

The Da Vinci Code- Fact vs. Fiction

Post-Show Activity

Fact vs. Fiction

Goals:

- Students will identify, research, and discuss various claims made in *The Da Vinci Code*
- Students will express understanding through writing and presenting
- Students will connect their findings to themes of *The Da Vinci Code*

NOTE: This activity has been aligned with TEKS and [Universal Design for Learning](#). TEKS can be found at the end of this document.

Materials Needed

- Computer with internet access
- Pencil/paper (optional)

Introduction

- Begin by asking students what they know about conspiracy theories
 - Can you define ‘conspiracy theory’?
 - Can you give an example of a conspiracy theory?
 - Are there any conspiracy theories you think have some credibility?
- Explain that one of the reasons *The Da Vinci Code* became such a phenomenon was the claim that Dan Brown made that his work was ‘fact.’ Many people reacted strongly to some of the ‘facts’ he wrote about.

Notes for UDL alignment: Use guiding questions to support different ways of recalling information. Invite students to help summarize the story aloud or with gestures.

Fact vs. Fiction

- Ensure students know how to find credible sources. Talk about the difference in blogs; sites that end in .edu or .org; Wikipedia, etc and how to distinguish fact from fiction.
- Decide if you are going to have students work independently or in small groups. (Younger students will do better in groups, more advanced students can work independently)

- Choose claims made in *The Da Vinci Code* for students to classify as fact or fiction. Some are listed below, but feel free to add others or have students choose things that stood out to them.
 - Mary Magdalene is featured in *The Last Supper* (the figure to Jesus's right).
 - The title of the painting "Mona Lisa" is an anagram of two Egyptian gods representing the divine unity of male and female (Amon and Isis/L'isa).
 - December 25 (Christmas) was originally a pagan holiday.
 - The Priory of Sion is an organization that protects an ancient secret.
 - The Rose Line, Rosslyn Chapel, and roses are all clues to the Holy Grail. (These can be separated if you choose)
 - Opus Dei is a branch of the Catholic Church committed to power and secrecy.
- 2. Students must research their chosen claim and identify it as fact or fiction.
- 3. Make sure students cite their sources!

Notes for UDL alignment: To provide multiple ways of expressing understanding, consider letting students act or physicalize their responses. You can also utilize Think-Pair-Share to provide additional solo and partner processing time.

Connect to Themes

- Once students have completed their research, have them identify a theme from the play that their claim aligns with. There may be other themes that you come up with as a class, but here are a few to get you started:
 - **Fact versus Fiction**
 - **Self Interest versus Collective Good**
 - **Secrets and Power**
 - **Patriarchal Structures versus Female Empowerment**

Notes for UDL alignment: Support multiple means of expression by allowing dictation, pre-drawn icons, or alternative art tools.

Reflection and Sharing

- Conclude the lesson by inviting students to share their discoveries. Did they learn anything that surprised them?

Notes for UDL alignment: Encourage students to share in pairs, small groups, or through written reflection to offer varied ways of participating.

TEKS

English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR)- Grades 7-8

5(B): generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information

6(C): use text evidence to support an appropriate response

English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR)- English I-IV

5(J): defend or challenge the authors' claims using relevant text evidence.

11(G)i: examine sources for credibility and bias, including omission

English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR)- English I

11(E): defend or challenge the authors' claims using relevant text evidence.

English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR)- English II-IV

11(E): Locate relevant sources

Fine Arts – Theatre I-IV:

5(A): evaluate and practice appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances

Fine Arts – Theatre I:

4(B): relate historical and cultural influences on theatre

Fine Arts – Theatre II:

4(A): analyze historical and cultural influences on theatre

Fine Arts – Theatre III-IV:

4(A): evaluate historical and cultural influences on theatre