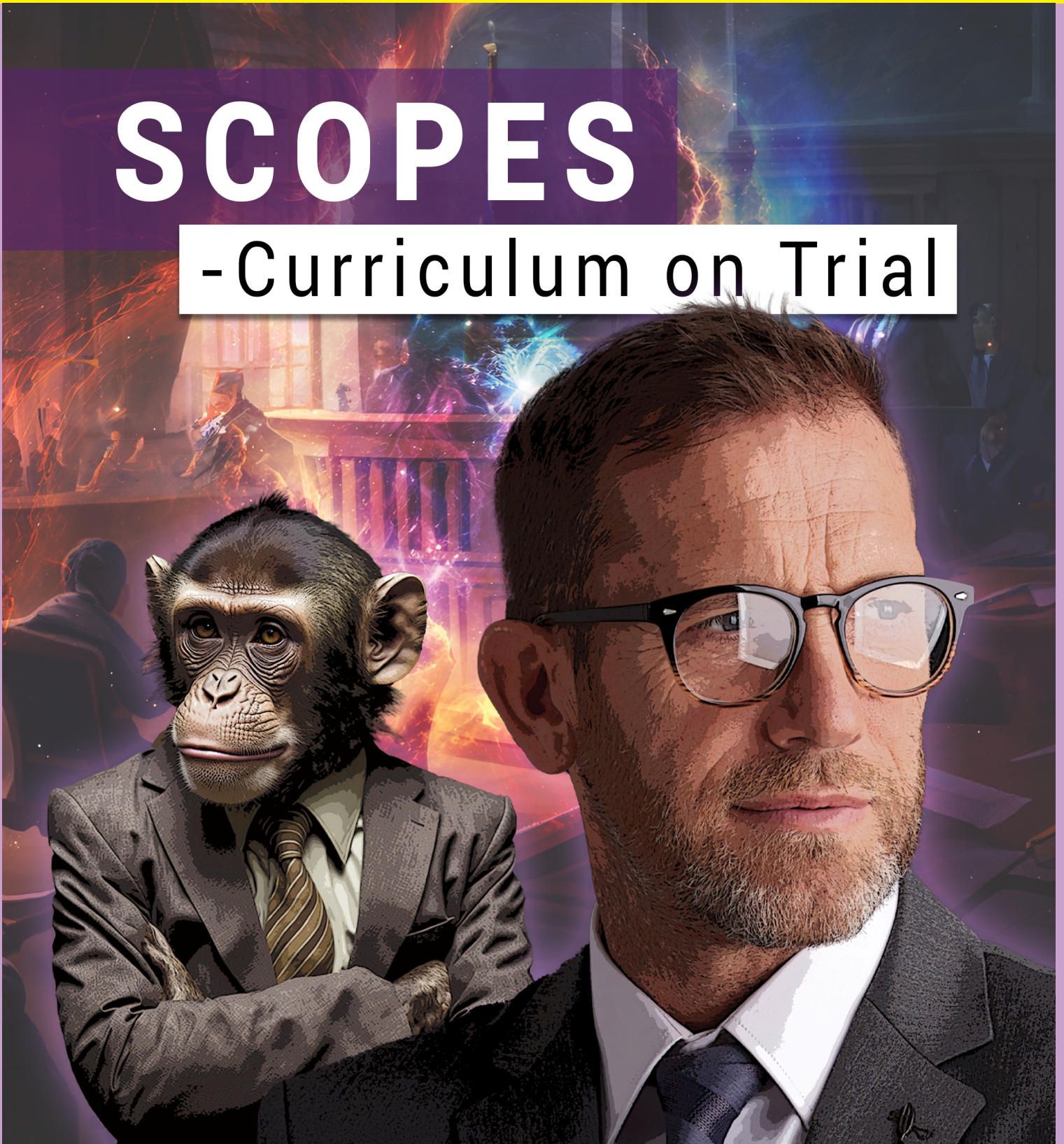


Teacher's Guide

SCOPES

-Curriculum on Trial



Phone: (888) 242-0563
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Scopes - *Curriculum on Trial* Teacher's Guide

