

# Teacher's Guide to Calliope: A Day in Court: Law in Greece and Rome

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This issue focuses on the early court system and laws in Greece and Rome. One of my favorite activities involves a mock trial. My students read: *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. This is a book that tells the story of a family in the 1930's. One of the characters is accused of a serious crime.

In conjunction with this reading, I have a local district attorney present to the students the workings of the trial system. After reading the book, students hold a mock trial for the accused character in the story. Students have parts as the accused, the lawyers, jury etc. It is a great activity that goes so well with this issue. This activity could be done after students and teacher familiarizes themselves with the court system using this issue.

Students can also see the similarities between our court system and the early Greek court system as described in the first article: "Judging Right and Wrong in Athens". If you do the above activity with your local district attorney, (or other local legal professional) this article can be a spring board for questions for the students to ask.

Use the article: "Laws for All". This activity gives students a chance to reflect on the laws from the Greek code. Have students select one of the laws from the Greek code (pg.7). Students can draw a picture representing the law. Students can then label the drawing with the law. What do students think of these laws? How are they like our current laws? How do they differ?

"The Dreaded Ostraca" gives teachers a chance to discuss Greek and Latin root words. Also, prefixes and suffixes. A list of these can be generated. Example: Root *derm* means skin, as in dermatologist. If students can learn prefixes, suffixes and root words, it's a giant step in assisting vocabulary learning.

"The Arbitration" gives students a chance, in small groups, to perform reader's theater. This article also gives teachers a chance to have students explore the meaning of arbitration and mediation. How can arbitration and mediation help you in real life situations? For example in our school we have a peer mediation program that helps students solve problems they may be having with other students. Also, have students explore the careers of mediators and arbitrators.

Compare and contrast the Greek and Roman imprisonment. Students can imagine being a prisoner in Greece or Rome. Use the article ("Deadly Jails") to help you with your writing.

After reading "On Trial in Athens", and explaining key terms such as litigants, prosecutor and magistrate, have students write about their experience on trial for jaywalking in ancient Athens. It might start like this.

It was a lovely, sunny day in Athens. I was lucky because my trial was outside. See, I was caught jaywalking. I was a little nervous, as I waited with others for the sacrifice to the gods.

This gives students a chance to interact with the text. Teachers should get some interesting stories.

Have students work together in groups on this next activity. Students read: "On Trial in Athens" and "Law Courts, Roman Style". Have students explore the differences and similarities between the Athenian and Roman courts. Example: the Athenian jurors use a bronze disk in voting for the prosecution or the defense. The Roman jurors used tablets.

Enjoy the issue.