



Lady Justice
The Scales of Justice



No David!

Teacher Notes: Please use these ideas as they relate to the developmental level of your own students, and as needed for your own area of study. A **handout** accompanies this learning activity, giving students the opportunity to write reasons for guilt or innocence of David.

Objectives:

1) Students will understand that the **Rule of Law** means that when problems happen, we must apply the rules fairly to everyone.

2) In the community, if people go to court to solve problems, the laws (written by the Constitution) must be followed.

1. Ask students what the word “justice” means.

Fairness, Impartial (point out the root word, partial), using the rules to decide if a law has been broken, The Rule of law. *This is why Lady Justice is blindfolded ~when there is a disagreement between people, she doesn't make decisions because someone is her friend, or not her friend, or because they are troublemakers...she uses her scales to make decisions.*

2. Ask what they think the scales of justice represent or means.

The scales of justice are about fairness in court cases. There are two sides to every story, and each side of a case or a story must be heard. Each side gets the chance to present “evidence”, or the details about the case.

Lady Justice carefully “weighs” the claims of each side, using the **scales** of justice handout.



3. Tell students that they will have the chance to be “jury” members, just as if they were in court, to decide whether David is guilty or not guilty of the crime of theft. *A jury is a group of people from the community who help make decisions at court trials; it is both a right and a responsibility for everyone to participate in the jury system so that our judicial branch can operate fairly.*

4. Ask students to recall the facts and details of the case and include them on their own Scale of Justice (handout). Students should be sure to present evidence for both sides of the scale. (K and 1 students may want to discuss and do whole group, or dictate their words for the teacher or volunteer helper.) They may also draw to express their “facts” about what happened in the case.

5. After discussing the facts on both sides of the case, students may vote as jury members (by a show of hands) on the “guilty” or “not guilty” verdict for David.

**Common Core State Anchor Standards For Reading
related to this learning activity:**

*Note: Each grade level has specific standards under these headings appropriate to the developmental level of their students:

Key Ideas and Details

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the quantitatively, as well as in words.

**Common Core State Anchor Standards in Speaking and Listening
related to this learning activity:**

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

***Common Core State Anchor Standards in Writing related to this
learning activity:**

Text Types and Purpose

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

**California History Social Science Standards related to Civics and
this learning activity:**

Kindergarten

Learning and Working Now and Long Ago

- K.1 Students understand that being a good citizen involves acting in certain ways.**
1. Follow rules, such as sharing and taking turns, and know the consequences of breaking them.
- K.2 Students recognize national and state symbols and icons such as the national and state flags, the bald eagle, and the Statue of Liberty. (Lady Liberty, Scales of Justice)**

First Grade

A Child's Place in Time and Space

- 1.1 Students describe the rights and individual responsibilities of citizenship.**
1. Understand the rule-making process in a direct democracy (everyone votes on the rules) and in a representative democracy (an elected group of people make the rules), giving examples of both systems in their classroom, school, and community.

Second Grade

People Who Make a Difference

- 2.3 Students explain governmental institutions and practices in the United States and other countries.**
1. Explain how the United States and other countries make laws, carry out laws, determine whether laws have been violated, and punish wrongdoers.

Third Grade

Continuity and Change

- 3.4 Students understand the role of rules and laws in our daily lives and the basic structure of the U.S. government.**
1. Determine the reason for rules, laws, and the U.S. Constitution; the role of citizenship in the promotion of rules and laws; and the consequences for people who violate rules and laws.

2. Discuss the importance of public virtue and the role of citizens, including how to participate in classroom, in the community, and in civic life.
3. Know the histories of important local and national landmarks, symbols, and essential documents that create a sense of community among citizens and exemplify cherished ideals (e.g., the U.S. flag, the bald eagle, the Statue of Liberty, the U.S. Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the U.S. Capitol). (Lady Liberty, Scales of Justice)
4. Understand the three branches of government, with an emphasis on local government.

Fourth Grade

California the Changing State

4.5 Students understand the structures, functions, and powers of the local, state, and federal governments as described in the U.S. Constitution.

1. Discuss what the U.S. Constitution is and why it is important (i.e., a written document that defines the structure and purpose of the U.S. government and describes the shared powers of federal, state, and local governments.)
2. Understand the purpose of the California Constitution, its key principles, and its relationship to the U.S. Constitution.
3. Describe the similarities (e.g. written documents, rule of law, consent of the governed, three separate branches) and differences (e.g. scope of jurisdiction, limits on government powers, use of the military) among federal state and local governments.

Fifth Grade

United States History and Geography: Making a New Nation

5.7 Students describe the people and events associated with the development of the U.S. Constitution and analyze the Constitution's significance as the foundation of the American republic.

1. Discuss the meaning of the American creed that calls on citizens to safeguard the liberty of individual Americans within a unified nation, to respect the rule of law, and to preserve the Constitution.