<u>Suggested Lesson Plan</u>	2
<u>Preview Questions</u>	3
<u>Key Terms</u>	4
<u>Viewing Guide</u>	5
<u>Viewing Guide Answer Key</u>	6
<u>Discussion Questions</u>	7
<u>Comprehension Quiz</u>	8
<u>Quiz Answer Key</u>	10
<u>Activity: Who Chooses? Who Benefits? Who Pays? What's Fair?</u>	11
<u>Enrichment and Integration Activities</u>	12
<u>Individual Rights vs. Majority Rules Lesson Plan</u>	14
<u>Is Scientific Research Free Speech? Lesson Plan</u>	17
<u>Academic Freedom Guidelines & Best Practices</u>	19
<u>Socratic Seminar Guidelines & Rubric</u>	21
<u>The Socratic Questioning Technique</u>	22
<u>The Philosophical Chair</u>	24

Scopes - *Curriculum on Trial*

Suggested Lesson Plan

These materials may be used in a variety of ways. For maximum benefit, we suggest the following lesson plan:

- As a class, discuss the Preview Questions OR you might assign one of the Preview Questions as an opening journal activity, then discuss.
- Distribute copies of the Viewing Guide for students to use as a note-taking tool during the video.
- Play the video, pausing if needed to facilitate understanding and note-taking.
- Review and discuss the answers to the Viewing Guide using the Answer Key as a guide.
- Use [Discussion Questions](#) to spark class discussion or assign these questions as homework. Feel free to pick and choose among the questions.
- Administer and grade the [quiz](#) using the Answer Key as a guide or use the online quiz version for immediate, autoscored feedback. (Students should log in to izzit.org as a student using your CLASS CODE – found on the MY ACCOUNT page – to take the online quiz.)

Scopes - *Curriculum on Trial*

Preview Questions

(These are meant to be read aloud by the teacher prior to viewing the video)

1. What does freedom of speech mean to you?
2. How does a community establish values and social norms?
3. Should the government control what is taught in public schools? Why or why not? Who *should* control what is taught in public schools? Why do you think that? What about private schools? Who should decide what is taught in them?
4. What role does the Supreme Court have in protecting the rights of citizens?

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial

Key Terms

ACLU - (American Civil Liberties Union) An American nonprofit organization founded in 1920 "to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to every person in this country by the Constitution and laws of the United States."

Appeal - To apply to a higher court for a reversal of the decision of a lower court OR to make a serious or urgent request, typically to the public

Butler Act - A law in Tennessee banning the teaching of evolution in public schools

Civil Liberties - Individual rights protected by law from unjust governmental or other interference

Civil Rights - The rights of citizens to political and social freedom and equality

Creationism - The belief that the universe and the various forms of life were created by God out of nothing

Curriculum - The lessons and academic content taught in a school

Establishment clause - Prohibits the government from establishing a religion

Freedom of religion - The right to practice or not practice whatever religion one chooses

Fundamentalism – A form of religion that believes in strict, literal interpretation of scriptures, be that the Bible, Quran, or other scripture

Fundamentalist - A person who believes in the strict, literal interpretation of their holy book/ scriptures and adherence to the rules set down in it

Indicted - Formally accused of or charged with a serious crime

Institution - An established law, practice, or custom

Legal - Established by or founded upon law or official rules

Mass media - Instruments for communicating with large numbers of people (radio, newspaper, magazines, tv).

Misdemeanor - A minor crime, punishable by a fine or a light jail term

Modernist - A person who believes in adapted, updated versions of traditional beliefs

Orator - A skilled public speaker

Scopes Trial - The trial of teacher John Scopes of Dayton, Tennessee, for the teaching of evolution in a public school. During this trial, attorneys Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan squared off on the teachings of Darwin versus the teachings of the Bible.

Theory of Evolution - The idea that organisms change and adapt over time into forms that are more beneficial for their survival.

