2016-17 Middle School Mock Trial
Case Errata & Clarifications

British Crown v Johnny Tremain

Q: I am wondering about the special instructions in the Johnny Tremain case. It states that backstory and background is relevant and important to the trier of fact and cannot be objected to because of relevance. Does that mean that the kids can use information from the book in the case?
A: Some judges might find that Johnny's backstory and background (time at the Lapham shop for example) might not be relevant to the treason charge before the court. This special instruction is to make the judge aware that Johnny's entire story should be considered. This does not mean witnesses can testify using material outside of their witness statement, including case summary or the book.

Q: I have some questions about Johnny Tremain's citizenship status. In the book, he is born in a convent in the south of France 3 months after the death of his French father who married Johnny's English mother on a ship to France by the ship captain. His mother brought him to America and raised him in Townsend, Maine. That doesn't make him an English subject according to the Digest of the Law of England with Reference to the Conflict of Laws, Rule 24, Sub-Rule - "British nationality is not inherited through women (p.172)" - even though this was published in 1896 does it apply to Johnny? Is this just a fact for the prosecution to discover?
A: Johnny should be considered subject to the laws provided in the case, regardless of citizenship. Citizenship is not a question for this court and no outside research/resources should be used in crafting arguments for the court.

Q: Looking at Johnny Tremain's case, my students note that the Massachusetts Body of Liberties cited as an exhibit in the case was overturned by a new colonial charter in 1691. Is this an intentional part of the case that they could exploit or something we should ignore?
A: Teams should use the Massachusetts Body of Liberty exhibit as written. Any outside resources/research, including reference to other documents not included in the case, is not allowed