



REENACTING HISTORY

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I recently tried a new classroom approach, which worked very well. Although I am a firm believer in the Socratic method, combined with reasonably dynamic lectures, sometimes those long night classes need a change of pace.

I had assigned my History 251 class a reader which included a partial transcript of the trial of Captain Preston, the British commander involved with the Boston Massacre. While the material was interesting, I thought it might be even more so if we tried to recreate the trial itself.

I first asked for volunteers to serve as defense and prosecuting attorneys, although these were not included in the transcript. The six brave volunteers were instructed to be prepared to question the witnesses. The text had thoughtfully provided some sample questions. I then assigned the rest of the class to be either witnesses or jurors. Each witness had to be prepared to answer, in character, questions about his/her testimony. Although there was some initial confusion and embarrassment, we all soon became engrossed in the 200-year-old trial. When the witnesses testified, it soon became clear that some of them were lying, and it was also possible to reconstruct what probably did happen that night. At the end of the trial, the jurors acquitted Captain Preston.

The trial format or re-enactment can provide an appealing change of pace along with increased student involvement, without demanding an excessive amount of extra preparation. ●

BIOLOGY 104 HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #2

Is A Gene An Organism's
Way Of Making Another Organism?
Or Is An Organism A Gene's
Way Of Making Another Gene?

ED BOSTICK

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Altruism Among the Anthropoids

Mong the Magnificent Pithecanthropus
Lived long ago in an African locus.
Polygynous Mong had eight lovely
mates.

Wonderful wives! Steatopygous nates!

Thirty-six children, some girls and
some lads,

All of them Mong's, the fruit of his
'nads.

Uncles and aunts and plenty of cousins
Made up Mong's tribe - there were
dozens and dozens!

Mong *et al* would wander the plain,
Looking for grub and hoping for rain.
Herbs, roots, and weeds were the
usual treat,

With leftover carcasses providing
the meat.

Oh Life, it was swell - a Garden of
Eden!

Lots of bright sunshine and plenty
of feedin'!

The troglodyte way was great for
them all;

But into all caves some darkness must
fall.

One day while the tribe was searching
for lunch,

A lion approached and threatened the
bunch.

Magnificent Mong, who was leading
the pack,

Had to make a decision - how to foil
the attack.

Mong had two choices! How could
he decide?

Should he go for the lion or turn tail
and hide?

Mong saved the tribe if he jumped on
the feline,
And all of his relatives made a fast
bee-line

For the tops of the trees. He protected
his species;

But Mong was digested and became
lion feces.

But what if our boy had opted to skip?
The kinfolks were eaten, the lion
licked his lip.

Mong shed a few tears but felt little
guilt,

He really felt glad that *his* blood wasn't
spilt.

Mong the Survivor, the King of the
Sneakies,

Later was fossilized and found by the
Leakeys.

Now for your homework - here comes
your assignment!

Please try to keep your thoughts in
alignment,

And write a brief essay about Mong's
proper choice:

Should he stay there and fight or run
and rejoice?

In a nutshell, as instructor to student,
I'm asking which choice would be the
more prudent:

To sacrifice family, saving his skin
Or to be altruistic, saving his kin?