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial Viewing Guide

Student Name: _____

1. John Scopes was on trial for teaching _____.
2. The Scopes trial took place in _____, _____.
3. The “Roaring 20s” were a time of _____.
4. The _____ was passed in Tennessee and made it illegal to teach the Theory of Evolution in a publicly funded institution.
5. The Tennessee legislation made it a _____ to teach anything other than creationism.
6. The _____ was a new institution that challenged the Butler Act as a violation of _____.
7. _____ was chosen to serve as the defendant represented by the ACLU challenging the Butler Act.
8. _____ served as the defense attorney.
9. _____ led the prosecution.
10. The trial became known as _____ vs. _____.
11. John Scopes was found _____.
12. The Butler Act was in effect for _____ decades.
13. _____ was the next teacher willing to challenge the constitutionality of evolution laws.
14. The Supreme court ruled that the evolution laws violated the _____ Clause.
15. The Establishment Clause prevents the government from favoring one _____ over another.

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial Viewing Guide Answer Key

1. Theory of Evolution
2. Dayton, Tennessee
3. great change
4. Butler Act
5. misdemeanor
6. ACLU, Freedom of Speech
7. John Scopes
8. Clarence Darrow
9. Williams Jennings Bryan
10. science vs. religion
11. guilty
12. four
13. Susan Epperson
14. Establishment
15. religion

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the Scopes trial take place? Why was it controversial?
2. Who were William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow? Why did they decide to take part in the trial?
3. Some people argue that neither side won the Scopes trial. Do you agree or disagree? Support your opinion.
4. What was the Epperson case about? Do you agree with the decision? Justify your answer.
5. What is the Establishment Clause? Why is it important? How does the Establishment Clause impact legislation?
6. What is the ACLU? What role does it play today? Do we need this group today? Why or why not?
7. What role does religion play in society? How much influence should religion have on laws? Support your opinion.
8. What is a curriculum? Who should decide what is included in a curriculum? Why is this important?
9. What is the role of public education in society? Why is this important? Is it important that there are options (choices) in education? Why or why not?
10. Do you think the outcome of the Scopes Trial be the same if it were tried today? Why or why not?

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial Comprehension Quiz

Name _____

1. The Butler Act of 1925 made it illegal to _____.
 - a. teach the Bible in TN schools
 - b. desegregate schools
 - c. teach evolution in TN schools
 - d. teach science in TN schools

2. A fundamentalist is someone who _____.
 - a. believes that science is the best way to understand the world
 - b. believes that the Bible is not true
 - c. believes that the Bible is open to interpretation
 - d. believes that the Bible should be taken literally

3. What does ACLU stand for?
 - a. American Civil Liberties Union
 - b. Anti-Constitutional Law Union
 - c. American Constitutional Law Union
 - d. American Constitutional Liberty Union

4. Who was the defense attorney for the Scopes Trial?
 - a. John Scopes
 - b. Williams Jennings Bryan
 - c. Charles Darwin
 - d. Clarence Darrow

5. What Supreme Court case in 1968 successfully challenged anti-evolution laws?
 - a. Epperson v. Arkansas
 - b. McLean v. Arkansas
 - c. Edwards v. Aguillard
 - d. Everson v. Board of Education

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial

6. What is evolution?
 - a. The process by which scientists complete their research
 - b. The process by which hypotheses are made
 - c. The process by which religion is taught
 - d. The process by which organisms have adapted and changed over time
7. What was the primary conflict addressed in the Scopes trial?
 - a. Education v. Church
 - b. Faith v. logic
 - c. Individual liberty v. majority rule
 - d. Science v. religion
8. What is the Establishment Clause?
 - a. Protects against the government banning religion
 - b. Protects against the government endorsing any specific religion
 - c. Allows the government to endorse one religion
 - d. None of the above
9. What were the two competing ideas of the 20th century reflected in this trial?
 - a. Freedom v. slavery
 - b. Faith v. science
 - c. Creationism v. evolutionism
 - d. Schools v. church
10. The Arkansas statute at the heart of Epperson v. Arkansas was struck down on what grounds?
 - a. 4th Amendment's protection of due process
 - b. 1st Amendment's protection of free speech
 - c. 1st Amendment's Establishment Clause
 - d. The 5th Amendment's right to not testify against oneself at trial

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial Quiz Answer Key

1. C
2. D
3. A
4. D
5. A
6. D
7. D
8. B
9. C
10. C

Scopes - *Curriculum on Trial*

Activity: Who Chooses? Who Benefits? Who Pays? What's Fair?

