

# Critical Challenges

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

## Sample Critical Challenge

### *The real Joan of Arc*

Taken from

## Joan of Arc and the Hundred Years' War

### Authors

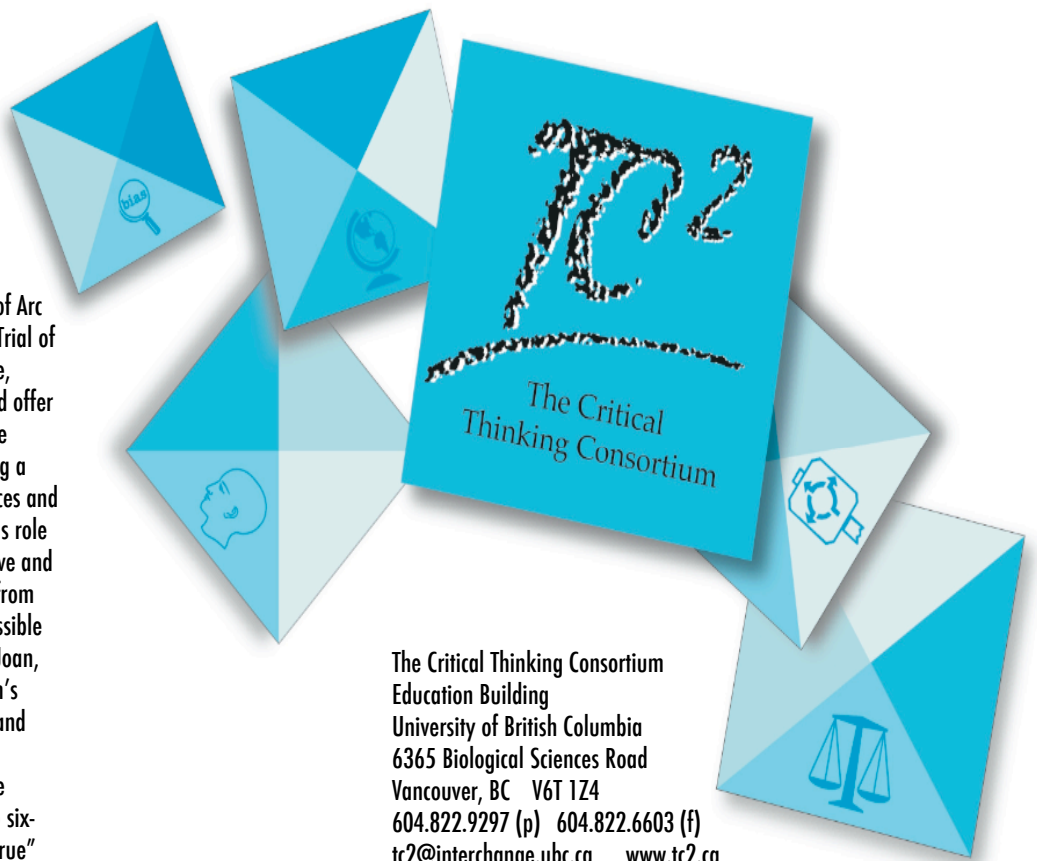
Catriona Misfeldt, Stacey Dawson, Matt Driediger,  
Mike Parker, Richard Rolph

### Editor

Roland Case

### Synopsis

This two-part challenge deals with the life of Joan of Arc and explores the circumstances leading up to her Trial of Condemnation in 1431. To begin the first challenge, students learn a few of the details of Joan's life and offer an initial assessment of her character. Students are provided with more extensive information including a map, timeline and briefing sheet outlining the places and events of the Hundred Years' War and Joan of Arc's role in this period. In addition, students examine positive and negative quotations about Joan's character taken from trial documents. After looking for evidence and possible counterevidence concerning various claims about Joan, students reconsider their initial assessment of Joan's character. After learning more about the political and cultural climate of the time, students offer a final reassessment of Joan. Finally, students address the second critical challenge which is to write a five- to six-paragraph biographical account explaining her "true" character.



The Critical Thinking Consortium  
Education Building  
University of British Columbia  
6365 Biological Sciences Road  
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4  
604.822.9297 (p) 604.822.6603 (f)  
tc2@interchange.ubc.ca www.tc2.ca



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# The real Joan of Arc



## Critical Challenge

- Critical tasks**
- A. Assess the character of Joan of Arc.
  - B. Write a five- to six-paragraph biographical account of Joan of Arc explaining her “true” character.

**Overview**

This two-part challenge deals with the life of Joan of Arc and explores the circumstances leading up to her Trial of Condemnation in 1431. To begin the first challenge, students learn a few of the details of Joan’s life and offer an initial assessment of her character. Students are provided with more extensive information including a map, timeline and briefing sheet outlining the places and events of the Hundred Years’ War and Joan of Arc’s role in this period. In addition, students examine positive and negative quotations about Joan’s character taken from trial documents. After looking for evidence and possible counter-evidence concerning various claims about Joan, students reconsider their initial assessment of Joan’s character. After learning more about the political and cultural climate of the time, students offer a final reassessment of Joan. Finally, students address the second critical challenge which is to write a five- to six-paragraph biographical account explaining her “true” character.

## Objectives

**Broad understanding**

Joan of Arc is a mysterious and controversial historical character.

**Requisite tools**

**Background knowledge**

- knowledge of the Hundred Years’ War
- knowledge of the life of Joan of Arc
- understanding of the historical context



**Criteria for judgment**

- criteria for character assessment (e.g., open-minded, empathic)
- criteria for biographical account (e.g., historically accurate, supported with corroborating evidence, balanced assessment)



**Critical thinking vocabulary**

- counter-evidence



**Thinking strategies**

- data chart



**Habits of mind**

- open-mindedness
- historical empathy



# Suggested Activities

## Pre-planning

- This critical challenge and the one following may be completed separately or in sequence. You may want to decide before starting the first challenge whether to use the next challenge, which involves simulating the initial Trial of Condemnation of Joan of Arc.

## Session One

Blackline Masters #1–5

Introduce  
Joan of Arc

- Begin the class by asking students to guess which female historical figure has inspired more books about her life than any other woman. After students have exhausted their suggestions, indicate that the person is Joan of Arc. (The University of British Columbia Library has 91 book titles.) At this point, provide a brief introduction to Joan's life by reviewing the facts outlined on *Overview of Joan's life* (Blackline Master #1) or by reading aloud a short published biography (see References for print and on-line sources).



knowledge of  
Joan's life

Introduce  
controversy

- Explain to the class that not only has Joan of Arc inspired more books than any other woman in history, she is famous throughout the world. However, she is a very controversial person. Despite the enormous amount of information about her, she remains a mystery; many questions about her motivation and mental health are still unanswered. Biographers have struggled to uncover the layers of truths, myths and legends in order to find the real Joan. The challenge is an attempt to get at the "real" Joan.

**Overview of Joan's life** (Blackline Master #1)

- born a peasant in 1412 in Domremy, France;
- heard angelic voices at age thirteen, telling her to drive the English from France and to secure the French crown for the rightful heir;
- presented herself to the French Court at age seventeen;
- after examination by a council of Church scholars to determine whether her voices came from God or from the devil, was found to be pure and good;
- given armor and a sword;
- successful in driving the English out of France;
- captured by the English;
- imprisoned in London;
- put on trial;
- found guilty of heresy;
- cleared of heresy by Pope Benoît XII in 1456;
- declared a martyr in 1909.

**The real Joan?** (Blackline Master #2A)

Differing perceptions of Joan's character

visionary from God	↔	visionary from devil
groundbreaking feminist	↔	troubled youth
dedicated patriot	↔	disloyal traitor
shrewd leader	↔	deluded peasant
self-sacrificing saint	↔	self-serving manipulator
devout Christian	↔	evil-doing heretic

**Initial assessment**

My initial assessment of Joan of Arc is

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>highly positive</b> exceptionally honorable; divinely motivated	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>mostly positive</b> basically well-intentioned and sincere for the most part	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>mostly negative</b> somewhat delusional and strange, but not insane	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>very negative</b> clearly limitable or driven by evil forces
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because ...

