

**Hammurabi's Code of Law Project**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Period:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Learning Objectives/Targets:**

1. SWBAT demonstrate their understanding of Hammurabi's Legal Code and knowledge of Mesopotamian society by utilizing knowledge of basic courtroom procedures to create and act out a mock trial skit (History 3, Communication 3)
2. SWBAT state a claim and support their opinion regarding whether Hammurabi's Legal Code was fair or cruel (Communication 6, History 3).

**Purpose:**

The purpose is to provide you with an avenue to explore court case proceedings, demonstrate understanding of Mesopotamian civilization, apply knowledge of Hammurabi's laws to different scenarios in order to determine guilt or innocence and punishment for various crimes, and to use evidence to form an opinion about whether the legal code is fair or cruel.

**Read Pages 22-25 in the textbook and complete the assignment.**

**Steps:**

1. Watch "Turning Points in History: Hammurabi's Code of Laws" and complete the provided writing prompt in your WHN.
2. Discover what "objections" are, the different types, and practice utilizing them.
3. Practice your legal skills and participate in "Make the Case" activity.
4. Read and discuss Hammurabi's Code of Laws (class set provided) and determine applicable laws for select cases, discuss strategies for helping prosecution and defense.
5. Complete assessment activity (see below) and mock trial Judging Form(s).
6. Complete Take A Stand Activity (if time allows).

**Assessment Activity: Create and Act Out a Mock Trial Skit**

**Overview:** For this project you will work in groups on court cases that need to be dealt with using Hammurabi's Code of Laws.

**Court Behavior:** Hammurabi's court was undoubtedly very strict! Courtrooms today also follow policy and procedures to allow the legal process to be engaged in a professional manner. It is expected you will be attentive and quiet in the courtroom while conducting yourself as if you were there. This means you should pay attention to the court proceedings and fulfill your tasks.

### **Group Members:**

- King Hammurabi: \_\_\_\_\_
- Bailiff: \_\_\_\_\_
- Prosecuting Attorney: \_\_\_\_\_
- Plaintiff: \_\_\_\_\_
- Witness for Prosecution: \_\_\_\_\_
- Defense Attorney: \_\_\_\_\_
- Defendant: \_\_\_\_\_
- Witness for the Defense: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Select a Case (or obtain permission to create your own!):**

- Case 1: Case Law #168
  - A father wants to put his son/daughter out of the house.
- Case 2: Case Law # 175
  - A slave-boy married a free man's daughter. She has had two children by this slave-boy. Now the slave-boy's owner wants to own the children and the slave-boy.
- Case 3: Case Law # 248
  - This person borrowed/hired another person's ox and while he had the ox it was injured.
- Case 4: Case Law # 204
  - This free person hit another free person on the cheek.
- Case 5: Case Law(s) # 229, 230, 231, 232
  - A man's house has collapsed killing his son and his slave and damaging his belongings. He wants to punish the builder of his house.
- Case 6: Case Law # 224, 225
  - A farmer has asked the local veterinarian to care for his two prize oxen. The veterinarian tried an experimental treatment, which went awry killing one ox yet saved the other ox. The farmer has asked for retribution.

### **Evidence:**

Be sure to decide what you are going to use for evidence for both the plaintiff and the defendant. Evidence could be:

- eye-witness testimony
- sales receipt
- invoice
- the plaintiff telling their side of the story
- the defendant telling their side of the story
- or ???...be creative!

### **King Hammurabi's Duties during the skit "trial":**

- Responsible for the accurate flow of the proceedings as outlined in steps above and will instruct the bailiff, attorneys, and witnesses
- Maintain Court Order
- Rule on Objections
- Be Fair and protect your people and your laws so that people do not feel it is OK to break the law
- You may provide a lesser penalty if you feel the attorney did a great job or defendant does not deserve full punishment under the law
- Find Guilt or Innocence, assign penalty according to the legal code

## Create your Mock Trial Skit

### • **SKIT MUST INCLUDE:**

- Decide case number or find law to create own (must be approved by me)
- Use Mesopotamian names for people and money (research)
- Work at least two objections into your skit narrative
- Assign Roles

**Write skit in this order and see duties below for further information to help with each step:**

- Bailiff provides instructions:
  - **"Hear ye, hear ye—the courtroom of the Great Hammurabi is now in session! All rise for the Honorable King Hammurabi (wait until King is seated, then tell court they may now be seated). Hear ye the decisions of the great Lord of the Universe, Ruler of the Land between the Two Rivers, and King of Babylon and Sumer! Case # \_\_\_\_\_ is before the court (then read charges)."**
  - King asks Defendant how he/she pleads (guilty or not guilty)
  - Defendant responds with either guilty or not guilty

### • **King requests Opening Statements**

- Prosecution Opening Statement – **write the opening statement**
  - Purpose: To let King Hammurabi and the jury know what you are going to prove.
  - Include: Your name, client's name, opponent's name, a description or story of the facts and circumstances that led to the case and/or key evidence you will provide (witness testimony, documents...)
    - Avoid too much detail, exaggeration, overstatement
- Defense Opening Statement – **write the opening statement**
  - Purpose: To deny that the prosecution or plaintiff has a valid case and to state innocence.
  - Include: Your name, client's name, facts that tend to weaken the plaintiff's case, and description or story of the facts and circumstances to prove your innocence and/or brief overview of key evidence you will provided (witness testimony, documents...)
    - Avoid too much detail, exaggeration, overstatement

