Analyzing Engraving of the Boston Massacre

Activity 1: Day 2

Objectives:

1. The student will be able to apply his/her knowledge of the historical record pertaining to the Boston Massacre to analyze a well known primary source engraving and poem of the event.
2. The student will be able to identify discrepancies with the historical record made in the engraving and poem.
3. The student will be able to describe the viewpoint of the author/artist by analyzing the primary sources.

Materials/ Resources:

2. Classroom Study Guide Notes and Materials
3. Original Document: Link showing original engraving with poem attached
   [boston_massacre_engraving_with_poem]
   [an_account_of_the_military_massacre_at_boston]
5. Supportive original document: “1769 Merchants Call for a Repeal”

Preparation:

Time: One 50 minute class period

Small cooperative Grouping of 2-4 students

Handout containing copy of engraving and poem

If technology allows I usually have a large color copy of the engraving on the Promethean Board

Completion of ACTIVITY 1, Day 1 Prior Content/Fact review of what happened before the massacre.
Poem below the above engraving says:

Unhappy Boston! see thy Sons deplore
Thy hallow’d walks besmear’d with guiltless gore
While faithless Preston and his savage bands
With murd’rous rancor stretch their bloody hands
Like fierce barbarians grinning over their prey
Approve the carnage and enjoy the day.

If scalding drops from rage, from anguish wrung
If speechless sorrow, lab’ring for a tongue
Or if a weeping world can ought appease
The plaintive ghosts of victims such as these
The patriot’s copious tears for each are shed
A glorious tribute which embalms the dead.

But know, Fate summons to that awful goal
Where justice strips the murd’rer of his soul
Should venal c___ts, the scandal of the land,
Snatch the relentless villain from her Hand
Keen execrations on this plate inscrib’d
Shall reach a Judge who never can be brib’d.

The unhappy sufferers were Mesr’s Sam’l Gray, Sam’l Maverick, James Coldwell Crispus Attucks, &Patr.
Carr Killed

Six wounded; two of them (Christ’r Monk & John Clark) mortally.

Activity 1, Student Sheet

Engraving and Poem of the Boston Massacre

1. Are the engraving and poem examples of primary sources? Explain why or why not.

2. Apply your knowledge of what happened at the Boston Massacre to analyze the engraving and the poem. Use your resources (notes, textbook, original source article) to find at least 5 discrepancies with the historical facts.

3. What features of the picture or words in the poem help us understand what the viewpoint of the author/artist would be?

4. Would you expect the author/artist to be a LOYALIST OR A PATRIOT? Support your opinion with reasons.
5. Cameras were not invented during this time. If a picture was to be placed in a book or newspaper article it was usually from an engraving such as this one. Imagine you were a colonist living in a far off colony such as Georgia or Virginia. You pick up your daily newspaper and see the title mentioning a massacre in Boston and see the engraving in this activity. Describe what impact would this have on you. What emotions would you feel? Would it have grabbed your attention enough to read the article? Why do you think there are discrepancies with the historical record? Review, using your textbook, the definition of propaganda. Is this an example of propaganda? Why or Why not?

6. What is the problem with using a primary source such as this to write a historical report about the Boston Massacre?

7. Bonus: Research the engraving and poem using an encyclopedia or one of the links provided to find the author/artist. How does this influence your viewpoint of the cartoon/poem?