Record initial  
assessment

- Present the first of three invitations to consider the first critical task:

*Assess the character of  
Joan of Arc.*

Invite students to offer this initial assessment, based on what they have heard thus far. Distribute *The real Joan?* (Blackline Master #2A–B) to each student (or each pair of students). Read aloud the list of

Provide background on the war

six pairs of opposing perceptions of her character, informing students that disputes over Joan's character are at the root of much of the controversy surrounding her. Direct students to complete only the "initial assessment" section of Blackline Master #2A. Explain that they will learn more about Joan and be asked to re-consider their initial assessment. As a class, briefly discuss students' initial judgments.



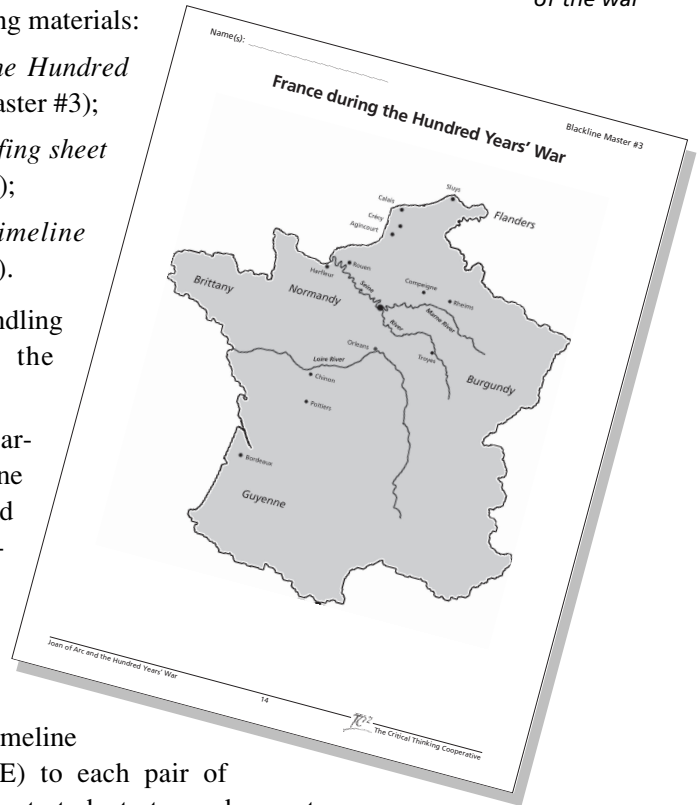
knowledge of the war

- Introduce the Hundred Years' War by asking how long students think the war lasted (nearly 120 years). After discussing what students might know, provide an overview of the places and events that figure prominently in the war, and Joan's role in this period, using the following materials:

- map of *France during the Hundred Years' War* (Blackline Master #3);
- *Hundred Years' War briefing sheet* (Blackline Master #4A–B);
- *Hundred Years' War timeline* (Blackline Master #5A–E).

There are various ways of handling these resources, including the following suggestions:

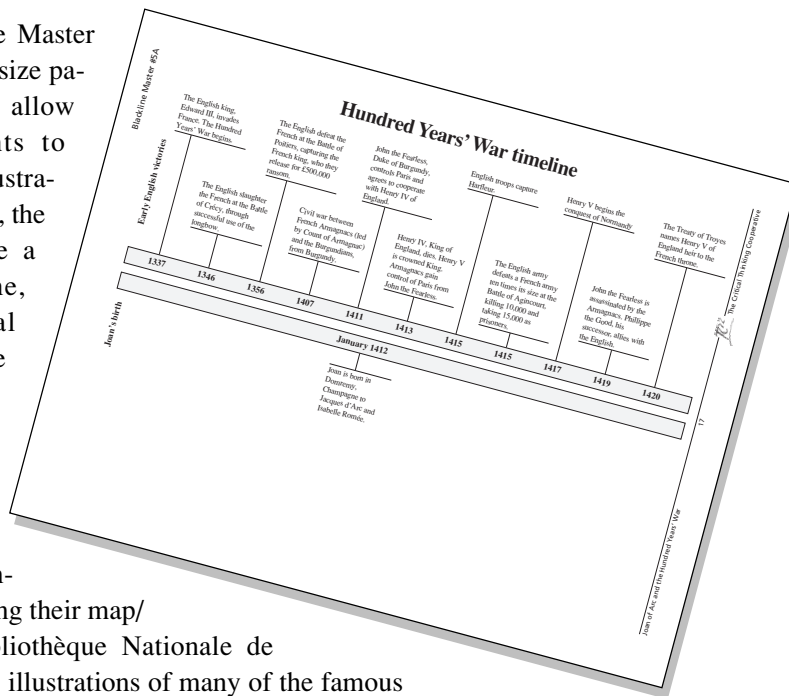
- create an overhead transparency of the map (Blackline Master #3) and read aloud the briefing sheet (Blackline Master #4A–B) to the class, pointing out the locations of the events on the map.
- distribute a copy of the timeline (Blackline Master #5A–E) to each pair of students and invite different students to read an entry on the timeline while you point out the locations of the events on an overhead transparency of the map.



Create illustrated map/timeline

- **OPTIONAL:** Assign students to create an annotated and illustrated map or an illustrated timeline of the Hundred Years' War. Arrange students in teams of three or four to produce an individual team project or to contribute parts of a common class project. To produce a large map, create a transparency from Blackline Master #3 for students to project on the wall and trace onto chart paper. The map should document the key places, events (key words only), dates and/or people (individuals and groups). You may want to enlarge the

timeline (Blackline Master #5A–E) on ledger-size paper (11 x 17) to allow room for students to draw or paste illustrations. Alternatively, the class might create a wall-size timeline, with individual teams responsible for specified periods of the war. See References for sources of images which students may consult when illustrating their map/timeline. The Bibliothèque Nationale de France website has illustrations of many of the famous battles in this war:



[http://www.bnf.fr/enluminures/themes/t\\_1/st\\_1\\_02/a102\\_002.htm](http://www.bnf.fr/enluminures/themes/t_1/st_1_02/a102_002.htm).

## Session Two

## Blackline Masters #6–8

Gather evidence about Joan

- Divide the class into two groups—the “positive” and “negative” groups. Distribute copies of *Positive comments about Joan* (Blackline Master #6A–B) to each pair of students in the former group and *Negative comments about Joan* (Blackline Master #7A–B) to each pair in the latter group. These sheets contain quotes about Joan offered as part of the charges against her at the initial Trial of Condemnation (1431) or as testimony in her posthumous Trial of Nullification (1456). Each group is to read the quotes, looking for evidence to support either a positive or a negative portrayal of Joan’s character traits:
  - The “positive” group is to read Blackline Master #6A–B for evidence that Joan is an admirable person (e.g., is a visionary, feminist, patriot, shrewd leader, devout Christian, self-sacrificing woman).



data chart

Blackline Master #6A

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Positive comments about Joan

Joan's supporters were often from the following groups:

- peasants from the area surrounding her village;
- villagers and citizens whose towns Joan helped to free from the English;
- members of the clergy who gave sacraments to her or who examined her prior to her trial;
- knights and lords who fought beside her.

These testimonies were heard at the Trial of Nullification twenty-five years after her initial trial, the Trial of Condemnation, where she was found guilty of witchcraft and heresy and was burned at the stake.

