

Arkansas History Lesson Plan

Early Arkansan Politics: The Crittenden Conway Duel

***Grades/Levels**
Grades 5-12

***Subject**
Arkansas History

***Author**
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***School/Grade Level**
University of Arkansas M.A.T. Program

***Enduring Understandings:**
I know the roles that Arkansas played in early American History

***Essential Questions:**
Who was the first governor of Arkansas State?
What is a primary source?

***Lesson Plan:**

1) Objectives:

The students will be able to:

- A) Experience what it would be like to investigate a crime scene.**
- B) Evaluate evidence and primary/secondary sources by applying their knowledge of Arkansas History**
- C) Learn about famous Arkansas politicians**
- D) Learn about early Arkansas politics and the importance of dueling to it.**
- E) Create a crime report that would propose a solution to the crime**

2) Materials:

- A) Evidence (See Attachment for list of evidence)**
- B) Tape**
- C) Rubber gloves**
- D) Map drawn of the room**
- E) Evidence folders**
- F) Pens, pencils, markers**

- G) Large squares of bulletin board paper**
- H) Clue list for teacher**

3) Activities/Procedures:

A) Before class, the room will need to be set up. The desks can be moved if space is needed. The set up will require a lot of space for planting evidence and the “body”. Use masking tape to outline a “body” on the floor (to look like a chalk outline). Number the evidence, 1-13. Plant the “gun” (evidence piece 2) and membership card (evidence piece 11) on the “body” (outline). The other evidence can be planted elsewhere in the room. It is a good idea to designate an area around the body for the students to focus on. A map of the classroom should be put somewhere that is accessible to the students. An accessible timeline should also be posted, along with 9 pieces of large bulletin board paper with the names of the suspects written at the top.

Time for preparation: 1hour

B) When the students come in, keep them away from the crime scene and tell them that there has been a murder. Then, tell them that the teacher had been planning an amazing lesson plan for the day. She had transported a number of famous Arkansan politicians from early Arkansas statehood to the future to help teach the class the role that they played in Arkansas’ history. The teacher had to go to her car to get some supplies, and on her way back, at exactly 5:30 AM, she heard two shots being fired. She ran into the room and found a body on the floor. The teacher then has the class get into groups of two if there are more than 12 students. She passes out rubber gloves, telling her students that she needs their help to figure out what took place in room 402.

Time: 5 min.

C) The students should search for evidence hidden in the designated area. They can’t touch anything without gloves, or they might contaminate the evidence. They must place each piece of evidence in its own evidence folder. On the front of the folder, they must write the number of the evidence, summarize what it is (e.g., primary source, secondary source, and what type (e.g., journal entry, newspaper article) and then make conclusions about what the evidence implies. Once they have done this with the first piece of evidence, they may go and look for more until all of the evidence is found.

Time: 15 minutes.

D) Once all of the evidence is found and evaluated, have all of the students sit down. Talk about possible suspects to lead them in the right direction for younger ages.

Time: 5 minutes

E) Have the students present the evidence to the class from 1-13. Call on them, starting with one and working to 13. Help them evaluate and suggest possible conclusions if they seem to be having trouble. Make sure they distinguish who the evidence is about (e.g., who was the 1st governor of Arkansas State?)

Time: 15-20 minutes

F) Have them think about who committed the murder, who they killed, and why they did it.

Time: 2 minutes

G) If there is time, allow the students to go to the paper with the name of their prime suspect on it.

Time: 2 minutes

H) If there is time, have them write why they think this person committed the murder, and who they think they murdered.

Time: 3 minutes

4) Homework:

A) Students shall evaluate the evidence and write up a crime report for homework. The report should include who they think was murdered, who killed them, and why. They should back up this conclusion with specific examples of evidence.

