



The Trial of Dayan:

A Drama Script Exploring Courtroom Procedure



Grades
5-7

Cross-Curricular Connections

The Trial of Dayan: Teacher Notes

This script is meant to supplement student learning about the criminal justice system, and it allows students to examine different points of view. The play centers on the trial of Dayan, an alien from Pandora, who is charged with vandalizing a local store. **The last scene (jury deliberations) is not portrayed, as students are invited to debate the guilt or innocence of Dayan based on the evidence itself.** It can be used to meet curriculum expectations in:

- Dramatic Arts
- Reading (reading the script)
- Writing (features of a play)
- Social Studies (Civics)
- Media Literacy (students can film their play, and perhaps share it on a classroom website)
- Art/Technology (building a set, if you so choose)

Cast

- Court Clerk
- Judge
- Prosecutor
- Defense Lawyer
- Witnesses for the Prosecution: Mr. Taft & Mrs. Callwood
- Witness for the Defense: Kendall
- Defendant: Dayan
- Jury: 12 students



20 roles;
other students
can serve as
courtroom
spectators

7 Page Script

The Trial of Dayan

Court Clerk: All rise for the Honourable Judge _____

(Judge walks in and takes his place.)

Court Clerk: Please be seated. This is the trial of the accused, Dayan, who is charged with vandalizing a local electronics store.

Judge: Will the prosecution please give their opening statement?

Prosecutor: Thank you, Judge *(turning to look at jurors)*. Jurors, today we are asking you to take seriously the decision that you will be making, and not to be influenced by your own opinions. You promised the court to listen to only the facts and the evidence provided in making your decision. Thank you. We will now call our first witness, Mr. Taft.

(Mr. Taft goes to the witness stand.)

Court Clerk: Do you promise to tell only the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Mr. Taft: I do.

Prosecutor: Thank you for coming today, Mr. Taft. As the owner of a large electronics store, can you tell us if you have had much trouble with vandalism?

Mr. Taft: No, I haven't, until this incident. However, I have had security cameras installed outdoors since that time.

Prosecutor: Have you had any contact with aliens before last March 10th, the day of the incident?

Mr. Taft: No, I had heard of them recently on the evening news, and my friend, Mr. Smith, told me that he has had trouble with aliens at his shoe store as well.

Prosecutor: Mr. Taft, on the morning of March 10th of this year, did you witness the accused, Dayan, in your electronics store?

Clear Text

Mr. Taft: Yes, he came in the store video game section. He was excitedly throughout the trial.

Prosecutor: Did you see or hear anything the defendant was involved in?

Mr. Taft: No, but I left the store bank that's around the corner, I saw the defendant spray paint the side of my building.

Prosecutor: What happened next?

Mr. Taft: I quickly called the police to arrive at the scene. I saw a feature on my phone to arrive at the scene.

Prosecutor: Thank you, and Juror. The video should be shown.

Judge: Defense, please.

Defense: Thank you, com-
municate
all the
go-
down.

Mr. Taft: No.

Prosecutor:

Court Clerk:

(Kendall walks to the witness stand.)

Court Clerk: Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Kendall: I do.

Defense: Kendall, you are considered to be an expert on the planet Pandora, and you sometimes act as a consultant to various governments here on Earth. Please tell us about Pandora.

Kendall: I would be happy to. Pandora is a small planet which has very little crime. The citizens of Pandora get along well together, and while there are police, they are not kept very busy.

Defense: Please tell us about Pandoran attitudes towards stores.

Kendall: On Earth, people show their preferences for a particular store by tweeting about it, or rating it on the internet. On Pandora, people show that they like a store by decorating the outside walls of it. You can tell how popular a store is by how much painting there is on the walls.

Defense: Is it illegal to spray paint stores?

Kendall: No, it is not.

Defense: Thank you, Kendall. *(Turns to the judge)* I have no further questions for this witness.

Judge: Prosecution, your witness.

Prosecutor: We have no questions for this witness.

Judge: Thank you for your service to the court, Kendall. You may now leave the stand. *(Kendall exits the stage.)* The prosecution may now present their closing statements.

Verdict is Left in Your Students' Hands!

Teacher Notes:

- I have not provided the last scene for this script, as I like my students to either write the ending themselves, or do an impromptu ending, where the 12 students portraying jurors debate their decision in front of their classmates.
- You will note that Dayan's age is never mentioned in the script. If you teach in a country or region with a particular youth justice system, such as in Canada, you may want to portray Dayan as a young person. This would allow students to examine how a youth is treated in the criminal justice system, and how the sentences for a crime may be different from those given to an adult accused of a similar crime.
- You will need to be familiar with the sentencing practices of your area, so that if your "jurors" decide to convict Dayan, they are aware of the possible sentences that may be given.

Other Resources:

While this resource was originally created for use in Canadian classrooms, I have provided links to a variety of websites where you can find further information about the court systems in a variety of countries:



United States

<http://government.mrdonn.org/judicialbranch.html>



England

https://kids.kiddle.co/English_law



Canada

<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/ccs-qjc/02.html>



New Zealand

<http://www.justice.govt.nz/services/access-to-justice/civics-education/ideas-for-teachers>



Australia

<http://www.findlaw.com.au/faqs/1187/what-are-the-different-courts-in-australia-and-how.aspx>

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Links to Information About the Judicial Systems of 5 Countries!