1. **Joan's military leadership**  
"It was said that Jeanne was as expert as possible in the art of ordering an army into battle, and that even a captain bred and instructed in war could not have shown more skill; at this the captains marvelled exceedingly." **Maitre Alguin Viole (Licentiate in Law, Advocate of the Court of Parliament)**
2. **Joan's ability as a military leader**  
"In all she did, except in affairs of war, she was a very simple young girl; but for warlike things, beating the lance, assembling an army, ordering military operations, directing artillery [weapons of war such as cannons and siege equipment]—she was most skillful. Everyone wondered just she could act with so much wisdom and foresight as a captain above all in making use of artillery that she was so wonderful." **Jean (Duke d'Alençon)**
3. **The reputation of Joan's trial**  
"I know well that Jeanne has no director, Counsel, no defender, up to the end of the Process [trial], and that no one would have dared to offer himself as her English, Italian, or defender, for fear of the Castles to counsel and direct Jeanne, by order of the Judges, were hardly repulsed [spoken to] and dismissed." **Brother Martin Ladvenu (priest)**

**Joan's devotion**

4. **The English reaction to Joan**  
"I think the English feared Jeanne more than the whole of the rest of the army of the King of France, and that in fear it was which moved them, in my opinion, to bring the Process against her." **Messire Pierre Lebuchier (Priest)**
5. **The English motivation for Joan's death**  
"Jeanne had done marvels in war, and, as the English are commonly superstitious, they thought there was a fate with her. Therefore, in my opinion, they, in my Messire Thomas Marie (Priest)
6. **Joan's devotion**  
"From her early youth, Jeanne was brought up with care in the faith, and in good morals; she was so good that all the villagers of Domremy loved her. Jeanne loved her belief and her Father [God]. She had modest ways, as well as any of her companions. She had modest ways, as well as any of her companions. She followed the plough and sometimes milled [looked after] the cattle in the fields. Also she did the usual duties of women, such as spinning, and other things. I know it pleased her to go often to the Hermitage of the Blessed Marie of Remon [a convent]—near when her parents thought her with the plough or into the fields; and when she heard the Mass, she went to the Church, in order to hear Mass..." **Jean Morel (labourer near Domremy)**
7. **Joan's Christian values**  
"She was a good and modest woman, living as a Catholic, very pious [religious], and when she could never failing to be present at the Mass. To her blasphemies [cursing or swearing in God's name] Many times when the Duke of Alençon [myself] heard of her, I found her reprove [express] her being reprehended." **Louis de Contes (Chamberlain to the Duke d'Orléans)**

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The Critical Thinking Cooperative

- The “negative” group is to read Blackline Master #7A–B for evidence that Joan is not an admirable person (e.g., is a witch, blood-thirsty warrior, disloyal traitor, deluded peasant, heretic, self-serving woman).

Distribute a ledger-size copy (11 x 17) of the chart *Looking for evidence* (Blackline Master #8) to each student. After discussing the quotes and the implied character traits with a partner, each student is to record Joan’s traits in the first column and any supporting evidence from the quotations in the second column of Blackline Master #8.

Looking for evidence				
Evidence from historical quotes			Evidence from briefing sheet	
I Character trait	II Initial supporting evidence	III Possible counter-evidence	IV Additional supporting evidence	V Additional counter-evidence

**Introduce counter-evidence**

- Once students have recorded these traits and any supporting evidence, introduce the notion of “counter-evidence” by asking students what this term might mean. If students need help with the concept, invite them to think what “counter-attack” or “counter-punch” might mean. After students understand that counter-evidence is evidence which challenges or contradicts other evidence, invite a student to identify one of Joan’s positive traits and to offer the supporting evidence for this trait. Invite students from the “negative” group to review their copy of Blackline Master #8 for evidence that challenges the identified positive trait. For example, if a student suggested that Joan was a talented military leader because she was skilled at ordering her men into battle (from quotation #1), the counter-evidence might be that she was blood-thirsty, always encouraging war when other means might have worked (from quotation #15). Repeat one or more examples until students understand what is required.



counter-evidence

**Share opposing evidence**

- Organize each pair of “positive” students to join a matching pair of students from the opposing group. Each pair is to help the corresponding pair identify evidence that challenges the evidence each has assembled. Suggest to students that they proceed as follows:
  - the “positive” pair reads one character trait and the initial supporting evidence they have recorded;
  - the “negative” pair looks over its data chart to find possible evidence that might challenge the “positive” pair’s evidence for that trait;
  - the “positive” pair records the possible counter-evidence in column three of Blackline Master #8;

Re-assess  
Joan's character

- reverse the procedure, with the “negative” pair presenting one of its traits and the “positive” pair looking for possible counter-evidence;
- alternate following this pattern until no further counter-evidence can be suggested.

- After all pairs have recorded possible counter-evidence, ask students to return to Blackline Master #2A–B where they recorded their initial assessment of Joan. Direct students individually to reconsider the critical task by completing the “second assessment” section. Remind them to remain open-minded as they re-evaluate their views of Joan’s character (e.g., they should be willing to consider new evidence against their view and to revise their view should the evidence warrant it). Explain that students are to indicate whether or not their assessment of Joan has changed and the reasons for their current thinking. As a class, briefly discuss students’ revised judgments.



open-mindedness

Session Three

Blackline Master #9

Consider the  
historical context

- As should be obvious to the class from the previous activity, there were deeply conflicting views of Joan’s character and motivation. Even the Church was divided. Some clergy felt Joan was pure and chaste—her actions and deeds were the work of God. Others believed Joan’s insistence on wearing men’s clothing was blasphemous and that her visions and voices were the devil’s work. Explain to students that if they are to sort through these conflicting accounts, they must understand the historical circumstances and prevailing beliefs. To develop students’ sensitivity to the attitudes and beliefs held by people during the Middle Ages, provide the following contemporary extensions of medieval beliefs:



historical empathy

- *Compare current perceptions of body piercing with medieval women wearing men’s clothing.* Consider the attitudes and assumptions that some people have towards those who pierce their bodies. For example, discuss how some students’ grandparents might react to multiple body piercings. What assumptions might they make about the person? Draw parallels with women who wore men’s clothes during the Middle Ages. At the time, even those women working in the fields wore skirts or dresses. By wearing men’s clothing, Joan was not only perceived as rebelling against her position as a woman, but also as challenging God’s authority. In Joan’s time, few people questioned their position in life and most feared God.
- *Compare the “realism” of children’s dreams with belief in dreams during the Middle Ages.* Invite students to recall the dreams/nightmares they had as young children. Did the dreams seem real to students when they were very young? Discuss how we now view dreams as the work of people’s sub-consciousness, yet in Joan’s time people did not know how their minds worked or understand the notion of the sub-consciousness. When they had dreams, many believed that someone was truly speaking to them or that it was a sign of something about to happen.

Examine historical beliefs

- Distribute to every student a copy of *Medieval practices and beliefs* (Blackline Master #9A–B). As a homework assignment, ask students to read the briefing sheet looking for evidence to support and to counter the traits they have identified. Direct students to look for factors that influenced people’s perspectives about Joan’s character and motivations. As they read through the briefing sheet, encourage students to place themselves in the minds and times of historical persons. This will help them assess Joan’s character traits from a historical perspective. Students are to add any relevant findings to Blackline Master #8, recording additional evidence supporting the traits in the fourth column and additional evidence countering the traits in the fifth column.



understanding of historical context



Session Four

Share arguments and re-assess

- Once students have completed the final two columns of (Blackline Master #8), invite them to join with a partner to share insights and to add evidence to their data chart. When students have exchanged ideas, each student is to revisit Blackline Master #2A–B for the last time and record his or her “final” assessment of Joan’s character. Students are to indicate whether or not their assessment of Joan has changed from the initial assessment and the reasons for their current thinking. As a class, briefly discuss students’ final judgments.

Pose critical task

- Invite students to imagine themselves as Joan of Arc’s biographer. They must decide how to portray her character and the events in her life in a brief biographical account of her life. Assign students to complete the critical task:



criteria for biographical account

Write a five- to six-paragraph biographical account of Joan of Arc explaining her “true” character.





