



# AT THE EXHIBIT: ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

## Long Road to Justice

The African American Experience in the  
Massachusetts Courts

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**Note to the Teacher:** These activities were created by Primary Source ([www.primarysource.org](http://www.primarysource.org)) to focus and enhance student learning when visiting the exhibit at the Edward Brooke Courthouse. They engage students in critical analysis, close observation, and the identification of key ideas and details from the exhibit. Print and distribute these worksheet pages to your class or share them digitally. Clipboards or notebooks will help students to take careful notes as they circulate. These activities may also be adapted for use with the virtual exhibit, [www.longroadtojustice.org](http://www.longroadtojustice.org), hosted by the Massachusetts Historical Society.



➔ **Worksheet #1**

**WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?**

**Student Directions:**

The exhibit you are visiting, **Long Road to Justice**, is divided into three sections, each on a different topic related to the African American experience in the Massachusetts courts: 1) Slavery 2) Education and 3) Participation. We ask you to visit each section, then in your own words, **write a clear summary of the main idea presented in that section**. Finally, **choose one strong detail** from the section that supports the main idea (for example, a legal case or historical incident) and explain your choice.

Topic	Your summary of the main idea	A supporting detail you chose and why
<b>I. Slavery and the Massachusetts Courts</b>		
<b>II. Education and the Massachusetts Courts</b>		
<b>III. Participation and the Massachusetts Courts</b>		



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## ➔ Worksheet #2

## REFLECTING ON THE “LONG ROAD TO JUSTICE” VIDEO

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### **Student Directions:**

After viewing the video, please write your thoughts in response to three of these questions. Choose the ones that interest you the most. You may write your answers on the back.

1. The interview subjects share personal stories of their struggle to participate equally as professionals in the legal system and the courts. What is an anecdote that stood out for you, and why?
2. In the courts — as lawyers, judges and citizens — African American women face a “double burden” of racism and sexism. How do the interview subjects speak to this issue? What do you think made their success possible despite this burden of discrimination?
3. Why for many Black judges and lawyers was full and equal jury participation for African American citizens a key issue to advocate?
4. What evidence do the interview subjects cite of progress toward racial equality in the courts? Do you agree with their assessment that progress has been made? Why/why not?
5. **A Challenge Choice:** “Institutionalized racism” is defined as the social policies and practices of groups, governments and organizations that result in widespread racial discrimination and inequality. In the film, what examples do African American judges and lawyers describe of institutionalized racism being practiced in the courts and legal system? What actions do you think are most effective in challenging these types of systematic or institutional discrimination?



➔ **Worksheet #3**

**PORTRAITS AT AN EXHIBITION**

**Long Road to Justice** is an exhibit designed to examine the question, *How have the African American community and the legal system of Massachusetts affected each other?* Three themes examined in this exhibit are (1) slavery and its abolition, (2) the struggle for equal education and (3) the participation of African Americans in the legal system. The goal of this activity is to introduce you to some of the people who have played important roles in the fight for justice and equality in Massachusetts.

**Student Directions:**

Select an interesting portrait from each panel. Why is he or she compelling? Record the information, your reactions and important information about the person’s participation in Massachusetts legal history.

Name and dates	What does the exhibit text tell us about the person?	What role did the person play in the struggle for justice?	Your reactions, thoughts and feelings



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➔ **Worksheet #4**

**ANALYZING IMAGES**

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The exhibit, **Long Road to Justice**, is richly illustrated with archival images—that is, historical primary sources that help us interpret the past through visual information.

**Student Directions:**

Choose an image that interested you or captured your attention.  
Provide a written description or a sketch in this box:

**Explain in writing:**

Why did you choose it?

What details are interesting?

What story does it tell?

What exhibit themes does it express?

**A Challenge Choice:**

Choose a second image that you think pairs with your first image in an interesting way. Explain your thought process: how do the two images compare/contrast? What story do they tell when put together?