

The following exercises were used by Tanya MacDonald with her learners during the pilot of this resource. They are Making Thinking Visible (MTV) Routines. MTV is used to help learners think critically about a subject and to engage in collaborative discussion. The examples below were used in conjunction with the trial scene in 'The Laramie Project', which can be found [here](#) at time stamp: 1:19:55 - 1:25:09.

### Exercise 1: Tug of War

Group discussion - reasons for and against the death penalty.



Take a roll of paper (or three pieces of flip paper) and place it along a wall, the floor, or a bank of desks. Ask your learners, individually or in groups, to think about reasons for and against the death penalty and write them on post-it notes. As a whole class, look at the reasons and discuss whether they are weak or strong. Stick your strong justifications to the far end of the paper and weaker justifications towards the middle.

Why are we doing this with the learners?

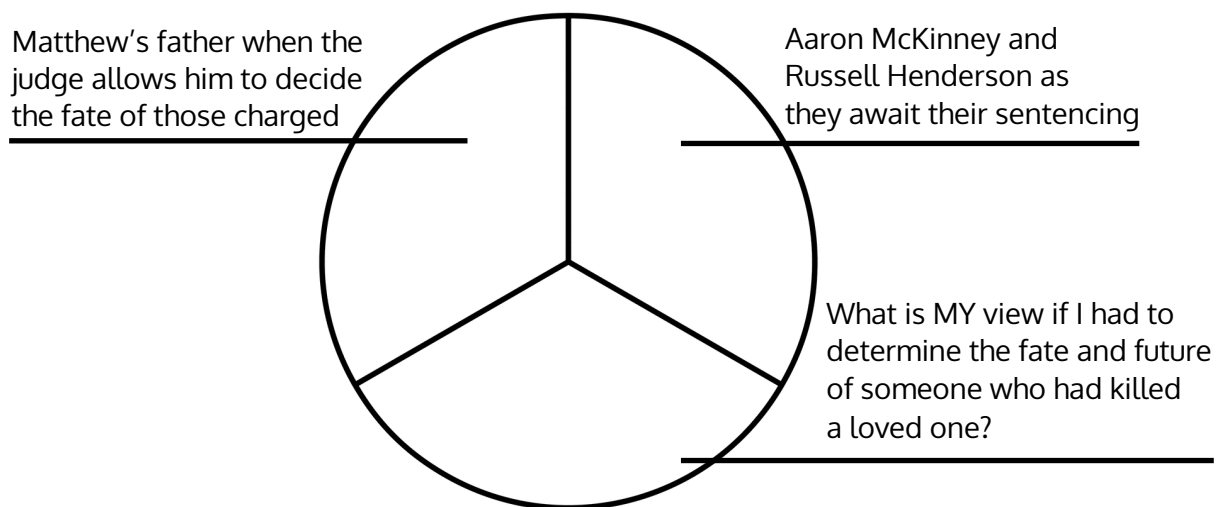
Taking a stance on an issue and supporting that stance with strong and sound reasoning is an important skill for life.

## Exercise 2: Circle of Viewpoints

The Circle of Viewpoints routine helps your learners to:

- identify different perspectives that could be present in or affected by what they have just read, seen or heard
- explore one perspective in further detail
- explain their reasoning
- ask questions from a differing perspective

Using the trial scene in 'The Laramie Project' look at the following viewpoints:



You could add as many characters to this viewpoints exercise as you wish.

If a thinking frame would be helpful for your learners, they can use the one below:

I am thinking about the court scene in 'The Laramie Project' from the point of view of (insert character name). I think (add their thoughts about how that character behaved/ what the character might be thinking/ what external factors the character has to think about). A question I want to ask is (what is your learner curious about?).

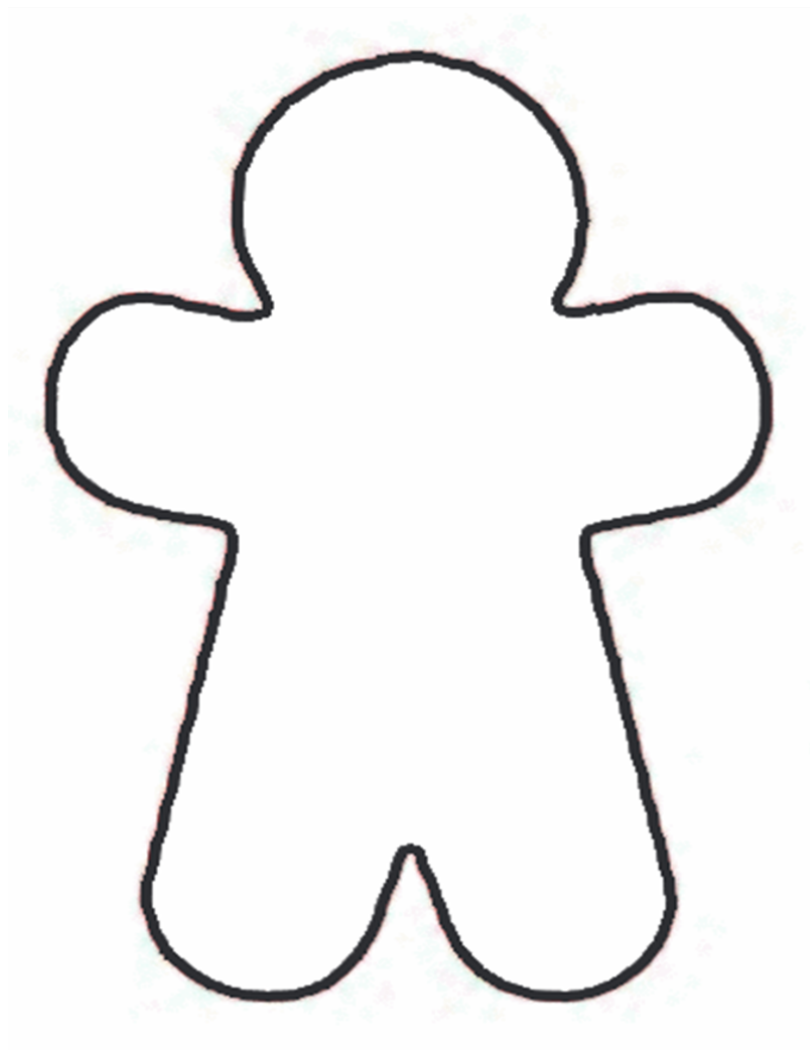
### Exercise 3: Step Inside

This exercise expands upon the circle of viewpoints. This thinking routine tries to connect with one of the opinions in the scene and then gets your learners to place themselves in their situation. It helps them to understand the nuances in opinion.

Use the following 5 questions to guide their thinking:

1. Describe the things this person can see?
2. What does this person know, understand or believe?
3. Consider what this person cares for and loves.
4. What questions does this person have?
5. What do they wonder about?

Ask them to label the diagram below with the answers the character would give to the 5 questions. Then ask the learners to put themselves in that situation and label another diagram with the answers they would give. You can then ask the learners to do a comparison of the viewpoints.



You can find more thinking routines at <https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>.