***Evidence:**

- 1) Eyewitness Account: The first governor of Arkansas Territory was seen leaving the room at 5:10 AM, and never returned until the shots were heard at 5:30 AM. When he arrived in the room after hearing the shots, he saw Mrs. Keen standing over the body with a terrified look on her face.**
- 2) A "gun" (a drawing of a gun) that was in the hand of the victim.**
- 3) A "gun"**
- 4) Eyewitness Account: The first governor of Arkansas State was last seen leaving room 402 at 5:00 AM. He did not return until shots were heard at 5:30 AM. When he turned the hallway, he saw Mrs. Law running from the room looking worried.**
- 5) Journal entry from Mrs. Law saying that she secretly wanted to be the 1st Governor of Arkansas. She invented a time machine to go back in time, and now all she had to do was eliminate her competition.**

- 6) Copy of Arkansas Gazette with two articles. One says that Conway beat Oden in the Congressional election of 1827. The other is an article where a witness heard Crittenden threaten to kill Woodruff for publishing 'A Voter.'
- 7) Blank lesson plan of Mrs. Keen's. On it, she has written that she couldn't think of a lesson plan for that day, but that she would do anything to make class more interesting. ANYTHING for a good lesson plan.
- 8) Copy of Arkansas Gazette with two articles. One claiming that Woodruff published awful letters about Crittenden. Some were written by Conway. The other stating that Sevier was next in line for the Congressional seat after Conway.
- 9) Summary of court case between Crittenden and Woodruff, where Crittenden is suing Woodruff for \$25,000 for slandering his good name.
- 10) Arkansas Gazette clip with two articles. One establishes importance of dueling to early elite in Arkansas. The other is a sworn testimony from Woodruff saying he would never duel.
- 11) Family membership card, planted on the "body".
- 12) Eyewitness account: The person who lost to Conway in the Congressional election of 1827 was last seen in room 402 at 5:20 AM. While he was leaving, he saw Henry Conway entering with an angry look on his face. Sevier was still in the room when he left.
- 13) Eyewitness account: Sevier left the room at 5:28 AM, as Robert Crittenden stormed in shouting, "You ruined my career, Conway!"

***Implications of Evidence:**

- 1) Mrs. Law- Secretly wanted to be the first governor of Arkansas. Did she eliminate her only competition while she had the chance?
- 2) Mrs. Keen- Her desire to make a good lesson plan that would give her students a love of history might have led her to murder.
- 3) James Miller- 1st governor of Arkansas territory is eliminated by eyewitness account.
- 4) Henry Conway- Ran against Odon in election, and became Arkansas delegate to Congress in 1827. Did this make Odon mad enough at him that he killed Conway? He wrote mean letters about Crittenden to the Gazette. Would these letters have made Crittenden angry enough to kill Conway? He was a member of the family (family ID card).
- 5) James Conway- He was a member of the family (family ID card) first governor of Arkansas is eliminated through eye witness account.
- 6) Robert Crittenden- Recently had articles published against him in the Gazette. He was angry at Woodruff for publishing these articles. He was angry at Conway for writing these articles. Was he angry enough at either of these people to murder them?

- 7) Sevier- Was next in line for the congressional delegate after Henry Conway. He really wanted the job. Was it enough to drive him to murder? He was a member of the family (family ID card)
- 8) Odon- Was angry that Henry Conway won the election for delegate to Congress in 1827. Was he bitter enough to murder Conway?
- 9) Woodruff- Was in a fierce legal battle with Crittenden over some letters he published that slandered his good name. Did he murder Crittenden to avoid paying the \$25,000?

***Content Standards Addressed**

Arkansas Social Studies Curriculum Framework:

SSPS 1.1. Identify primary and secondary and sources.

SSPS 1.3. Apply historical methodologies to understand the differences between fact and opinion.

SSPS.1.4. Develop creative and critical thinking skills.

PAG 1.3. Summarize the characteristics of effective leadership in Arkansas in historical and contemporary time periods.

<p>TPS.4.AH.9-12.4</p>	<p>Discuss the historical importance of Arkansas' territorial officials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Miller • Robert Crittenden • Henry Conway • James Conway • Ambrose Sevier • <i>"The Family"</i>
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References:

1. The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture: Dueling. <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=3692>
2. The University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law Territorial Brief s and Records: Robert Crittenden vs. William E. Woodruff. <http://arcourts.ualr.edu/case-075/75.1.html>
3. An Arkansas History for Young People: Third Edition by T. Harri Baker and Jane Browning