**Present structure for bio**

You may want to read to the class one or more textbook accounts of Joan, especially those that ignore the controversy surrounding her life and character. Use these accounts to help students generate criteria for an effective textbook account or use the following criteria to critique these published accounts:

- historically accurate and relevant information;
- presents a fair-minded account (e.g., gives a balanced hearing to alternative points of view);
- supports with specific, corroborating evidence.

Encourage students to use these criteria when drafting their own account.

- Suggest the following structure to organize students' writing:
  - Paragraph #1: a short, opening statement summarizing three or four of Joan's attributes;
  - Paragraphs #2–5: one paragraph for each attribute that provides specific, corroborating evidence supporting the attribute and alternative or opposing points of view about the attribute;
  - Paragraph #6: a brief conclusion summarizing Joan's "true" character and why she was so famous.

Encourage students to refer to the evidence they have recorded on Blackline Master #8 and other information about Joan found on the briefing sheets and other materials consulted during this challenge. Ask students to share their completed biographies in pairs or small groups before handing them in.

**Evaluation**

**Blackline Masters #10–12**

**Assess evidence of character**

- Assess students' ability to gather evidence supporting/countering each of Joan's character traits recorded on *Looking for evidence* (Blackline Master #8) using the rubric found in *Assessing the evidence* (Blackline Master #10). According to this rubric, the assignment is worth 15 marks and is assessed on three criteria:
  - identification of character traits,
  - amount and relevance of supporting evidence,
  - amount and relevance of counter-evidence.

Blackline Master #10

**Assessing the evidence**

Use the following rubric to assess students' evidence supporting and countering each of Joan's character traits. Award intermediate marks for evidence falling between the descriptors.

Identification of character traits	Undeveloped	Competent	Well developed
	No plausible character traits are identified.	Three plausible character traits are identified.	Five or more plausible character traits are identified.
Supporting evidence	1 Virtually no relevant evidence is offered to support any of the character traits.	3 Approximately two pieces of relevant evidence are offered to support each character trait.	5 Four pieces of relevant evidence are offered to support each character trait.
Counter-evidence	1 Virtually no relevant counter-evidence is offered to support any of the character traits.	3 Approximately two pieces of relevant counter-evidence are offered to support each character trait.	5 Four pieces of relevant counter-evidence are offered to support each character trait.
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>15</b>

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

/ 15

The Critical Thinking Cooperative

**Assess justification of character**

- Assess students' justification for the three successive assessments of Joan's character on *The real Joan?* (Blackline Master #2A–B) using the rubric found in *Assessing the justification* (Blackline Master #11). According to this rubric, the assignment is worth 10 marks and is evaluated on two criteria:
  - recognition of new evidence,
  - willingness to reconsider their initial assessment.

**Assess textbook paragraphs**

- Assess the biographical account of Joan's character using the rubric found in *Assessing the account* (Blackline Master #12). According to this rubric, the assignment is worth 15 marks and is evaluated on three criteria:
  - accurate and relevant information,
  - support with specific corroborating evidence,
  - balanced analysis.

**Assessing the justification** (Blackline Master #11)

	Underdeveloped	Competent	Well developed
Recognition of new evidence	The explanations make little or no reference to new evidence or perspectives in the subsequent assessments.	The explanations make modest reference to new evidence or perspectives in the subsequent assessments.	The explanations make significant reference to new evidence or perspectives in the subsequent assessments.
Openness to re-assessment	No signs of any reconsideration of the initial evidence. Student ignores any contrary evidence.	Some indication of reconsideration of the initial assessment in light of new evidence, but student occasionally discloses contrary evidence.	Clear indication of serious reconsideration of the initial assessment in light of new evidence.
	1	3	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

**Assessing the account** (Blackline Master #12)

	Underdeveloped	Competent	Well developed
Accurate and relevant information	Many facts about Joan's character are inaccurate or irrelevant.	Provides a number of relevant and accurate facts about Joan's character. However, some information is inaccurate or irrelevant, and key information is missing.	All the facts provided about Joan's character are accurate and relevant.
Specific corroborating evidence	Little or no supporting evidence is provided.	Some supporting evidence is provided, but tends to be vague or not convincing.	The evidence is specific and convincing.
Balanced analysis	The account shows no consideration of more than one point of view of Joan's character.	The account shows some consideration of differing points of view, but does not do them justice.	The account seriously considers alternate points of view of Joan's character.
	1	3	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

**Extension**

- Invite the class to speculate why Joan of Arc has become as famous as she has (e.g., she was a woman ahead of her time, she was a political puppet, she was a peasant woman who rose to a position of power and respect in a man's world). You may wish to use the following stems to stimulate their thinking:

*“There are many reasons for Joan of Arc’s fame including...*

*But in my opinion, the most compelling reason is...because...”*

**Examine Joan's fame**

## References

### Print sources

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- Brooks, Polly Schoyer. (1990). *Beyond the Myth: The Story of Joan of Arc*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Cranny, Michael. (1997). *Pathways: Civilizations Through Time*. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada.
- Dumarche, Lionel and Jean Pouessel. (1990). *The Hundred Years' War*. London: Evans Brothers Limited.
- Stanley, Diane. (1998). *Joan of Arc*. New York: Morrow Junior Books.

### On-line sources

*Famous Trials—Joan of Arc.*

[http://www.lawbuzz.com/justice/joanof\\_arc/joanof\\_arc.html](http://www.lawbuzz.com/justice/joanof_arc/joanof_arc.html)

This interactive website details the events leading up to and including Joan of Arc's trial. It provides links to a variety of images and paintings related to the trial.

*Joan of Arc On-line Archive.*

<http://archive.joan-of-arc.org/index.html>

A biography, timeline, manuscripts, quotations, letter, portraits and other information about Joan of Arc are contained in this site developed by Allen Williamson.

*Saint Joan of Arc Center—Short Biography.*

<http://www.stjoan-center.com>

*Saint Joan of Arc Center—Picture Album.*

<http://www.stjoan-center.com/Album/>

This link shows photographs and paintings from places and people in Joan's early life, her mission, the battles, the coronation of Charles VII, the prisons and her death.

*Saint Joan of Arc Center—Pictorial Essay.*

<http://www.stjoan-center.com/picessay/>

This link is written in first person (from Joan's perspective) and reads like a diary of her life. It includes related images.

*Saint Joan of Arc Center—Trials.*

<http://www.stjoan-center.com/Trials/>

This site provides an English translation of the Trial of Condemnation and Nullification by Murray T. Douglas.

*The Age of Charles V.*

<http://www.bnf.fr/enluminures/aaccueil.htm>

The Bibliothèque Nationale de France has many images of people and battles from the early part of the Hundred Years' War.

## Overview of Joan's life

- born a peasant in 1412 in Domremy, France;
- heard angelic voices at age thirteen, telling her to drive the English from France and to secure the French crown for the rightful heir;
- presented herself to the French Court at age seventeen;
- after examination by a council of Church scholars to determine whether her voices came from God or from the devil, was found to be pure and good;
- given armour, a banner and troops to fight against the English;
- successfully led armies against the English for two years;
- captured and turned over to the English;
- imprisoned for over a year;
- put on trial for heresy and witchcraft without legal counsel;
- found guilty and burned at the stake in 1431;
- cleared of charges 25 years later at a second trial;
- declared a saint over four hundred years later (1920) by Pope Benedict.

# The real Joan?

## Differing perceptions of Joan's character



## Initial assessment

My *initial* assessment of Joan of Arc is



### highly positive

exceptionally  
honourable;  
divinely motivated



### mostly positive

basically well-  
intentioned and  
for the most part  
sincere



### mostly negative

somewhat  
devious and  
strange, but not  
insane



### very negative

clearly unstable  
or driven by  
'evil' forces

because . . .