The four questions above can be a useful tool for evaluating any policy or system. Posing the questions is a great way to stimulate critical thinking. As a class, or in small groups, discuss the following:

(For each question, think broadly about all the possible people or groups of people who may be affected, and remember there may be non-monetary costs and benefits.)

1. Who decides (chooses) what curriculum should be taught in public schools? Why is this important?
2. Who benefits from having the authority to control curriculum in schools? Who benefits from access to ideas and scientific discoveries?
3. What is the cost (who pays and how much?) of censorship and limiting access to information and ideas? Explain.
4. Should some groups be able to censor what is taught in public schools? If so, how should it be decided? What would be the impact and consequences of limiting what can be taught in school?
5. How would your answers change if we were looking at private schools instead of public? Example, who decides (or should decide) what curriculum is taught in a private school?

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial

Enrichment and Integration Activities

Research Projects: Work independently or in small groups. Choose one or more of the topics below to learn more about. Gather information from multiple sources to help answer the questions. Create a report that includes both written and visual elements such as pictures, charts, and graphs. Be sure to cite your sources. Share your findings with the class in a presentation.

- A. The Scopes Trial focused on the evolution of mammals, but the word evolution can refer to other objects and processes, such as tools, computers, cell phones, or automobiles. Have your students brainstorm a list of objects and processes that have changed over time. Then, individually or in small groups, invite students to choose and focus on one item from the list. After students research the changes of the item they have chosen, have them examine the significance of these changes. Students will create a “snapshot” of the evolution of their object and evaluate whether the changes affected the world for better or for worse. Post the “snapshots” on the wall and create a large timeline. Have students complete a gallery walk, writing down what they agree or disagree with. Lead the class in a discussion on what they have learned.
- B. Students work in small groups to consider the question “Did the Scopes trial settle the debate between fundamentalism and modernity?” Students will research similar modern-day public debates or court cases like the Scopes trial. They should compare and contrast their modern topic to the Scopes trial. Each group shares what they learned with a presentation of their choice. (Video, slide deck, report, etc.)
- C. Have students research the process for developing curriculum in your school. They should interview teachers, school administrators, district administration, parents, students, and school board members. They will put together a report and present to the class how the process works and evaluate whether they believe the process is effective or not. Would they recommend changes? If so, what changes?
- D. More Writing Activities
1. Have the students pretend to be journalists during the Scopes trial. They must write an editorial opinion piece to feature in the newspaper. Questions for them to consider: What is the key conflict of this case? What side do you agree with? Why? What evidence do you have to support your opinion?

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial

Individual Liberty vs. Majority Rule

- Lesson Plan

Time to Complete: Materials/ Technology/ Resources:	Time to complete the lesson: Will vary, depending on the desired duration * The Scopes: Curriculum on Trial video (can be streamed from izzit.org with no login required.) * Presentation Method (smartboard, projector, etc.) * Viewing Guide * Discussion Questions – one set for teacher only * Warm up Handout * Large piece of butcher paper for each group.
Standards:	Use our free and easy-to-use Standard Alignment tool to align this lesson with the standards in your school district.
Learning Objectives:	Students will discuss, using evidence from documentary sources, how historical context, regional differences, and mass media shaped the Scopes trial. Students will build and write more complex stories of the Scopes trial than one that frames it as merely a debate between evolutionists and creationists. Students will read documents historically, using strategies of sourcing, contextualization, careful reading, and corroboration.
Topics:	1920s, Scopes Trial, Censorship, Education, First Amendment
Absorb: (11:08 minutes)	Tell students that in 1925, a teacher was arrested for teaching evolution in Tennessee. Handout the Warm-up document. Ask the students to evaluate the following questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Did Scopes violate the Butler Act?2. What was the key legal issue at play during the Scopes trial? <p><u>Watch:</u></p> <p>Scopes - Curriculum on Trial video streamed from izzit.org with no login required.</p>

