

Boston crimes and the search for evidence

1962–1964 | Grade 2 · Read & notice

Teacher note: this topic includes loss, violence, discrimination, or criminal allegations. Preview and choose a suitable reading together. No reenactment of harm is needed.

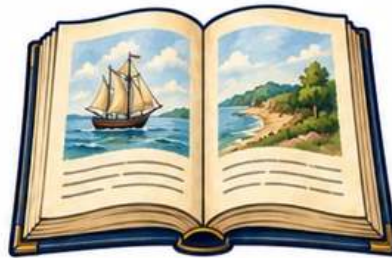
Words to know

evidence — information that helps support or question a claim

investigate — look carefully to learn what happened

compare — look for ways things are alike and different

Look closely



Modern topic illustration created for Massachusetts History Explorers. It is not a historical artifact.

Read the story

A series of murders frightened people in the Boston area. Investigators tried to find who was responsible. Later DNA work helped resolve one case. Evidence matters more than a frightening nickname.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. What happened in this reading? Tell one fact.
2. Who or what is this reading mostly about?
3. Choose a word from the word bank. Explain it in your own words.
4. Look at the picture and its caption. What does it help you notice? Is it from the time of the event?

Follow-up reading: Edward Brooke wins a Senate election

1966

Edward Brooke was elected a U.S. senator from Massachusetts. He was the first Black person popularly elected to the U.S. Senate. His election was an important political milestone.

How are the two readings alike or different? Tell a partner one connection. Which event came first?

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.2.1: ask and answer questions; RI.2.2: identify a main topic; RI.2.7: use images and words; W.2.2 and SL.2.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: A series of murders frightened people in the Boston area. Investigators tried to find who was responsible. Later DNA work helped resolve one case. Evidence matters more than a frightening nickname. The label Boston Strangler can hide differences among cases. Later DNA evidence connected Albert DeSalvo to Mary Sullivan’s murder; it did not independently prove every crime attributed to that series.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

Image: Original site illustration.

[Image source and rights record ↗](#)

The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event’s [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.