**Second assessment**

Key new information:

With this new information, my assessment of Joan of Arc has

- become more positive
- become more negative
- not changed

because...

**Final assessment**

Key new information:

Compared with my initial assessment, my final assessment of Joan of Arc

- is more positive
- is more negative
- has not changed

because...

# France during the Hundred Years' War



# Hundred Years' War briefing sheet

The Hundred Years' War was a dispute between the monarchs and nobles of France and England. Although there were often breaks in the fighting—including a period from 1348–1356 when the Black Death was raging across Europe, war lasted from 1337–1453. More accurately, it was a series of wars that took place in what is now known as France. The driving motivation was to determine who should be king of France.

## Lead-up to the war

The conflict between the kings of France and England began long before the start of The Hundred Years' War. For centuries, rulers in both countries struggled for economic control of French provinces. However, when Philip the Fair (Philip IV) died in 1328 without an heir, the fight for the throne of France began. The French supported a cousin of the dead ruler. The English king, Edward III, the grandson of Philip the Fair, believed he had a stronger claim to the throne. Edward III invaded France on November 1, 1337. He had the support of several French barons, but the majority of the French did not want to be part of England and fought to drive out the English.

## English victories (1337–1429)

The English gained control of vast areas of France up until 1429 when they began to lose ground. They had a powerful weapon—the longbow—that repeatedly helped them defeat French armies. Archers, ordinary villagers, were trained to use the longbow. It could penetrate plate armour and kill a knight. In three important battles the French tried to ride past the common archers to get at their social equals—the English knights—but the volley of arrows was so deadly that, in each case, many French were killed. The surviving knights were ransomed for large sums of money. At the Battle of Crécy, on August 26, 1346, the English were outnumbered by a French army three times its size. The French knights believed they were invincible and attacked. They retreated when they saw the onslaught of arrows. Many knights, knocked from their horses, lay helplessly in their heavy armour and were slaughtered with knives. At Poitiers, in 1356, the English repeated their victory. In this battle the French believed they had caught the English at a disadvantage. The knights charged on foot but were killed by a wall of arrows. The French king, John, and his son, Philip, were captured and held for ransom. At the

Battle of Agincourt in 1415, the French army of 20,000–30,000 men outnumbered the 6,000 English. Led by Henry V, the archers won another victory over the heavily armoured French knights.

## Internal conflict among the French (1392–1435)

Around 1392, the current king of France, Charles VI, was rumoured to be mad. Because he was an ineffective ruler, the country was governed by John the Fearless (Duke of Burgundy) and Louis of Orléans (cousin of the king). John and Louis had different opinions about what was best for France. John wanted to promote trade and make peace with the English. Louis wanted to recapture a French province controlled by England. John assassinated Louis.

The son of the king, also called Charles (Duke of Orléans), was the dauphin or rightful heir of France. He gathered forces from his father-in-law, Bernard of Armagnac, and prepared to fight the current ruler of France, the Duke of Burgundy. But John the Fearless gathered his own troops. Civil unrest between the Armagnacs and Burgundian troops grew. Both sides turned to England for help. In 1411, the Burgundians asked for help and were given 2,000 soldiers. The next year, the Armagnacs promised the English king French provinces in exchange for 4,000 men. Both sides accused each other of treason and the conflict continued.

Queen Isabeau, acting on behalf of her insane husband, formed an alliance with the Burgundians. In 1419, when the dauphin Charles' men assassinated John (Duke of Burgundy), the Burgundian troops formed an alliance with England. Philippe the Good, who succeeded John as the Duke of Burgundy, supported the English claim to the throne. He thought it was better to let the English have their way than to keep fighting. Queen Isabeau agreed and in 1420 she convinced her mad husband to sign the Treaty of Troyes. Philippe, the Duke of Burgundy, was promised more power in the new France. Under the treaty, Henry V, king of England, married Catherine, the daughter of the current French king. When Charles VI died, Henry would become king of France. The only person who refused to go along with the treaty was the dauphin Charles, who insisted on his claim to the French throne.



**Ending of the war (1429–1453)**

In the early part of the 15th century, France was divided into three regions. The northern part of France was ruled by the English king, Henry VI. The eastern part, including Paris, was controlled by the Burgundians, who for many years had supported England's attempts to conquer France. Nearly one-half of the country, from the Loire valley south, recognized the dauphin Charles as Charles VII of France even though he had not yet been crowned. Although the royal officials remained loyal to Charles, his youth, inexperience and lack of funds made it difficult to re-conquer the rest of France.

It is at this time that Joan of Arc comes upon the stage. She supports Charles and is instrumental in driving the English from Orléans in the spring of 1429. On July 17, 1429, Charles was crowned king of France. Six years later he and Philippe, Duke of Burgundy, agree to cooperate. This effectively undermines the English cause to determine who should be the French king. It marks the beginning of the end for the English, but it was too late for Joan, as she was executed in 1431. In 1436 Paris surrendered to the French and by 1450 the English had been driven out of Normandy. The war finally ended in 1453. The English had left France except for the area near the port of Calais.

# Hundred Years' War timeline

		The English king, Edward III, invades France. The Hundred Years' War begins.		The English defeat the French at the Battle of Poitiers, capturing the French king, who they release for £500,000 ransom.		John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, controls Paris and agrees to cooperate with Henry IV of England.		English troops capture Harfleur.		Henry V begins the conquest of Normandy		The Treaty of Troyes names Henry V of England heir to the French throne.
1337	1346		The English slaughter the French at the Battle of Crécy, through successful use of the longbow.									
	1356			Civil war between French Armagnacs (led by Count of Armagnac) and the Burgundians, from Burgundy.								
	1407											
	1411					Henry IV, King of England, dies. Henry V is crowned King. Armagnacs gain control of Paris from John the Fearless.						
	1413											
	1415											
	1415							The English army defeats a French army ten times its size at the Battle of Agincourt, killing 10,000 and taking 15,000 as prisoners.				
	1417											
	1417											
	1419											
	1419											
	1420											
January 1412												

## Early English victories

## Joan's birth

Joan is born in Domremy, Champagne to Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle Romée.

Henry V and Charles V die creating a disputed kingship in France between the infant Henry VI and the dauphin (eldest son of French king) Charles. John, Duke of Bedford, becomes the Regent of France (acting on behalf of the dauphin).

Orléans is captured by the English.

Charles raises an army to recapture Orléans.

**The English capture Orléans**

1422	1428	1429
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**Joan's call to service**

1425	May 1428	January 1429	February 1429	March 4-5, 1429	March 9, 1429	mid-March 1429
Joan first hears internal "voices" of St. Michael, St. Margaret and St. Catherine.	Joan's voices urge her to seek permission to talk to the dauphin.	Joan's voices become more urgent and frequent. They tell her to organize a siege of Orléans and to escort the dauphin to Rheims to be crowned King of France, and drive away the English.	Joan correctly predicts that the French will lose a battle to the English outside Orléans. Joan leaves to meet the dauphin. She is given a horse, sword and men's clothes. She cuts her hair and begins to refer to herself as la Pucelle, or the Maid.	Joan sends a letter to the dauphin, Charles, announcing her arrival and requesting an interview. She prays at the Chapel of St. Catherine, a shrine for prisoners of war.	At Chinon, Joan is presented to Charles. Charles hides in the crowd to test whether Joan can find him although she has never seen him. Joan identifies Charles and tells him of her visions. She gives him a sign to prove she came from God.	Joan is examined by learned bishops and doctors to ensure her voices are from God and not the devil. The committee finds nothing but good in her. Charles gives Joan a suit of armour and a standard (banner). Joan requests the sword buried behind the altar in the Chapel of St. Catherine. No one had heard of it, but