Overall guiding question(s):	What are civil liberties? How does the government decide how to handle situations when one individual's exercise of liberty conflicts with the goals or rights of others in society?
Lesson Procedures: (50 Minutes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In small groups, have students brainstorm the specific civil liberties and freedoms guaranteed in the United States. They record their ideas on a large piece of butcher paper. 2. Ask the students to share their brainstorms with the class and add to their own thinking as others present. 3. ACTIVITY: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Divide your class into groups of four. b. Each group will answer the following question: "What happens when the majority of a democratic society does not agree with an individual's assertion to act differently?" c. Each group will select an additional Supreme Court Case addressing Individual vs. Majority rights. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. <u>Minersville School District v. Gobitis (1940)</u> ii. <u>West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnett (1943)</u> iii. <u>Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1968)</u> iv. <u>Counts v. Cedarville School District (2003)</u> v. <u>Epperson v. Arkansas (1968)</u> vi. <u>Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971)</u> d. Guiding questions for research: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What is the main conflict in the case? ii. How did the Supreme Court Ruling impact societal norms? iii. What individual right was upheld? <p>At the end of the activity, have a class discussion about the students' overall impression of what they learned.</p>
Summary & Assessment: (15 Minutes)	<p>Assessment is based on the group work and the reflection of what students learned as a result of their experiences interacting with others.</p> <p>Bring students back together to discuss their findings. Summary discussions may include the different perspectives the class members shared regarding the research around civil liberties.</p>
Reflection: (5 minutes)	<p>Select a current event, either from izzit.org or a news site, regarding civil liberties. Discuss the article (or video, text, visual, etc.). What civil liberty is being challenged or supported? How can we ensure civil liberty? Do you think there is some material that shouldn't be in schools? If so, what? Are some materials appropriate for certain ages, but not others? Who gets to decide?</p>

WARM UP DOCUMENT - LESSON ON INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS VS. MAJORITY RULE

In 1925, Tennessee passed the following law, called the Butler Act:

It shall be unlawful for any teacher . . . to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.

The Butler Act made it illegal to teach from textbooks like the one below.

Textbook – A Civic Biology, 1925

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/39969/39969-h/39969-h.htm>

The Doctrine of Evolution.

We have now learned that animals may begin with very simple one-celled forms and end with a group which contains man himself. The great English scientist Charles Darwin explained the theory of evolution. This is the belief that simple forms of life on the earth slowly gave rise to more complex forms.

Man's Place in Nature.

We see that man must be placed with the vertebrate animals because of his vertebral column. We place man with the apelike mammals because of structural likeness. The group of mammals which includes the monkeys, apes, and man we call the primates.

Evolution of Man.

There once lived races of men who were much lower in their mental organization than present people. If we follow the early history of man, we find that at first he must have been little better than one of the lower animals. Gradually he must have learned to use weapons and kill his prey, first using rough stones for this purpose. Man then began to farm the fields, and to have permanent houses. Civilization began long ago, but even today the earth is not entirely civilized.

Source: Excerpt from widely-used biology textbook, *A Civic Biology*, written in 1914 by George W. Hunter, a biology teacher from New York City. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/39969/39969-h/39969-h.htm>

Questions:

1. How does this textbook explain where man came from?
2. Why might people in Tennessee in 1925 have wanted to outlaw this textbook?

Scopes - Curriculum on Trial

Is Scientific Research Free Speech?

