

HistoryMiami Museum Courthouse Tour and the Mock Trial

As part of your tour of the Courthouse with HistoryMiami Museum your students can participate in a mock trial. We can provide a prewritten script (link available on the Resources for Learning page) that students will use during the mock trial or you can create your own and bring it with you on the day of your visit. Check out the resources below and our suggestions for how to get the most out of your visit.

You may choose to create your own script as part of a pre-visit activity and then bring it along on the day of your visit. We will help to facilitate your mock trial during the tour. Please make sure you keep the script to one hour or less. Here are a few resources to get you started creating your own script:

[New York Times article about conducting a mock trial](#)

[Sample script template from Leon County, Florida](#)

[Sample script template created by teachers](#)

If you would like to dig deeper into the mock trial, try some of these resources. They include lesson plans for mock trial units and guides for mock trial competitions to do in your school or district.

[Mock trial script with explanatory narration from California Courts](#)

[Selection of scripted and non-scripted trials for use in the classroom from California](#)

[Selection of mock trials from Classroom Law Project](#)

[Selection of mock trials from Teaching Civics](#)

[Manual for mock trial from Classroom Law Project](#)

[Mock trial lesson plan that includes a science-based case](#)

Suggestions for pre-visit activities:

- Ask students to create their own mock trial script. See resources above for ideas.
- If you are planning to use our pre-made script (see link on Resources for Learning page) think about assigning roles to your students in advance. It saves time once we are in the courtroom. Have each student create a back story for their character to practice creative writing skills as well as what they have learned about the judicial system. You can also have each student, no matter what their role, write an opening statement based on the script. The students assigned to play lawyers will read theirs during the mock trial.
- Review important vocabulary from the mock trial and other resources provided above.
- Ask students to create their own pieces of evidence based on the script you will be using during the mock trial.

Suggestions for post-visit activities:

- After your courthouse visit and mock trial, continue the learning in the classroom by asking students to act out a sentencing hearing based on the verdict delivered. They will need to research possible sentences, how hearings work, create a script, etc.
- Have a classroom discussion, based on research conducted by students, about what the repercussions of the case and sentencing could be. You can ask them to incorporate a discussion about penance, reparations, etc. This discussion could also take the form of a debate.



- Ask students to play the role of a courthouse reporter who recaps the trial, verdict and sentencing. They can get creative and use large format newsprint paper to create a frontpage layout or just write the article and share with their classmates. If you make this a long-term group project, students could create a broadcast skit instead of writing an article. They can play the role of reporter or reprise some of their roles from the trial on “camera” in post-trial interviews. If they choose to look back on the trial years later, reporters can include questions about the repercussions of the trial and the effects on those involved.