will play the various roles.
7. **Explain Steps in a Mock Trial:** [Resource 4](#) (page 3) explains the steps in a Mock Trial.
8. **Preparing and Rehearsing:** put students in groups that allow them to rehearse for the mock trial. Groups should consist of...
 - a. a witness
 - b. attorney who will do direct examination of that witness
 - c. attorney who will do cross-examination of that witness
9. **Conduct the Scripted Mock Trial:** [Resource 4](#) (pages 4-13)
10. **Draw Conclusions:** Distribute copies of [Resource 6](#). Students are now asked to draw evidence supported conclusions for two questions:
 - a. Was Mary Dyer guilty or not guilty?
 - b. Were the Puritans who settled Massachusetts Bay hypocrites?
 - c. Let the jury announce its verdict. Poll the participants in the scripted mock trial - do they find Mary Dyer guilty or not guilty?
 - d. Pose the following questions for discussion: Was Mary Dyer guilty? Were the Puritan laws guilty? Or were both guilty?
11. **Reveal the Outcomes and Effects:** see [Resource 7](#). The information on this paper can be read by students or presented orally as a “mini lecture” debrief by the teacher.

12. **Explaining Competing Accounts:** the lesson offers an opportunity for you to reinforce students' understanding of why there might be different accounts of the same event. Present students with the two "accounts" below then have them discuss how evidence or point of view might have led to the different accounts [e.g., the authors use different evidence - the laws of Massachusetts Bay versus the actions of Mary Dyer].

<p>Account 1</p> <p>Mary Dyer was a victim of cruel and unjust laws passed by the Puritans. They left England for religious freedom then denied it to people like Mary.</p>	<p>Account 2</p> <p>Mary Dyer was a victim of her own actions. The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay showed her mercy twice and even let her go after they executed two other Quakers for doing the same thing.</p>
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Optional Video: A one minute video about Mary Dyer is available [here](#)