French victories

<p>The English retreat. Many drown when the drawbridge is set on fire and collapses. The English commander abandons all remaining forts around Orléans.</p>	<p>The French army, led by the Duke of Alençon, captures several occupied towns along the Loire River.</p>	<p>In the Battle of Patay, 4,000 English are killed or captured and the English commander, Lord Talbot, is taken prisoner.</p>	<p>Charles hopes to win the Duke of Burgundy away from the English. The Duke agrees to give up Paris if Charles calls a fifteen-day truce. Charles agrees but does not tell Joan. The Duke is waiting for English reinforcements. Finally, Charles agrees to attack Paris.</p>	
<p>May 8, 1429</p>	<p>May/June 1429</p>	<p>June 1429</p>	<p>July 1429</p>	<p>July/August 1429</p>

Joan's victory at Orléans

<p>Joan dictates her first letter to the English summoning the King of England to withdraw his troops.</p>	<p>Joan's army successfully enters Orléans with food and cattle for the citizens, but the English still partially surround Orléans. Joan waits for reinforcements and sends several letters to the English urging them to return to England and threatening great loss of life if they do not leave.</p>	<p>Dunois, brother to the Duke of Orléans, arrives with reinforcements and launches an attack on the English. After Joan joins the battle, the French troops win. Joan correctly predicts she will be wounded but that the French will take the Tourelles (huge towers at Orléans which had been captured by the English). During the 13-hour battle, Joan is struck in the shoulder by an arrow and is carried to safety. She pulls the arrow out herself, rests, and then returns to fight. By evening, the French are exhausted but Joan is determined to achieve a victory. She prays and then returns to the battle. The sight of her inspires the troops who break over the wall and seize the fort.</p>	<p>Joan attends the coronation of Charles.</p>
<p>March 22, 1429</p>	<p>April 29, 1429</p>	<p>May 4-7, 1429</p>	<p>July 17, 1429</p>



**French setbacks**

Paris is attacked. Because the city is fortified and the walls protected by a moat, the attack is difficult. Charles sends a message ordering the army to withdraw and return to the town of Saint-Denis, where he is staying. The army leaves for Saint-Denis but is unable to reach the town because the King had ordered the bridge destroyed.

Charles disbands his army and hopes the Duke of Burgundy will support him. One thousand soldiers arrive from England. The Duke of Burgundy uses the threat of peace talks with Charles to encourage the English to secure his loyalty with more money and land.

September 1429

Fall 1429–February 1430

September 8, 1429

October–December 1429

May 1430

July 1430

January 1431

**Joan's capture**

In the attempt to take Paris, Joan is wounded in the thigh.

Joan does not wait for Charles to realize his mistake. She joins a small army of independent soldiers and goes north to fight. Joan is rewarded by Charles. Her family is raised to the nobility, given a coat of arms and the surname "du Lys".

Joan's voices return, telling her that she will soon die. Joan leads four hundred men to defend the town of Compiègne which is under siege by the Duke of Burgundy. Her force attacks a Burgundian encampment. The enemy retreats but then ambushes the French soldiers. Joan is captured by a Burgundian soldier.

Joan is turned over to the English for 10,000 francs plus 6,000 francs for the men who had captured her. Joan is so distraught at being sold to the English that she throws herself from a prison tower. She survives.

Joan is transferred to the custody of Bishop Cauchon. The first trial (The Trial of Condemnation) begins. Joan is tried by the Inquisition, a special court appointed to deal with heretics. She is accused of many things but only two charges are laid: that she dressed in men's clothing and that she claimed God guided her personally through voices and visitations.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**French expel English**

1435	1436	1450	1453
<p>Treaty of Arras between Charles VII and Philip the Good of Burgundy is signed, threatening the English cause.</p>		<p>The English are driven out of Normandy.</p>	
<p>Paris surrenders to the French.</p>		<p>The English are driven out of Guyenne (Southwestern France). This signals the end of The Hundred Years' War.</p>	

**Joan's trials**

February 1431	May 23-24, 1431	May 28-31, 1431	1450	1456
<p>The first public session of the trial is held. Joan is brought in to testify.</p>	<p>The trial ends with a guilty verdict. Joan is threatened with execution by burning. Terrified of fire, she recants (changes her previously stated beliefs) and signs an abjuration (a document) agreeing to put on women's clothing and obey the Church. She is sentenced to life in prison. The English are furious, but are assured by Bishop Cauchon that they will catch her still.</p>	<p>Joan rejects her previous abjuration. She dresses again as a man and accepts the death sentence. Bishop Cauchon turns Joan over to the state for execution. Joan is burned at the stake.</p>	<p>The process of retrying Joan's case begins. Witness testimony is gathered and accepted into the record.</p>	<p>In the Trial of Nullification, the judges reject the original verdict; Joan is declared innocent.</p>

## Positive comments about Joan

Joan's supporters were often from the following groups:

- peasants from the area surrounding her village;
- villagers and citizens whose towns Joan helped to free from the English;
- members of the clergy who gave sacraments to her or who examined her prior to her trial;
- knights and lords who fought beside her.

Their testimonies were heard at the Trial of Nullification twenty-five years after her initial trial, the Trial of Condemnation, where she was found guilty of witchcraft and heresy and was burned at the stake.

### *Joan's military leadership*

1. "It was said that Jeanne was as expert as possible in the art of ordering an army into battle, and that even a captain bred and instructed in war could not have shown more skill; at this the captains marveled exceedingly." **Maitre Aignan Viole (Licentiate in Law, Advocate of the Court of Parliament)**

### *Joan's ability as a military leader*

2. "In all she did, except in affairs of war, she was a very simple young girl; but for warlike things, bearing the lance, assembling an army, ordering military operations, directing artillery [weapons of war such as crossbows and siege equipment]—she was most skillful. Everyone wondered that she could act with as much wisdom and foresight as a captain who had fought for twenty or thirty years. It was above all in making use of artillery that she was so wonderful." **Jean (Duke d'Alençon)**

### *The injustices of Joan's trial*

3. "I know well that Jeanne has no director, Counsel, nor defender, up to the end of the Process [trial], and that no one would have dared to offer himself as her Counsel, director, or defender, for fear of the English. I have heard that those who went to the Castle to counsel and direct Jeanne, by order of the Judges, were harshly repulsed [spoken to] and threatened." **Brother Martin Ladvenu (priest)**

### *The English reaction to Joan*

4. "I think the English feared Jeanne more than the whole of the rest of the army of the King of France, and that this fear it was which moved them, in my opinion, to bring the Process against her."  
**Messire Pierce Lebouchier (Priest)**

### *The English motivation for Joan's death*

5. "Jeanne had done marvels in war, and, as the English are commonly superstitious, they thought there was a fate with her. Therefore, in my opinion, they, in all their counsels and elsewhere, desired her death."  
**Messire Thomas Marie (Priest)**

### *Joan's devotion*

6. "From her early youth, Jeannette was brought up with care in the Faith, and in good morals; she was so good that all the village of Domremy loved her. Jeannette knew her Belief and her Pater ["Our Father" in Latin; a prayer] and Ave ["The Ave Maria"; a prayer] as well as any of her companions. She had modest ways, as becomes one whose parents were not rich. Up to the time she left her parents she followed the plough and sometimes minded [looked after] the cattle in the fields. Also she did the usual duties of women, such as spinning, and other things. I know it pleased her to go often to the Hermitage of the Blessed Marie of Bermont [a convent], near Domremy. Often I saw her go there. She was there when her parents thought her with the plough or into the fields; and when she heard the Mass-bell, if she were in the fields, she would go back to the village and to the Church, in order to hear Mass..."  
**Jean Morel (labourer near Domremy)**

### *Joan's Christian values*

7. "She was a good and modest woman, living as a Catholic, very pious [religious], and when she could, never failing to be present at the Mass. To hear blasphemies [cursing or swearing in God's name] upon the Name of Our Lord vexed [annoyed] her. Many times when the Duke d'Alençon swore or blasphemed before her, I heard her reprove [express disappointment in] him. As a rule, no one in the army dared swear or blaspheme before her, for fear of being reprimanded." **Louis de Contes (Chamberlain to the Duke d'Orléans)**

*Joan's goodness*

8. “She was a girl of good disposition, devout [very committed to her faith], patient, loving the Church, going often to confession, and giving to the poor all that she could. I can attest this, having been witness thereof, both at Domremy and at my own house at Burey, where she passed [stayed] six weeks.”