### • **King asks Prosecution to proceed with their case**

- Prosecution calls Plaintiff to take the stand
  - Bailiff swears in the witness
  - Prosecution questions Plaintiff – **Write the questions and plaintiff response**
    - Plaintiff needs to be able to explain who are you – in other words, are you rich or poor, free or a slave, and what do you do for a job?
    - You claim the defendant has broken a law or done something to harm you, your property, or your family. Be ready to explain your side of the story and how the defendant has done you wrong.
    - Be able to explain the evidence you have against the defendant.
- Defense Cross-Examines Plaintiff – **write the questions you will ask the Plaintiff and Plaintiff response**
  - Purpose is to attempt to discredit or negate the Plaintiff's case.
  - Try to secure admissions of information that will prove your case.
- King asks the Plaintiff to sit down
- King asks the Prosecution if they have any additional witnesses

### • **Prosecution calls Prosecution Witness to take the stand**

- Bailiff swears in the witness
- Prosecution questions the witness – **write the questions you will ask this witness and the responses the witness will provide**

- Who is this person (name, free/slave)? What do they do for work?
  - What did they witness and/or what evidence do they have?
- Defense Cross-Examines the witness – **write the questions you will ask this witness and the responses the witness will provide**
  - Purpose is to attempt to discredit or negate your opponent's case.
  - Try to secure admissions of information that will prove your case.
- King will ask, "Does the Prosecution wish to call any further witnesses in this case?"
  - Prosecutor will respond, "The Prosecution rests their case Honorable King Hammurabi."

• **King asks Defense to proceed with their defense**

- Defense calls Defendant to take the stand
  - Bailiff swears in the witness
  - Defense questions Plaintiff – **write the questions you will ask and the Defendants answers**
    - Be able to explain who you are – in other words, are you rich or poor, free or a slave, and what do you do for a job?
    - You believe you are innocent of the charges against you and will need to be able to explain your side of the story and why you believe you are innocent.
    - Be ready to explain the evidence to support your innocence.
- Prosecution Cross-Examines Defendant – **write the questions you will ask and the answers the Defendant will provide**
  - Purpose is to attempt to discredit or negate your opponent's case.
  - Try to secure admissions of information that will prove your case.

• **Defense calls Defense Witness to take the stand**

- Bailiff swears in the witness
- Defense questions Defense Witness - **write the questions you will ask this witness and the responses the witness will provide**
  - Who is this person (name, free/slave)? What do they do for work?
  - What did they witness and/or what evidence do they have?
- Prosecution Cross-Examines Defense Witness - **write the questions you will ask and the answers the Defendant will provide**
  - Purpose is to attempt to discredit or negate your opponent's case.
  - Try to secure admissions of information that will prove your case.
- King will ask, "Does the Defense wish to call any further witnesses in this case?"
  - Defense will respond, "The Defense rests their case Honorable King Hammurabi."

• **King calls for Closing Statements**

- Prosecution Delivers Closing Statement – **write your closing statement**
  - This is the last statement that you get to make to the court so make it a summary of your proof and your last chance to try to convince the court that your client has met their burden of proof against the defendant and that the court should decide in your favor. It is okay to remind the King of the law and to ask for what you hope to receive or what you want to happen to the defendant. Be dramatic and energetic!
- Defense Delivers Closing Statement – **write your closing statement**
  - This is the last statement that you get to make to the court so make it a summary of your evidence proving your client is innocent and/or a summary of the ways the Prosecution failed to prove their case beyond a reasonable doubt. It is okay to remind the King of the law and to ask for what you hope to happen. It is your last chance to try to convince the court that your client is innocent. Be dramatic and energetic!
- King reads the applicable law(s), provides the verdict and sentences accordingly if found guilty.

**Checklist:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1) Write skit – be sure each group member has a copy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2) Answer comprehension questions from page 1 and attach to your packet
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3) Complete a "Mock Trial Judging Form and Case Analysis Sheet"
  - o For one trial – not your own (I will hand out the day of the presentations) during the trial presentations
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4) Grade yourself on the rubrics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5) Grade your peers on the provided Peer Grades Sheets (will be anonymous).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6) Attach all items to the packet and turn into the basket.

<b>Competency: Mesopotamia (M2)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Examine artifacts and explain the significance of major achievements of ancient Mesopotamia and/or how they help shape our understanding of Mesopotamian history and culture.	No errors and student had thoughtfully constructed skit that demonstrated a clear understanding and knowledge of Mesopotamian law and culture.	Assignment was completed as required.	Assignment was completed but lacks correct information or key components.	Assignment is incomplete.

<b>Competency: Communication (SSC3)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Orally share information in meaningful ways.	Student participated in the skit in an informative and entertaining manner and clearly demonstrated understanding of court procedures and Mesopotamian knowledge.	Assignment was completed as required.	Assignment was completed but lacks correct information or key components.	Assignment is incomplete.

**Self-Assessment:**

- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I contributed to writing the mock trial script. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| I demonstrated appropriate courtroom decorum.   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| I worked respectfully with others.              | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

**Group Assessment:**

- |  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Our skit had all the required elements.<br>Procedures, order, objections | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Our skit was well written/used solid evidence.                           | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Our skit demonstrated Mesopotamian knowledge.                            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

**Mock Trial Judging Form and Case Analysis**

**Class Period:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Group #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Case #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Law(s) Broken:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Charges Filed/Case Synopsis (accused of what by whom?):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Group Members/Roles:**

**King:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness for Prosecution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bailliff:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Defense Attorney:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prosecuting Attorney:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Defendant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Plaintiff:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness for Defense:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evidence:** Record key evidence provided during the trial.

**Prosecution**

**Defense**

**Verdict:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Explain if you agree or disagree with the verdict:**