- Lesson Plan

Time to Complete:	Time to complete the lesson: Will vary, depending on the desired duration
Materials/ Technology/ Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* The Scopes - Curriculum on Trial video (can be streamed from izzit.org with no login required.)* Presentation Method (smartboard, projector, etc.)* Viewing Guide* Discussion Questions – one set for teacher only
Standards:	Use our free and easy-to-use Standard Alignment tool to align this lesson with the standards in your school district.
Learning Objectives:	<p><i>Students will discuss, using evidence from documentary sources, how historical context, regional differences, and mass media shaped the Scopes trial.</i></p> <p><i>Students will build and write more complex stories of the Scopes trial than one that frames it as merely a debate between evolutionists and creationists.</i></p> <p><i>Students will read documents historically, using strategies of sourcing, contextualization, careful reading, and corroboration.</i></p>
Topics:	1920s, Scopes Trial, Censorship, Education, First Amendment
Absorb: (11:08 minutes)	<p>Write the following questions on the board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How do people use science in their daily lives?- Should the government limit and control scientific research and discovery? Why or Why not? <p>Have the students work in small groups to answer these questions. Each group then presents their initial discussion. Write the key points on the board under each question.</p> <p><u>Watch:</u></p> <p>Scopes - Curriculum on Trial video streamed from izzit.org with no login required.</p>

Overall guiding	Should scientific research and discovery be protected by the First Amendment?
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Lesson Procedures: (30+ Minutes)	<p>Tell students that in 1925, a teacher was arrested for teaching evolution in Tennessee. Handout the Warm-up document. Ask the students to evaluate the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What issue did the Scopes trial bring to light? • What was the primary legal issue of the Scopes trial? • Would this situation happen today? Why or Why not? <p><u>Watch:</u> Scopes - Curriculum on Trial video streamed from izzit.org with no login required.</p> <p>After watching the video, have students discuss the questions above in small groups. Pass out the hand out and have students read the article. Utilize a reading strategy such as "Marking the Text" to help students understand the article.</p> <p>After reading the article and watching the video, have students research Academic or scientific research. There are many articles available online. Have the students choose one additional article that supports their opinion on whether or not scientific research and discovery should be protected under the first amendment. (See questions below)</p> <p>Students will be grappling with the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is academic freedom and why is it needed? • Why is it important for teachers to have discretion over what they teach and how they teach? • How does having students of opposing viewpoints in your class positively affect the learning environment? <p>Student will prepare their evidence on the following questions above. They will need a class period (or two) to prepare their round-table discussion.</p>
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Summary & Assessment: (1 Class Period)	<p>Using a strategy such as a Socratic seminar or Philosophical Chairs , students will have a round table discussion on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is academic freedom and why is it needed? • Why is it important for teachers to have discretion over what they teach and how they teach? • How does having students of opposing viewpoints in your class positively affect the learning environment? <p>Should scientific research and discovery be protected by the first amendment? Why or why not?</p>
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Reflection: (5 minutes)	<p>Students will complete a 5 minute free write answering the question: Should scientific research and discovery be protected by the first amendment? Why or why not? They must defend their answer with evidence from class discussion and the activity. This is their exit ticket.</p>
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Academic Freedom Guidelines and Best Practices

Prepared by the [OAH Committee on Academic Freedom](#)

Retrieved from <https://www.oah.org/about/governance/policies/academic-freedom-guidelines-and-best-practices/> on March 3, 2023.

Academic Freedom: What is it & Why does it matter?

Academic freedom is the principle of freedom of expression for scholars engaged in discipline-related teaching, learning, research, publication and service. Academic freedom is the foundation of intellectual discovery; it ensures an open search for knowledge and “nourishes the environment within which students develop critical habits of mind” [1] essential to the citizenry of a democratic society. Academic freedom entails both rights and responsibilities.

Components of Academic Freedom

Applies to full-time, part-time, tenure/tenure-track, contingent, graduate student instructors, research assistants.

In Research & Publication Academic freedom includes the liberty to conduct research and draw conclusions rooted in evidence. Academic freedom defends researchers’ right to choose methodologies, draw conclusions, and assert the value of their contributions, but does not protect against critiques of their claims.

In Teaching & Learning Academic freedom includes the individual instructor’s right to select course materials and content, pedagogy, make assignments and assess student performance. These should be germane to the subject matter.