**Durand Laxart (Joan's uncle)**

*Joan's commitment to her faith*

9. “When she was given over by the Church, I was still with her, and with great devotion she asked to have a Cross; and hearing this, an Englishman, who was there present, made a little cross of wood with the ends of a stick, which he gave her, and devoutly she received and kissed it, making piteous lamentations [sorrowful moans] and acknowledgements of God, Our Redeemer, Who had suffered on the Cross for our Redemption, of Whose Cross she had the sign and symbol; and she put the said Cross in her bosom [chest], between her person and her clothing. And, besides, she asked me humbly that I would get her the Church Cross, so that she might see it continually until death.” **Maitre Jean Massieu (Priest)**

*Joan's ability to foresee the future*

10. “I saw Jeanne for the first time at Poitiers. And then she foretold [predicted] to us—to me and to all the others who were with me—these four things which should happen, and which did afterwards come to pass; first, that the English would be destroyed, the siege [attack] of Orléans raised, and the town delivered from the English; secondly that the King would be crowned at Reims; thirdly, that Paris would be restored to his dominion [rule]; and fourthly, that the Duke d’Orléans should be brought back from England. And I who speak, I have in truth seen these four things accomplished. We reported all this to the Council of the King; and we were of opinion that, considering the extreme necessity and the great peril [danger] of the town, the King might make use of her help and send her to Orléans.”

**Brother Séguin de Séguin (Dean of the Faculty of Theology of Poitiers)**



# Negative comments about Joan

Joan's enemies were predominately from the following groups:

- the English;
- the Burgundians (who were allied with the English);
- churchmen who feared for their lives if they supported Joan or who hoped to gain favour with the English by not supporting her.

The following passages or articles are taken from a document read to Joan on March 27, 1430, formally outlining the 70 crimes she was accused of committing. These articles were prepared by Jean d'Estivet, the prosecutor of the trial. d'Estivet was a friend of Bishop Cauchon, the Inquisitor judge. The very formal, legal nature of the document makes it difficult to read. The best strategy is to read in chunks and try to grasp the main idea, and not get bogged down in trying to understand every word.

## *Promoting witchcraft*

**11.** “The Accused, not only this year, but from her infancy, and not only in your Diocese [the areas under a bishop's control]...but also in many other places in this kingdom, had done, composed [made up], contrived [plotted] and ordained [ordered] a number of sacrileges [violations of anything sacred to the Church] and superstitions: she made herself a diviner [someone who speaks for God], she caused herself to be adored and venerated [looked upon with respect]; she had invoked [summoned] demons, and evil spirits, consulted them, associated with them, had made and had with them compacts, treaties and conventions, had made use of them, had furnished to others, acting in the same manner, aid, succor [help], and favour, and had, in much, led them on to act like herself; she had said, affirmed, and maintained that to act thus, to use witchcraft, divinations [God-like characteristics], superstitions, was not a sin, was not a forbidden thing, but, on the contrary, a thing lawful, to be praised, worthy of approval; also she had led into these errors and evil doings a very great number of persons of diverse estates, of both sexes, and had imprinted on their hearts, the most fatal errors...” **Article 2**

## *Contradicting divine teachings*

**12.** “The Accused had fallen into many diverse and detestable [extremely hateful] errors which reek [smell] of heresy [actions that contradict Divine teachings of God]. She had said, vociferated [shouted], uttered, published and inculcated [instilled] within the hearts of the simple, false and lying propositions [statements] allied to heresy, even themselves heretical, contrary to our Catholic Faith and its principles, to Gospel rules, and to the Statutes established or approved by General Councils; propositions, contrary not only to the Divine Law but also to Canon and Civil Law; propositions scandalous, sacrilegious [violating anything sacred], contrary to good manners, offensive to pious [religious] ears; she had furnished help, counsel and favour to the people who dogmatically [firmly believed] affirmed, or promulgated [publicly announced] such propositions.” **Article 3**

## *Acting immorally*

**13.** “Jeanne attributes to God, His Angels and His Saints, orders which are against the modesty of the sex, and which are prohibited [forbidden] by the Divine Law...In one word, putting aside the modesty of her sex, she acted not only against all feminine decency, but even against the reserve which men of good morals, wearing ornaments and garments which only profligate [immoral and reckless] men are accustomed to use, and going so far as to carry arms of offense [to carry weapons]. To attribute all this to the order of God, to the order which had been transmitted [passed on] to her by the Angels and even by Virgin Saints, is to blaspheme [curse or swear in God's name] God and His Saints, to destroy the Divine Law and violate the Canonical Rules; it is to libel [discredit] the sex and its virtue [goodness], to overturn all decency, to justify all examples of dissolute [immoral, sinful] living, and to drive others thereto.” **Article 13**

## *Wearing men's clothing*

**14.** “Previous to, and since her capture, at the Castle of Beaufort and at Arras, Jeanne had been many times advised with gentleness by noble persons of both sexes, to give up her man's dress and resume [wear again] suitable attire [clothing]. She had

absolutely refused, and to this day also refuses with persistence; she disdains [considers it unworthy of her character] also to give herself up to feminine work, conducting herself in all things rather as a man than as a woman.” **Article 16**

*Encouraging war and bloodshed*

15. “So long as Jeanne remained with Charles she did dissuade him with all her power, him and those with him, from consenting [agreeing] to any treaty of peace, any arrangement with his adversaries [enemies]; inciting them always to murder and effusion [spread] of blood; affirming that they could only have peace by sword and lance; and that God willed it so, because otherwise the enemies of the King would not give up that which they held in his kingdom; to fight against them thus, is she told them, one of the greatest benefits that can happen to all Christendom.” **Article 18**

*Listening to the devil when attempting suicide*

16. “Jeanne, as one desperate, for hate and contempt of the English, and foreseeing the destruction of Compiègne, which she believed to be imminent [most likely to happen], did attempt to kill herself by throwing herself down from the top of a tower; at the instigation [provocation, encouragement] of the devil, she took it into her head to commit this action; she applied herself to commit it; she did commit it in so far as she was able; on the other hand, in so throwing herself down, she was so well impelled [forced] and guided by a diabolic [belonging to the devil] instinct that she had in view rather the safety of her body than that of her soul and of many others. Often indeed, had she boasted that she would kill herself rather than that she should be delivered to the English.” **Article 41**

*Lying and possession by evil forces*

17. “Jeanne had not feared to proclaim that Saint Michael, the Archangel of God, did come to her with a great multitude [number] of Angels in the house of a woman where she had stopped at Chinon; that he walked with her, holding her by the hand; that they together mounted [climbed] the stairs of the Castle and together gained the Chamber of the King; that the Angel did reverence [feeling of deep respect] to the King, bowing before him, surrounded by this multitude of Angels, of which some had crowns on

their heads and others had wings. To say such things of Archangels and the Holy Angels is presumption [exceed what is proper], audacity [boldness], lying, as in the holy books we do not read that they did like a reverence, a like demonstration to any saint—not even to the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God...all these are lies imagined by Jeanne at the instigation of the devil, or suggested by demons in deceitful apparitions [visual appearance of spirits], to make sport of her curiosity, she who would search secrets beyond her capacity and condition.” **Article 51**

