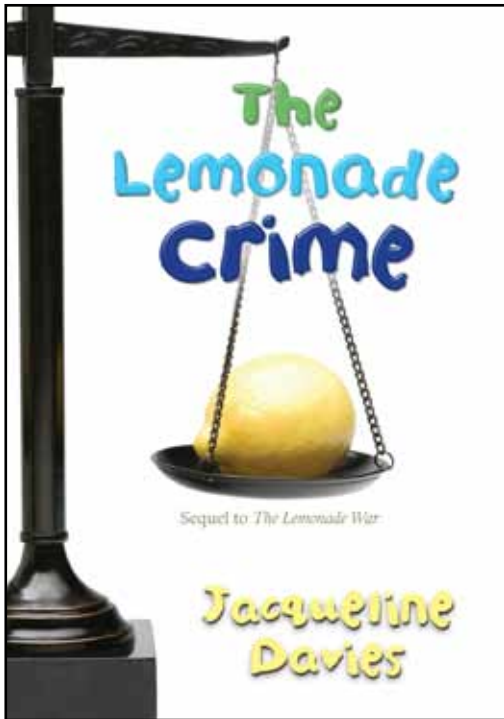


# A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO The Lemonade Crime

BY JACQUELINE DAVIES



“It isn’t fair” is a refrain teachers of middle elementary and early middle school grades hear often. At this age, children are all about justice—absolute, black and white justice. In small ways and large, that is the main theme of Jacqueline Davies’s *The Lemonade Crime*.

The novel begins with Jessie Treski complaining, “No fair!” when her brother, Evan, takes four chocolate chip cookies, leaving her three. Is she right? Is that “no fair”? As the novel progresses, broader questions emerge:

- Can a person accused of a crime get a fair trial?
- Is guilt or innocence absolute?
- Should circumstantial evidence play a role in determining justice?
- Are there fair consequences for crimes?

Students will think about these questions in the context of the engrossing plot and engaging characters in *The Lemonade Crime*. And, with the questions, discussions, and activities suggested in the guide, they’ll think about the whole issue of fairness in their own lives.

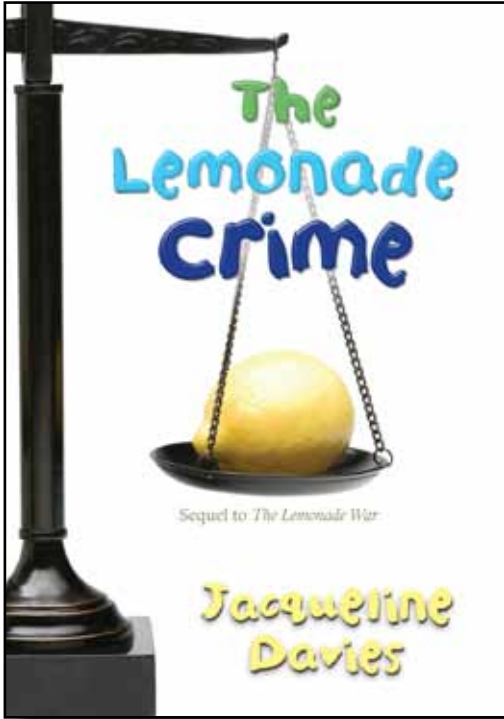
## ACTIVITIES

### Reader’s Theater

The centerpiece of the novel is the trial for the “lemonade crime.” With the help of your students, adapt the trial scenes into play form and create a reader’s theater. There is plenty of dialogue to build the script on, and there are even diagrams to help your students create the stage set.

Before the play writing begins, be sure your students are clear about the sequence of events involved in the trial. Have them create a flow chart of the actions listed here in the proper chronological order.

- Defense rests
- Jury votes
- Jack testifies about the pool party
- Scott is acquitted
- Megan becomes Scott’s lawyer
- Jessie hands Scott an arrest warrant
- Evan testifies
- Jessie sets up the yard for the trial
- Closing arguments
- Megan questions witnesses
- Court is adjourned
- Jessie, Evan, and Scott sign an agreement of atonement
- Prosecution rests
- Scott testifies
- David calls the trial to order



You'll have roles for 22 to 26 students. Below is a list of characters:

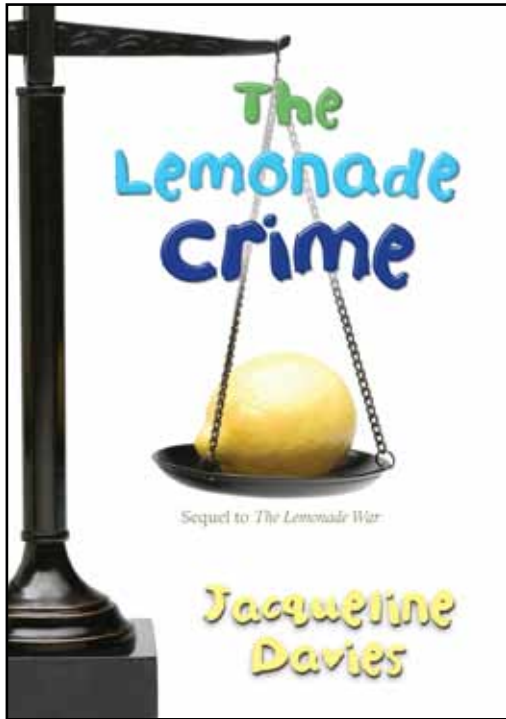
- Jessie: prosecutor
- Evan: plaintiff
- Scott: defendant
- David: judge
- Megan: Scott's lawyer
- Paul, Ryan, Kevin . . . : witnesses
- Adam: Evan's friend
- Sally, Carly, and 10 others: jury
- \*Reporters (optional)

\*You can add additional characters such as newspaper and TV reporters to enhance the activity. The reporters can have scripted dialogue or they can be allowed to improvise their questions. (Of course, the questions and answers should reflect the storyline and how the characters feel about what has happened.)

To help prepare for their roles, students should complete the following character chart:

Character	Role in the story	Personality traits	Trial Persona: cooperative, defiant, manipulative, indifferent (pick one)
Jessie		Tries to be perfect	
Evan			Indifferent
Scott			
David			
Megan	Evan and Jessie's friend, Scott's lawyer		
Adam			
Paul			
Jack			

Perform the play in the class and then "take it on the road." To broaden participation and to help your students' understanding of the process, change the cast for each performance.



## RESEARCH PROJECT

Jessie is a stickler for fairness. Whether at home with her brother or in school with her classmates, she wants to be treated fairly and as an equal. Explain to the class that our Founding Fathers were also sticklers for fairness. They were worried that the government they were creating might act unfairly and unreasonably. The Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments to the Constitution addressed that issue by delineating the rights people have when they are suspected or accused of a crime. Divide your class into four groups and have them research how each of these amendments protects the rights of citizens and insures that they all will be treated fairly. The students should then write about how each of these amendments can be applied to the trial of Scott Spencer in *The Lemonade Crime*.

These websites will be useful resources:

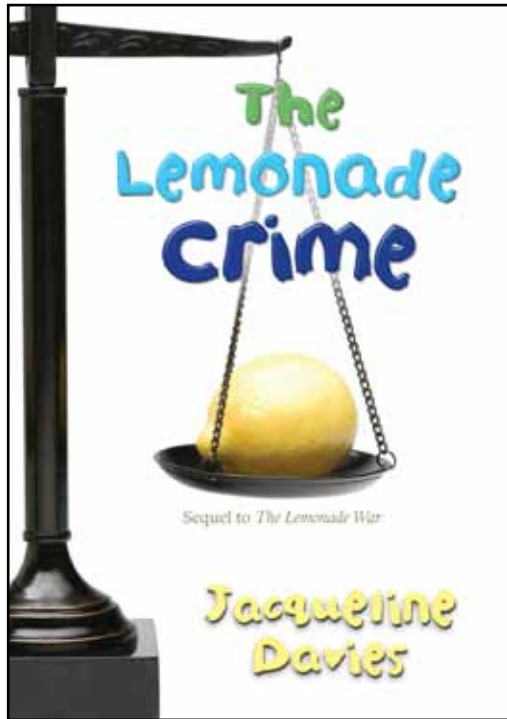
[new.civiced.org/resources/publications/resource-materials/465-amendments-to-the-constitution-of-the-united-states-of-america](http://new.civiced.org/resources/publications/resource-materials/465-amendments-to-the-constitution-of-the-united-states-of-america)

[www.historyforkids.org/learn/northamerica/after1500/government/billofrights.htm](http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/northamerica/after1500/government/billofrights.htm)

## LANGUAGE ARTS—VOCABULARY

All but three of the chapter names in *The Lemonade Crime* are legal terms or concepts. Your students will find other legal words and ideas in the text itself. Create a class “law glossary” to keep track of the new words introduced. Your students may know other legal terms. Add them to the list. Ask students to follow news coverage (in newspapers, on TV, or online) and bring in examples of how these words and terms are used in day-to-day life.