Limits may arise where (1) coordination among instructors for common courses requires agreement on matters of content, syllabi, materials and examinations; [2] (2) there are institutional constraints and concerns rooted in the religious aims of the university, which should be explicitly laid out in writing for instructors prior to appointment; [3] (3) the manner of instruction substantially impairs the rights of others or...demonstrates that the instructor is professionally ignorant, incompetent, or dishonest with regard to their discipline or fields of expertise.” [4]

In Public Expression Academic freedom includes the right to bring relevant expertise to “the larger community with regard to any matter of social, political, economic or other interest;” and through any mode of communication (including speech, writing and electronic media). [5]

As experts operating in the public sphere, historians should aim to “be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, [and] should show respect for the opinions of others.” [6]

Academic Freedom vs. Free Speech: What’s the Difference?

- **Academic Freedom:** rights held by educators to engage in academically-recognized expression
 - **Free Speech:** expression guaranteed to the individual by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
- Academic Freedom Free Speech**

To whom does this right apply? Educators engaged in the pursuit of their discipline; in public and private institutions All people within the jurisdiction of the United States

What does it “cover”? Discipline-related teaching, learning, research, publication, in and outside the classroom
All forms of speech and speech content without regard to the speaker’s knowledge or accuracy

Who or what institution is charged with respecting/not violating this right? Educational institutions at all levels
Governments, public institutions and their policies and representatives

Source(s) of this right? Depend[s] on constitutional law, state law, institutional custom and policy, and whether the institution is public or private [\[7\]](#) 1st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and related laws and court decisions

In the Words of Scholarly Experts:

Joan Wallach Scott [\[8\]](#)

Historian, Institute for Advanced Study & member of AAUP Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure
“[there is a] difference between academic freedom -- a protection of faculty rights based on disciplinary competence -- and freedom of speech-- the right to express one's ideas, however true or false they may be.”

“Student free speech is appropriately limited in the university classroom, subject to the disciplinary tutelage of the professor in charge -- a professor who has been subjected to and certified by a disciplined formation of his or her own. This does not mean silent acquiescence in the face of indoctrination, far from it. It does mean learning how to critically evaluate things, how to question orthodoxy and challenge it from a position of knowledge rather than one of unexamined belief.”

AAUP [\[9\]](#)

Statement on academic freedom and the first amendment “The First Amendment generally restricts the right of a public institution—including a public college or university—to regulate expression on all sorts of topics and in all sorts of settings. Academic freedom, on the other hand, addresses rights within the educational contexts of teaching, learning, and research both in and outside the classroom—for individuals at private as well as at public institutions.”

Socratic Seminar Guidelines and Rubric

Students: Here are the general guidelines for participating in a Socratic seminar, and a scoring rubric I will use to grade your participation.

Guidelines for participating

Come prepared. Bring notes and bookmarked pages that are relevant to the discussion.

Participate, participate, participate!

Relate your comments to the text or its themes.

Back up comments with evidence you have gathered.

Try to comment on someone else's previous statement before you give yours.

Personal stories should have a direct connection to the text.

Keep discussion alive by asking open-ended, thought-provoking questions.

Disagree with comments, not individuals. Never put anyone down.

Use your speaking time fairly (contribute but don't control).

Participant Rubric

The higher the score, the better.

4	3	2	1
Offers enough solid analysis, without prompting, to move the conversation forward.	Offers solid analysis without prompting.	Offers some analysis but needs prompting from the seminar leader	Offers little commentary.
Demonstrates a deep knowledge of the text and the question.	Demonstrates a good knowledge of the text and the question.	Demonstrates a general knowledge of the text and question.	Comes to the seminar ill-prepared with little understanding of the text and question.
Comes to the seminar prepared, with notes and a marked or annotated text.	Comes to the seminar prepared, with notes and a marked or annotated text.	Is less prepared, with few notes and no marked or annotated text.	Does not listen to others, offers no commentary to further the discussion.
Shows active listening.	Shows active listening, offers clarification and/or follow-up.	Actively listens but does not offer clarification and/or follow-up to others' comments.	
Offers clarification and/or follow-up that extend the conversation.	Relies on the text to drive his or her comments.	Relies more upon his or her opinion, and less on the text to drive his or her comments.	
Makes comments that refer to specific parts of the text.			

