

Newspapers In Education and
The Legacy of John Adams
Student Worksheets



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*These materials were created to celebrate Law Day 2011 but can be used anytime as the information of the material is timeless.
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Introduction

Throughout the history of the United States, and specifically in the state of New York, men and women have found the strength to challenge popular opinion and take a stand for the greater good. These features will highlight a few of those brave men and women.

We hope this series educates you about a part of New York's role in our legal history. This series is intended to prompt discussion and exploration of the historical and contemporary role of lawyers in defending the rights of the accused, and renew appreciation for the fundamental principle of the rule of law and the critical role of informed, engaged citizens.

The vignettes highlight the following cases:

The Boston Massacre

William Seward's defense of William Freeman

The Lemmon Slave Case

Susan B. Anthony jailed for voting

The Pentagon Papers Case

The Legacy of John Adams: The Boston Massacre

The public protests before the Boston Massacre are similar to recent events and demonstrations by people within the United States and around the world. Look through the newspaper (in-print or electronically) for examples of people protesting. Compare and contrast these current protesters with the Boston colonists and the actions/reactions of the British soldiers. Discuss what you've found as a class.

The Boston Massacre: 1770	Modern Protests Today

Follow Up: Firm British control and the colonists' reaction to it, ultimately lead to the American Revolution and beginning of a new nation. What do you think might be the long term effects of protests going on today?

Bonus Activity: Look for stories that involve prisoners in Guantanamo and legal actions involving the handling of their cases. How do their cases compare with other cases routinely brought before American courts?

The Legacy of John Adams: William Seward's defense of William Freeman

Look through the news (in-print or online) for examples a person or group of people defending a person or group that is highly unpopular in the eyes of the general public. Write a brief summary of the circumstances surrounding the controversy, including all points of view.

Examine the issue:

What?

Who?

When?

Where?

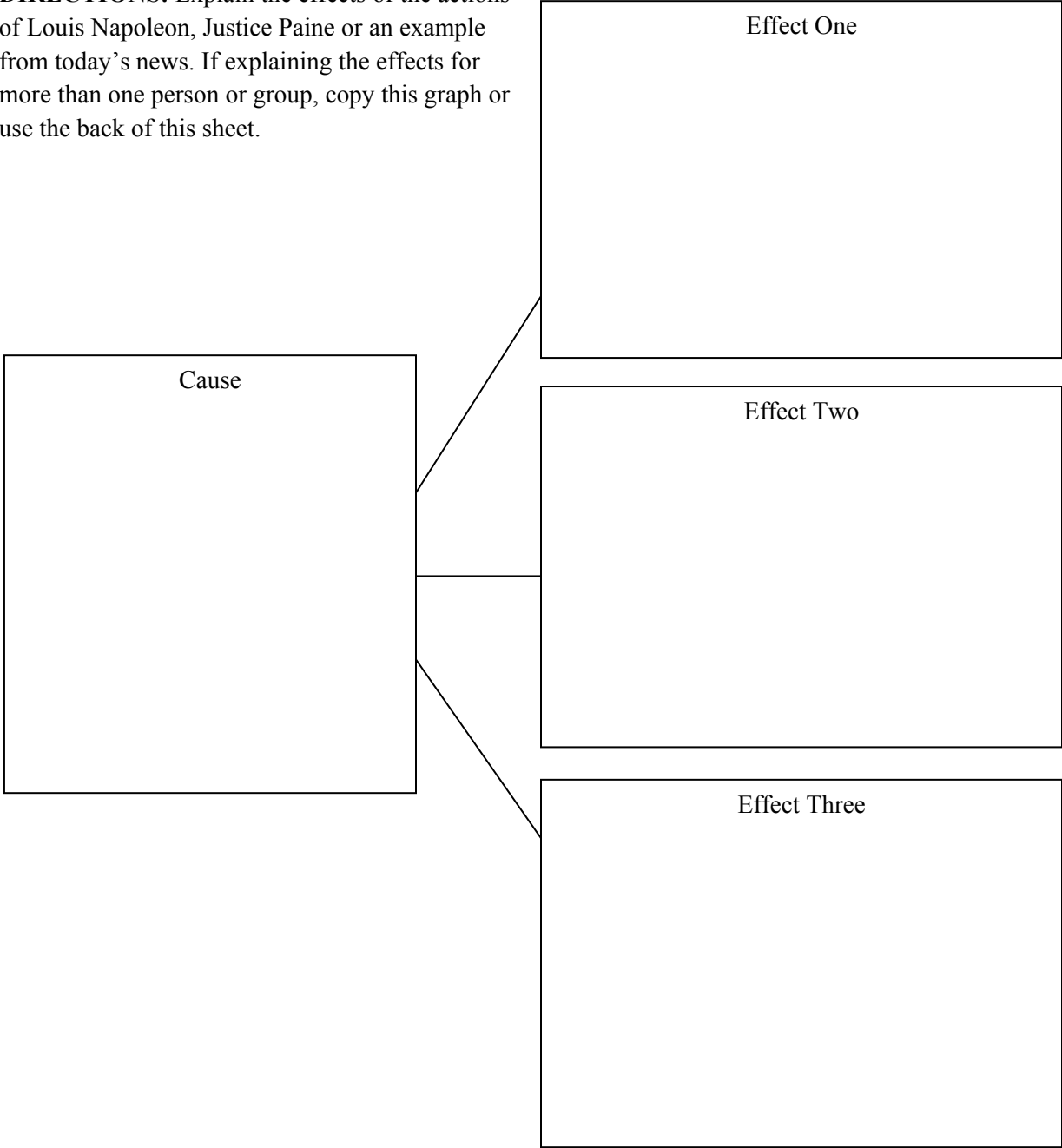
Why?

