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Twelve Angry Men
BY REGINALD ROSE



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Table of Contents

Pre-Reading

Theme/The United States Jury System	4
Stage Positioning	6
Researching and Debating the Death Penalty	12
Researching Setting.....	14

Act 1

Questions for Review	16
Jury Profiles	18
Non-Literal Language	20
Examining Justifications	24
Unpopular Decisions	26
Writing an Obituary.....	28
Advice Column	30

Act 2

Reaching Conclusions	32
Suspense	34
Questions for Review	36
Conflict	38
Writing a Poem	40
Writing Dialogue	42

Act 3

Stage Directions	44
Questions for Review	46
Creating a Collage.....	48
Altering the Form of the Play	50
Journal Entry	52
Prejudice	54
Convincing Evidence.....	56

Wrap-Up

Courtroom Sketches	58
Exploring Character Values	60
Letter Writing	62
Conducting an Interview	64
Casting a Drama	66
Reflecting on Theme.....	68
Writing an Alternate Ending.....	70
Create a Book Cover	72
Writing a Review.....	74
Book Vs. Film	76

Appendix

Terms and Definitions.....	78
Small Group Learning.....	79
Directions for a Debate	84
Newspaper	85

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Theme****The United States Jury System****Objective:** Researching and reporting on the jury system of our country**Activity**

Using a minimum of three sources, research how the jury system works in the United States. As you do your research, consider the ways in which jury members are selected, how often they may serve, how they are compensated, and what, if any, ways in which improvements could be made. Compare our jury system with similar systems in other governments.

Once your research has been completed, construct some sort of visual representation of your findings to share with the class. This can be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, a poster, model, collage, or anything else that visually sums up your research. Use this visual aid to help you make a report of your information to the class.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act I**Jury Profiles****Objective:** Creating composite character profiles for figures in a dramatic selection

Jury member selection is not as random as it may seem. Although initially individuals are selected randomly from a community pool to serve jury duty, the actual people chosen from this group to serve on a specific jury may undergo a rigorous process of elimination, especially with high-profile trials involving serious penalties for the accused.

There are, in fact, many firms that specialize in providing information and analysis to aid attorneys in selecting the best of a group of people to serve on a particular jury. These firms retain social scientists that use demographic information, as well as personal questionnaires and interviews, to gauge such items as personal attitudes and predispositions to certain situations. This information is critical in leading the attorneys on either side to strike or select members to serve on their jury. Once the jury has been selected, it helps the firm to then be able to describe the jury as a group and advise the attorney on how best to present the case in court in order to persuade the jury to vote for a specific verdict.

Activity

Pretend you are an attorney appointed for the defense of the accused in *Twelve Angry Men*. Your job is to try to select a jury that is most likely to vote “not guilty.” Keep in mind that jury selection is divided equally between the prosecution and the defense. Make up a series of questions that you will use to determine which people you want to serve on the jury. Try to have at least twelve questions. Include the answer that you want the prospective juror to give. We have supplied the first one for you.

Question:**Answer You Want**

Have you read about or heard anything about this case?

No

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act 2

Suspense

Objective: Recognizing methods of adding suspense to a work of literature

One thing that makes *Twelve Angry Men* as riveting a drama as it is could be the use of suspense throughout the play. Reginald Rose begins building suspense in Act 1 by the way he sets the stage. It is a hot, airless day, and has, in fact, been so all week. The men are hot and irritable and likely to be at odds with one another because of it. As the play progresses, Act 2 continues to build the suspense, beginning with the very start of the act, which takes place only a few seconds after Act 1 ends on a very abrupt note.

Activity

Use the following prompts to analyze how Rose continues to build suspense in Act 2.

1. Rose sets Act 2 moments after ending Act 1 very abruptly. How does this contribute to the suspense?
2. The dialogue in the beginning of Act 2 is choppy, with a great many sentences ending with an abrupt stop marked by an extended dash. For example, Juror FIVE says “Now, just a minute—” and is responded to by Juror THREE “Now, you listen to me—.” How does dialogue of this sort increase suspense?
3. Juror EIGHT, when pressed for his reasoning, presents a rather drawn-out explanation of his concern with the across-the-street neighbor’s testimony and again with the elderly man’s testimony. How does this create suspense?
4. At the end of the act, Juror THREE explodes with rage directed at Juror EIGHT. It seems unfathomable that a person could react this strongly to having his opinion challenged, and yet Juror THREE does. How does this, too, add to the suspense?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act 3**Questions for Review****Objective:** Interpreting and analyzing events of a dramatic selection**Activity**

Answer each question briefly but thoroughly.

1. Where does the vote stand at the beginning of Act 3?
2. Explain whether they are a hung jury?
3. How does Juror FOUR reconstruct the killing to make it more plausible with the old man's testimony?
4. When Juror TEN begins his racist rant about "those people" and how "they" need no real reason for killing and are incapable of telling the truth, what does each juror, in turn, do? Which juror appears to have no difficulty listening to TEN?
5. Who is the last holdout on a "not guilty" verdict?
6. How is he finally convinced?
7. What does Juror THREE do to Juror EIGHT as they are leaving the deliberation room, and how does Juror EIGHT respond?