The Socratic Questioning Technique

The Socratic approach to questioning is based on the practice of disciplined, thoughtful dialogue. Socrates, the early Greek philosopher/teacher, believed that disciplined practice of thoughtful questioning enabled the student to examine ideas logically and to determine the validity of those ideas. In this technique, the teacher professes ignorance of the topic in order to engage in dialogue with the students. With this “acting dumb,” the student develops the fullest possible knowledge about the topic.

The Socratic questioning technique is an effective way to explore ideas in depth. It can be used at all levels and is a helpful tool for all teachers. It can be used at different points within a unit or project. By using Socratic questioning, teachers promote independent thinking in their students and give them ownership of what they are learning. Higher-level thinking skills are present while students think, discuss, debate, evaluate, and analyze content through their own thinking and the thinking of those around them. These types of questions may take some practice on both the teacher and students’ part since it may be a whole new facet of learning.

Tips for Using Socratic Questioning:

- Plan significant questions that provide meaning and direction to the dialogue
- Use Wait Time: Allow at least thirty seconds for students to respond
- Follow up on students’ responses
- Ask probing questions
- Periodically summarize in writing key points that have been discussed
- Draw as many students as possible into the discussion
- Let students discover knowledge on their own through the probing questions the teacher poses

Types of Socratic Questions and Examples

The Socratic Questioning technique involves different type of questions. Some examples of these are:

Socratic Question Type Example

Clarification questions

- What do you mean by...?
- Could you put that another way?
- What do you think is the main issue?
- Could you give us an example?
- Could you expand upon that point further?

Questions about an initial question or issue

- Why is this question important?
- Is this question easy or difficult to answer?
- Why do you think that?
- What assumptions can we make based on this question?
- Does this question lead to other important issues and questions?

Assumption questions

- Why would someone make this assumption?
- What is _____ assuming here?
- What could we assume instead?
- You seem to be assuming_____.
- Do I understand you correctly?

Reason and evidence questions

- What would be an example?
- Why do you think this is true?
- What other information do we need?
- Could you explain your reason to us?
- By what reasoning did you come to that conclusion?
- Is there reason to doubt that evidence?
- What led you to that belief?

Origin or source questions

- Is this your idea or did you hear it from some place else?
- Have you always felt this way?
- Has your opinion been influenced by something or someone?
- Where did you get that idea?
- What caused you to feel that way?

Implication and consequence questions

- What effect would that have?
- Could that really happen or probably happen?
- What is an alternative?
- What are you implying by that?
- If that happened, what else would happen as a result? Why?

Viewpoint questions

- How would other groups of people respond to this question? Why?
- How could you answer the objection that _____ would make?
- What might someone who believed _____ think?
- What is an alternative?
- How are _____ and _____'s ideas alike? Different?

The Philosophical Chairs

Philosophical Chairs is a format for discussion and debate. Students take a position on a controversial issue and then try to influence the opinions of others through logical arguments and presentation of facts. Students improve listening skills, argumentation and constructive discourse.

Instructions

1. Teachers provide a reading on a controversial issue and formulate a statement requiring students to take a position on that topic.
2. Students read the article and mark the text for areas of agreement and/or disagreement as well as questions that need clarification
3. Students take a stand on the issue and ensure they can use the text to support that position.
4. Designate one side of the classroom for students who agree with the statement and the other side for those who disagree; the middle of the room is designated for students who are unsure or unable to choose sides. Review active listening.
5. Students move to their side of the room. In the group, they will discuss their ideas and choose the three most compelling arguments for their position. One student will record and share those arguments.
6. Start the discussion by having the recorder share their three arguments, with no commentary or response for each of the three groups.
7. Students may now change positions in the room based on the arguments.
8. The discussion should now become free-flowing between the opposing groups.
Only one student may speak at a time. Students may change positions at any time during the discussion by moving to their new position.
9. When time is called, any student remaining in the middle of the room must choose a side.
10. Debrief, reflect, and have student summarize how and why their position changed through the conversation (or did not).

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