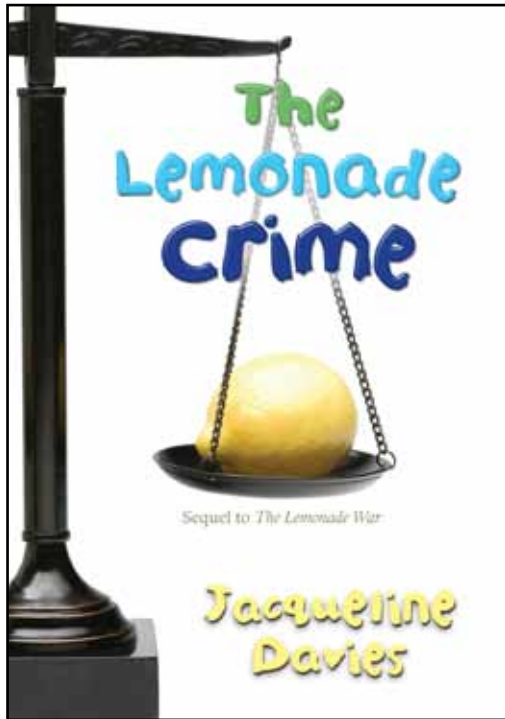
## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

According to the American Bar Association, due process means the right to be treated fairly by all agencies of your government. Due process is not limited to making sure you are treated fairly by law enforcement agencies and the courts. The right to due process extends to all your dealings with the government, such as whenever it creates laws about your right to travel, raise a family, or use your property. It must also be fair if you apply for a government job or receive government benefits.

1. Point out that the public gets much of its information about due process from television dramas. Have students watch some currently popular television series about police work, taking notes on procedures followed. Ask the students what they would have done in the situations portrayed. What actions by the police officers were fair or unfair? Then invite a police officer to visit the class and analyze the accuracy of the information conveyed on television.
2. Arrange to have the class visit and observe procedures at a local court hearing. If possible, have the judge discuss procedures with students.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Like so many students, Jessie frequently complains about how kids don't follow the rules and how things are not fair. When Scott jumps ahead of her in line, she tells the teacher. "Scott needs to learn a thing or two about rules." [p. 10] But Jessie breaks the rules herself: first when she passes a note to Evan in the class, and then when she's reading a book outside during recess. Jessie even manipulates the trial as she is setting it up to favor her point of view. How does she do that? Does this plan work for her? Why or why not? Often we see rules as they apply to someone else and not to ourselves. My rule is fair; your rule is unfair. Have your students cite examples from their own lives when they've thought this way.



2. Scott was once accused of stealing Ryan's lunch money, but no one had actually seen him do it. After talking about that with Megan, Evan realizes that it was just a rumor. He remembered that his mother once said to him: "Rumors are like pigeons. They fly everywhere and make a mess wherever they go." [p. 36] What did his mother mean by that? Have the students talk about times they have spread rumors. Then have them talk about times that they have been victims of rumors.
  
3. Evan is convinced that Scott's new X-box is proof that Scott stole the lemonade money and used it to buy the game. Is this factual evidence or circumstantial evidence, or is it opinion? Discuss with the class the differences and what the phrase "burden of proof" means.
  
4. Both Evan and Scott stole money. Evan took the money to get even with his sister but intended to return it. Scott took the money because it was there. Does it make a difference why the money was taken? Are the two crimes the same or different? Do we forgive Evan because we like him better? Do you think a jury should evaluate a case based on the way they feel about the people involved? Scott was eventually acquitted of the crime. What does that tell you about the justice system?
  
5. Jacqueline Davies sets *The Lemonade Crime* during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur—the Day of Atonement, when Jews assess their actions and take responsibility for their wrongdoings of the previous year. Yom Kippur is the time they ask for forgiveness. What lessons does Evan learn from his friends Adam and Paul about what true atonement is?
  
6. Will Evan and Scott ever be real friends? What do your students think?

*This guide was created by Clifford Wohl, educational consultant*