

The Da Vinci Code- Fact vs. Fiction

Post-Show Activity

Fact vs. Fiction

Goals:

- Students will identify, research, and discuss claims made in *The Da Vinci Code*.
- Students will evaluate sources for credibility and bias.
- Students will express understanding through multiple modes of communication.
- Students will connect research findings to the play's larger themes.
- Students will engage in Artful Thinking routines to guide analysis and reflection.

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)
- Optional: graphic organizer, art supplies for posters, audio/video tools

Introduction

Begin by asking students:

- Can you define “conspiracy theory”?
- Can you give an example?
- Are there any you think have some credibility?

Explain that *The Da Vinci Code* became a phenomenon partly because Dan Brown claimed his story was based on “facts.” Many readers reacted strongly to these claims.

UDL Tip: Use guiding questions, visuals, and gestures to support different ways of recalling and expressing background knowledge.

Exploring Claims

- Introduce several claims from *The Da Vinci Code* (students may also suggest their own):
 - Mary Magdalene is featured in *The Last Supper* (figure to Jesus's right).
 - “Mona Lisa” is an anagram of Amon and Isis/L'isa.

- Christmas (Dec. 25) was originally a pagan holiday.
- The Priory of Sion is an ancient secret society.
- The Rose Line, Rosslyn Chapel, and roses are clues to the Holy Grail.
- Opus Dei is a Catholic branch committed to secrecy and power.

UDL Tip: Present claims in multiple forms: text cards, images of artworks, or short video clips.

Step 2: Research and Analysis

Teach students how to identify credible sources (e.g., .edu, .org, peer-reviewed, mainstream news vs. blogs, Wikipedia).

Students select one claim to research (individually or in groups).

Use **Claim–Support–Question** to structure analysis:

- **Claim:** What is being asserted?
- **Support:** What evidence exists (and from which sources)?
- **Question:** What uncertainties or new questions arise?

Choice in Expression: Students may record findings in writing, as a podcast, infographic, or video clip.

Connect to Themes

After fact-checking, students link their claim to a theme from the play. Options include:

- Fact vs. Fiction
- Secrets and Power
- Self-Interest vs. Collective Good
- Patriarchal Structures vs. Female Empowerment

Artful Thinking Extension: Use **Connect–Extend–Challenge**:

- How does this claim connect to what you already knew?
- How does it extend your thinking?
- What challenged or surprised you?

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

Creating Presentations

Students present their findings in their chosen format:

- Mini research paper or written summary.

- Infographic or fact-check poster.
- Short video or podcast episode.
- Tableau or skit dramatizing fact vs. fiction.

UDL Tip: Provide sentence frames, graphic organizers, or digital tools for students who need structured scaffolding.

Reflection and Sharing

Conclude with class reflection. Options:

- Pair or small group discussions.
- Gallery walk of posters/infographics.
- Anonymous digital poll: Which claims were most surprising?

Final reflection routine:

- **I Used to Think... Now I Think...** – How did your understanding shift?
- **OR Connect–Extend–Challenge** – What connections, extensions, or challenges emerged?

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