How?

Follow up: As a class, discuss potential ways to solve the injustice. Think about the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How of the class' best solution.

The Legacy of John Adams: The Lemmon Slave Case

DIRECTIONS: Explain the effects of the actions of Louis Napoleon, Justice Paine or an example from today's news. If explaining the effects for more than one person or group, copy this graph or use the back of this sheet.



Follow up: Are you surprised by any of the effects? If so, which ones and why?

The Legacy of John Adams: Susan B. Anthony jailed for voting

Look through editions of the newspaper for editorials. Note how these persuasive pieces use facts to support their opinion. Imagine you lived during Susan B. Anthony's times. Use these editorials as a model and write how Anthony or someone else involved in the case might have felt. Use the grid below, organize the facts you've found concerning women's right to vote. Be sure to include the points that support the opposing point of view. By knowing and understanding the opposition's argument, you can strengthen your own position.

SUPPORTING FACTS	
PROS	CONS

Follow up: As a class, share opinions verbally during a controlled debate.

Better at expressing yourself visually? On the back of this sheet draw an editorial cartoon that clearly argues your side of the issue.

The Legacy of John Adams: The Pentagon Papers Case

Our nation's founders realized someone needed to hold the government accountable for its actions. The First Amendment, freedom of the press, ensures that newspapers and other media continue to serve as the "public's watchdog." Publishing information and commentary on controversial topics are two ways newspapers exercise this responsibility.

- ♦ Look through editions of the newspaper for examples of the newspaper holding the government or elected officials responsible for their actions (or in some cases, inaction). Imagine you are an elected official; briefly write how you would work to resolve this issue.

Issue	Your solution

Follow up: Conduct research on the reasons how and why government might succeed in halting publication of documents, such as the Pentagon Papers. What's the "heavy burden?" Also, compare the release of the Pentagon Papers with the recent publication of some classified material on the website WikiLeaks. Use newspaper archives to gather information.

Additional Internet Resources (in alphabetical order):

Autobiography of William H. Seward from 1801 to 1834: 1831-1846, By William Henry Seward, Frederick William Seward: <http://tinyurl.com/SewardBIO>

Boston Massacre Historical Society: <http://www.bostonmassacre.net/>

Editorial/Political Cartoon Analysis Worksheet: <http://nieonline.com/cftc/pdfs/eval.pdf>

Federal Judicial Center: **The Trial of Susan B. Anthony: A Short Narrative:**
<http://tinyurl.com/SBAnthonySummary>

The Lemmon Slave Case: *New York Times* Editorial, April 26, 1860:
<http://www.nytimes.com/1860/04/26/news/the-lemmon-slave-case.html>

National Archives at New York City: **Susan B. Anthony and the Struggle for Suffrage**
<http://www.archives.gov/northeast/nyc/education/suffrage.html>

National Security Archives at George Washington University: **The Pentagon Papers: Secrets, Lies and Audiotapes** – Audiotapes from the Nixon White House:
<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB48/nixon.html>

Supreme Court Briefs and Opinions:
<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB48/supreme.html>

New York News Publishers Association: **Understanding News Media** features and graphic organizers: <http://www.nynpa.com/nie/understandingnewsmedia.html>

New York State Civics Roadmap: <http://www.nyscms.org/>

State Court Watch: A site that shows connections between state case law, famous U.S. Supreme Court cases, and topics covered in U.S. Government and citizenship classes:
<http://www.statecourtwatch.org>

If you've enjoyed this series of vignettes and graphic organizers and would like to learn more about civics and law related education visit the Law, Youth and Citizenship Program of the NYS Bar Association online at www.lycny.org.