*Manipulating the people to worship her*

18. “By all these inventions, Jeanne had so seduced [led astray] Christian people that many have in her presence adored her as a Saint, and in her absence do adore her still, composing [creating] in her honour masses and collects; yet more, going so far as to call her the greatest of all the Saints after the Virgin Mary, raising [putting up] statues and images to her in the Churches of the Saints, and bearing about them medals in lead or other metal representing her—exactly as the Church does to honour the memory and the recollection [remembrance] of the canonized Saints, publicly proclaiming [stating] that she is sent from God; and more Angel than woman. Such things are pernicious [harmful] to the Christian religion, scandalous, and prejudicial [harmful] to the salvation of souls.” **Article 52**

*Forcing her leadership on the army*

19. “In contempt [feeling of one who views something as worthless] of the orders of God and the Saints, Jeanne, in her presumption [arrogance] and pride, had gone so far as to take command over men; she had made herself commander-in-chief and had under her orders nearly 16,000 men, among whom were Princes, Barons, and a number of Gentlemen; she had made them all fight, being their principal captain.” **Article 53**

*Accusation of being a temptress*

20. “Jeanne did behave in an unseemly manner with men, refuses the society [company] of women, wishes to live with men only, to be waited up by them, even in her own room and in the most private details; a like thing had never been seen or heard of a chaste [pure] and pious [religious] woman.” **Article 54**

# Looking for evidence

I Character trait	Evidence from historical quotes		Evidence from briefing sheet	
	II Initial supporting evidence	III Possible counter-evidence	IV Additional supporting evidence	V Additional counter-evidence

# Medieval practices and beliefs

## Religious beliefs

During the Middle Ages religion was a central factor in everyday life. For many people, religion directed and guided their lives. People believed that everyone, throughout their lives, struggled between good and evil and were judged by God after death. If you were good you went to heaven. If you were bad you suffered in hell. Evidence of God was believed to be seen everywhere: the world was filled with religious signs and meanings. God was responsible for the weather, people's health, crops—all successes and failures. If things went badly, people believed they were being punished for their sins. Participating in religious ceremonies meant God would forgive their sins and they could avoid the eternal agonies of hell. God's blessing was required for every important event—such as births, marriages and bountiful harvests. Every ceremony had a religious aspect. People of the Middle Ages accepted things without questioning them. God determined their position in society. Objects that were from Saints held miraculous powers. Some people took their spiritual beliefs so seriously that they devoted their entire lives to God and became monks or nuns.

At the time, the Catholic Church, as the major religious institution in Europe, was very powerful and influential. The Church created its own law—canon law—to which everyone was subject, including kings and peasants. The Church established courts to try people accused of violating religious law. Although the Church Court was not allowed to sentence a person to death, it could administer two very harsh punishments: excommunication and interdict. Excommunication meant the person was banished from the Church and therefore denied salvation (saving of their soul). This was often used by the Pope to exercise power over political rulers. Interdict prevented many sacraments (religious ceremonies) and services from being performed in the king's land. Without sacraments, people believed they would suffer in hell for eternity.

## Superstitions

Despite the influence of the Church, belief in myth and magic remained strong in the Middle Ages as it helped people explain and understand the natural world. People believed in supernatural powers and had many superstitions. They expected the dead to reappear as ghosts. They believed good goblins would bring luck whereas evil witches had the power to take a healthy child and replace it with a sick one. The Church frowned upon

superstitions and placed witchcraft on a level with heresy. It ordered the Inquisition to root out devotion to the devil (Satan). Many people suspected of witchcraft were led to confess under torture and were burned at the stake.

## Role of women

During the Middle Ages, women were generally viewed as inferior to men and therefore had fewer advantages in life than men. The Church taught that women's lower social status was justified. Men dominated medieval society. Most women's roles were limited to the home and convent. Peasant women worked from dawn to dusk in the fields, raised children and cared for, fed and clothed their families. Most women were poor and powerless. They died young. Women had few legal rights. They were often controlled by their fathers before marriage and by their husbands afterward. Many marriages were arranged. The good of the family was more important than the wants and needs of the individual. Women who lived in towns were slightly better off than the women who worked in the fields. They were able to earn money. Noble women had many more opportunities. They often received a good education and could inherit land from their husband. However, the role of noble women was often limited to running the household. Ownership of property and privileges, including being a Duke or a King, was passed from father to eldest son. Women were generally regarded as dependent on men.

## Upper class motivations

In medieval times, there existed strong divisions between the upper classes (the lords) and the peasants. For example, it was thought to be beneath a lord's dignity to fight with a peasant. Consequently, many French knights refused to attack the archers who were seen to be of low birth. For the upper classes, and the people they hired or coerced into participation, war was a money-making activity. The money from a successful war came in several ways: theft and plunder, kidnapping important people for ransom, collecting taxes from townspeople and farmers. Many fortunes won in battle or through treaties had enduring results over centuries. The relationships among members of the upper classes were complex and highly political. There was continual forming and undermining of partnerships. This created many opportunities for people to disagree about who should succeed whom as king or queen. All of this was intensified because the privileges of the upper class carried with them a lot of money.

## Assessing the evidence

Use the following rubric to assess students' evidence supporting and countering each of Joan's character traits. Award intermediate marks for evidence falling between the descriptors.

	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>Competent</b>	<b>Well developed</b>
<b>Identification of character traits</b>	No plausible character traits are identified.  <b>1</b>	Three plausible character traits are identified.  <b>3</b>	Five or more plausible character traits are identified.  <b>5</b>
<b>Supporting evidence</b>	Virtually no relevant evidence is offered to support any of the character traits.  <b>1</b>	Approximately two pieces of relevant evidence are offered to support each character trait.  <b>3</b>	Four pieces of relevant evidence are offered to support each character trait.  <b>5</b>
<b>Counter-evidence</b>	Virtually no relevant counter-evidence is offered to support any of the character traits.  <b>1</b>	Approximately two pieces of relevant counter-evidence are offered to support each character trait.  <b>3</b>	Four pieces of relevant counter-evidence are offered to support each character trait.  <b>5</b>

**TOTAL / 15**

Comments:

## Assessing the justification

Use the following rubric to assess the students' justification for their successive assessments of Joan's character. Award intermediate marks for evidence falling between the descriptors.

	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>Competent</b>	<b>Well developed</b>
<b>Recognition of new evidence</b>	The explanations make little or no reference to new evidence or perspectives in the subsequent assessments.  <b>1</b>	The explanations make modest reference to new evidence or perspectives in the subsequent assessments.  <b>3</b>	The explanations make significant reference to new evidence or perspectives in the subsequent assessments.  <b>5</b>
<b>Openness to re-assessment</b>	No sign of any reconsideration of the initial assessment in light of new evidence. Student ignores any contrary evidence.  <b>1</b>	Some indication of reconsidering the initial assessment in light of new evidence, but student too easily dismisses contrary evidence.  <b>3</b>	Clear indication of serious reconsideration of the initial assessment in light of new evidence.  <b>5</b>

**TOTAL** / 10

Comments:

## Assessing the account

Use the following rubric to assess the students' biographical account of Joan. Award intermediate marks for evidence falling between the descriptors.

	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>Competent</b>	<b>Well developed</b>
<b>Accurate and relevant information</b>	Many facts about Joan's character are inaccurate or irrelevant.  <b>1</b>	Provides a number of relevant and accurate facts about Joan's character. However, some information is inaccurate or irrelevant, and key information is missing.  <b>3</b>	All the facts provided about Joan's character are accurate and relevant.  <b>5</b>
<b>Specific, corroborating evidence</b>	Little or no supporting evidence is provided.  <b>1</b>	Some supporting evidence is provided, but tends to be vague or not convincing.  <b>3</b>	The evidence is specific and convincing.  <b>5</b>
<b>Balanced analysis</b>	The account shows no consideration of more than one point of view of Joan's character.  <b>1</b>	The account shows some consideration of differing points of view, but does not do them justice.  <b>3</b>	The account seriously considers alternate points of view of Joan's character.  <b>5</b>

**TOTAL** / 15

Comments: