



# The Boston Massacre

# Instructions

- Rate each of the following exhibits based on how well it supports the statement:

***“Were the British soldiers guilty of murder for the events of the Boston Massacre?”***

- Each exhibit is rated from -2 (very against the statement) to + 2 (very supportive of the statement)

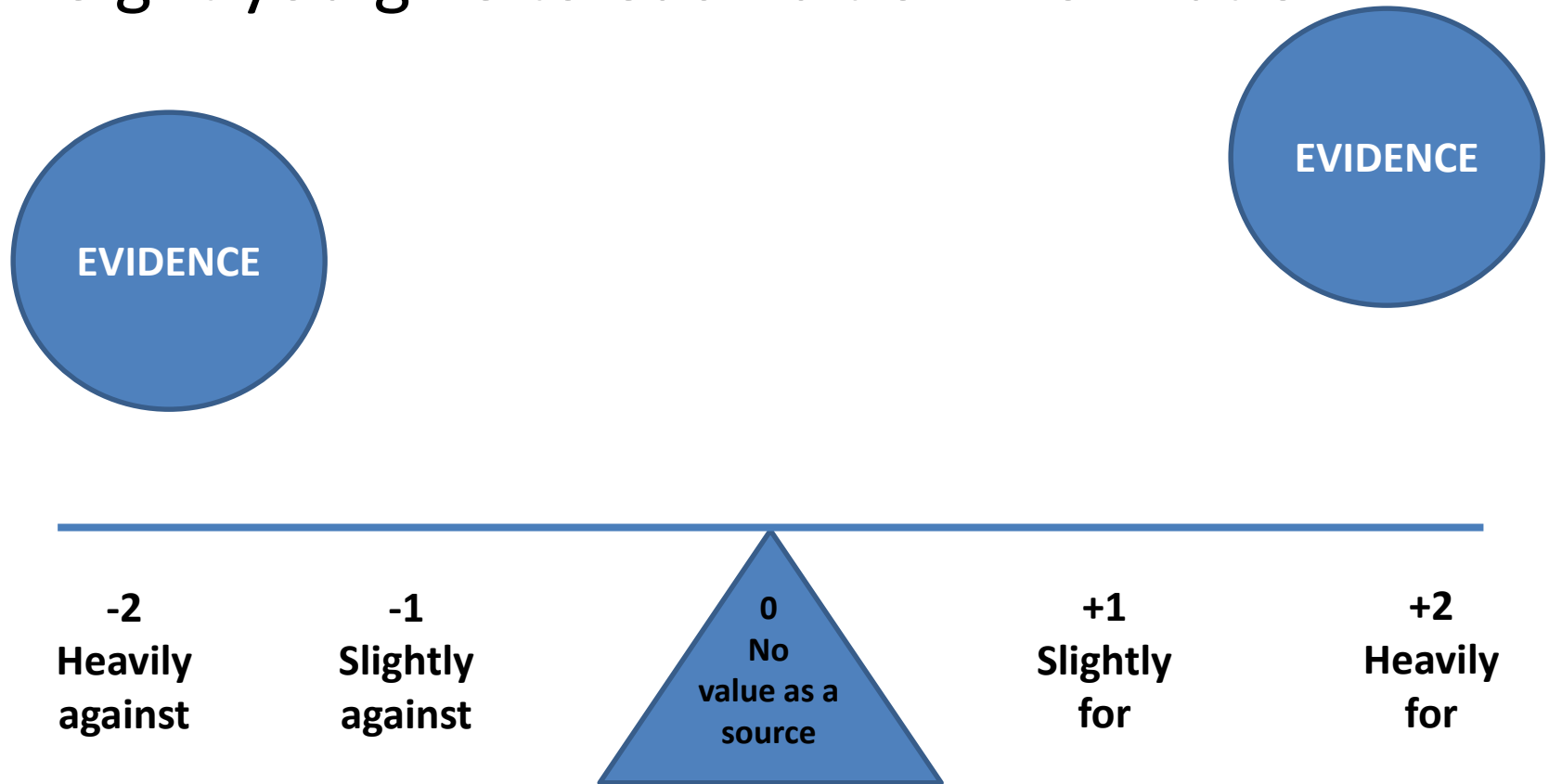
- A rating of 0 means the source is not useful in either case

- For each write one or two sentences defending your rating.

# Set up your paper into columns like this:

Exhibit	Rating	Why?
Z – Photograph of forest	+1	Stories of bigfoot often say he lives in the forest. This is actually a forest so the stories are somewhat believable.

Not all evidence is equally important. Part of drawing a conclusion is determining how much weight you give to each bit of information.



# **Exhibit A: Personal Testimony**

“If an assault was made to endanger their lives, the law is clear, they had a right to kill in their own defence; [even] if it was not so severe as to endanger their lives, yet if they were assaulted at all, struck and abused by blows of any sort, by snow-balls, oyster-shells, cinders, clubs, or sticks of any kind; this was a provocation, for which the law reduces the offence of killing, down to manslaughter, [not murder.]”

*-John Adams, defense attorney for the soldiers and second president of the United States.*

**The British soldiers were guilty of murder.**

# **Exhibit b: Personal Testimony 2**

“They not only fired without the order of the civil magistrate but they never called for one, which they might easily have done. They went down...armed with muskets and bayonets fixed, presuming they were clothed with as much authority by the law of the land as the posse comitatus of the country [*a group of citizens helping to stop crime*] with the high sheriff at their head.”

*-Samuel Adams, Founding Father, leader of the American Revolution and John Adams' cousin*

**The British soldiers were guilty of murder.**



# **Exhibit c:**

## **Assassin's Creed 3**

**The British soldiers were guilty of murder.**

**Exhibit d:**  
***“The Bloody Massacre”***  
**Engraving by Paul Revere**  
***(Two weeks after the Event)***

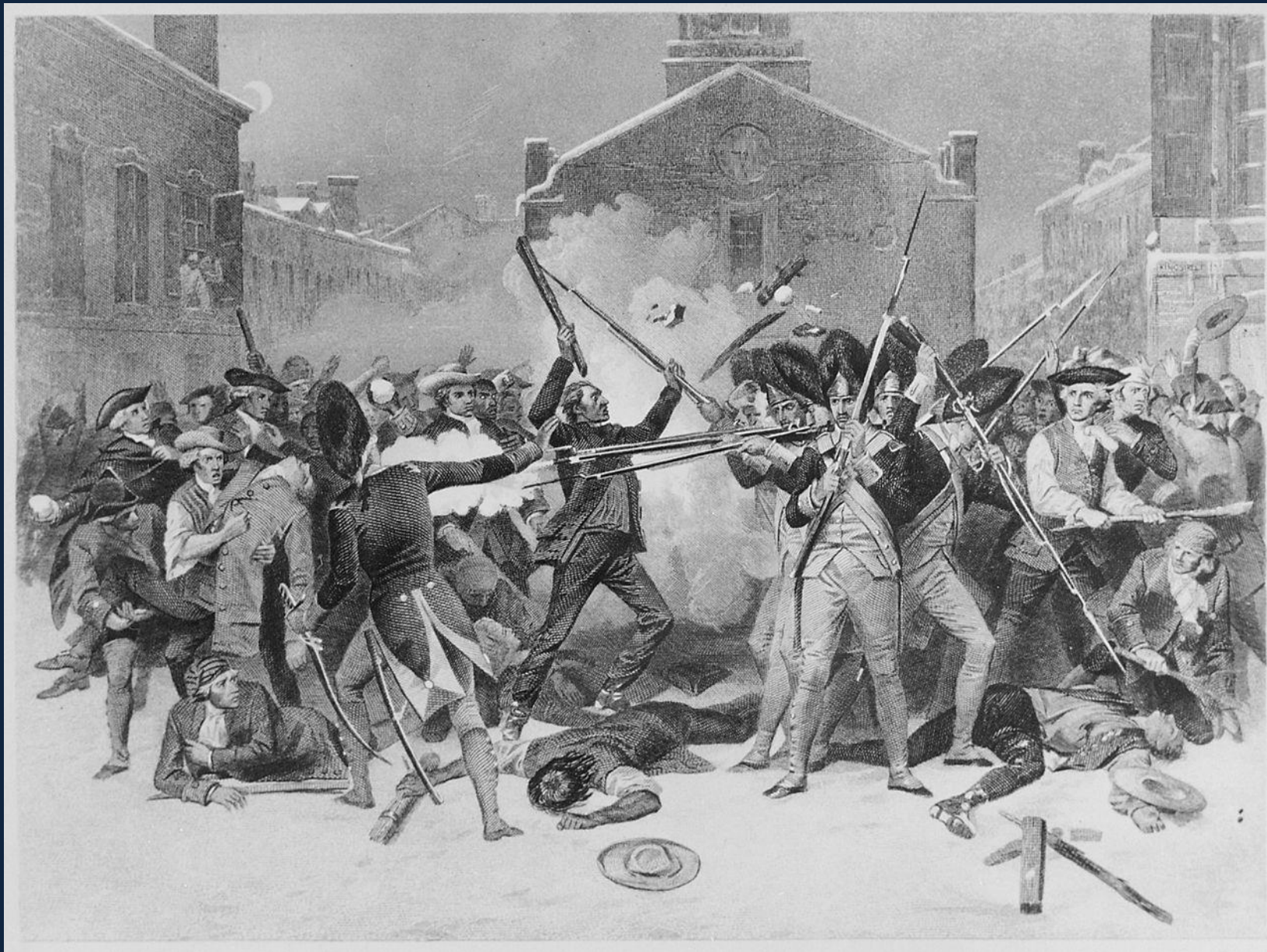




**The British soldiers were guilty of murder.**




**Exhibit E:**  
**Etching by Alonzo Chappel,**  
**1868**



**The British soldiers were guilty of murder.**

**Exhibit F:**  
**Deposition of Captain Preston,**  
**March 12, 1770**



The mob still increased and were more outrageous, striking their clubs or bludgeons one against another, and calling out, come on you rascals, you bloody backs, you lobster scoundrels, fire if you dare. They advanced to the points of the bayonets, struck some of them and even the muzzles of the pieces. On which some well behaved persons asked me if I intended to order the men to fire. I answered no, by no means, pointing out to them that I was standing in front of the muzzles of the men's guns, and must fall as a sacrifice if they fired. While I was thus speaking, one of the soldiers having received a severe blow with a stick, stepped a little on one side and instantly fired.

On this a general attack was made on my men by a great number of heavy clubs and snowballs being thrown at them, by which all our lives were in imminent danger, some persons at the same time from behind calling out, damn your bloods-why don't you fire. Instantly three or four of the soldiers fired, one after another, and directly after three more in the same confusion and hurry. The mob then ran away, except three unhappy men who instantly expired.

On my asking the soldiers why they fired without orders, they said they heard the word fire and supposed it came from me. This might be the case as many of the mob called out fire, fire, but I assured the men that I gave no such order; that my words were, don't fire, stop your firing.

**The British soldiers were guilty of murder.**



**Exhibit G:**  
**Witness Depositions,**  
**1770**

Ebenezer Hinkley: “Just after 9 o’clock heard the Cry of Fire. I saw the party come out of the Guard House. A Capt. cried out of the Window ‘fire upon ’em damn ’em.’ I followed ’em down before the Custom House door. Capt. Preston was out and commanded ’em. They drew up and charged their Bayonets.... Then I heard the word fire in  $\frac{1}{4}$  minute he fired.”

Peter Cunningham: “I am pretty positive the Capt. bid ’em Prime and load. I stood about 4 feet off him.”

William Wyatt: “I heard the officer say fire. The Soldiers did not fire. His back was to me. I heard the same voice say fire. The Soldiers did not fire. The Officer then stamped and said Damn your bloods fire be the consequences what it will. Immediately the first Gun was fired.”

**The British soldiers were guilty of murder.**

# Instructions

- Add up all of your rating numbers from the exhibits. If your rating is positive he is real. If it is negative he is fictional.
- Write an ARE answering: **“Do you believe the British soldiers were guilty of murder as a result of the events of the Boston Massacre?”**
- Assertion- The soldiers were/were not guilty of murder.
- Reason- The evidence shows...
- Evidence x 2- This is proven by exhibit \_\_\_\_\_ which shows \_\_\_\_\_ and exhibit \_\_\_\_ ...