

High School Mock Trial Rubric - Team Participation

For use in teaching the mock trial process and for evaluating team presentations.

These forms are provided to help teachers and coaches evaluate student learning in the mock trial process. This rubric is specifically formulated for students who are working as a team to accomplish a goal.

1 - poor	2 - below average	3 - good/average	4 - strong/effective	5 - excellent
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1. Each member of the team has a clear understanding of the mock trial rules of procedure.
2. Each member of the team has a clear understanding of the burden of proof.
3. Each member of the team is able to present information in logical and articulate manner.
4. All members of the team contribute, listen and respect each other.
5. All members of the team understand the steps in the trial.
6. All members of the team attend meetings, practices and trials regularly.
7. All members of the team understand that they are limited to the materials provided in the mock trial packet.
8. All members of the team understand good citizenship and fairness.
9. All members of the team are aware of alternative dispute resolution processes.
10. All members of the team understand the American judicial system.

High School Mock Trial Rubric - Attorney Opening/Closing

For use in teaching the mock trial process and for evaluating student presentations.

These forms are provided to help teachers and coaches evaluate student learning in the mock trial process. This rubric is specifically formulated for students who are assigned the task of crafting and presenting an opening statement or a closing argument.

1 - poor	2 - below average	3 - good/average	4 - strong/effective	5 - excellent
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1. Student comprehends the various statements of fact and has a clear idea of the burden of proof.
2. Student provides an accurate synopsis of what needs to be discussed in an opening statement.
3. Student provides an accurate synopsis of what needs to be discussed in a closing argument, and understands that there are limits on what may be included based on what is discussed during the trial.
4. Delivery of opening and/or closing is clear and concise, with minimal reliance on notes.
5. Student speaks clearly and loudly enough to be heard throughout the room.
6. Student directs comments to the appropriate audience; including judge, jury or witness, with good eye contact.
7. Student exhibits appropriate courtroom decorum and respect for all parties in the trial, including opposing counsel and witnesses.
8. Statements are organized into thoughtful and methodical presentations.
9. Appropriate time limits are followed.
10. Students performing closing arguments use appropriate information only and indicate that they listened and understood opposing arguments.

High School Mock Trial Rubric - Attorney Direct/Cross

For use in teaching the mock trial process and for evaluating student presentations.

These forms are provided to help teachers and coaches evaluate student learning in the mock trial process. This rubric is specifically formulated for students who are assigned the task of crafting and presenting an opening statement or a closing argument.

1 - poor	2 - below average	3 - good/average	4 - strong/effective	5 - excellent
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1. Student comprehends the various statements of fact and has a clear idea of the burden of proof and is able to establish a foundation for documents.
2. Student develops questions for direct that indicate a clear understanding of the case and how it should be proved.
3. Questions are appropriate for direct or cross, i.e. no leading questions on direct.
4. Delivery of questions on direct and/or cross is clear and concise, with minimal reliance on notes.
5. Student speaks clearly and loudly enough to be heard throughout the room.
6. Student directs comments to the appropriate audience; including judge, jury or witness, with good eye contact.
7. Student exhibits appropriate courtroom decorum and respect for all parties in the trial, including opposing counsel and witnesses.
8. Statements are organized into thoughtful and methodical presentations.
9. Appropriate time limits are followed.
10. Student knows when to object, and on what grounds and is able to explain articulately why objections are made or should be overruled.

High School Mock Trial Rubric - Witnesses

For use in teaching the mock trial process and for evaluating team presentations.

These forms are provided to help teachers and coaches evaluate student learning in the mock trial process. This rubric is specifically formulated for students who are serving as mock trial witnesses.

1 - poor	2 - below average	3 - good/average	4 - strong/effective	5 - excellent
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1. Students are familiar with all mock trial rules.
2. Students understand the burden of proof.
3. Students are familiar with their witness statement and any additional information provided in the mock trial packet that is relevant to the case at hand.
4. Student understands that they must respond accurately, within the information in their witness statement, to questions asked by mock trial attorneys.
5. Appropriate time limits are followed.
6. Student speaks clearly and loudly enough to be heard throughout the room.
7. Student directs comments to the appropriate audience; including judge, jury or witness, with good eye contact.
8. Student exhibits appropriate courtroom decorum and respect for all parties in the trial, including opposing counsel and witnesses.
9. Student portrays the witness in a convincing manner, within the rules (i.e., no costumes, props, dialects or accents).
10. Student can perform the role of witness without use of notes.

Additional Information

Past ISBA mock trial problems are available for classroom use via the Internet at <http://www.isba.org/Sections/lawrelateded.html>

While official mock trial teams registered and participating in the state mock trial event each spring are limited to the materials provided by the ISBA for this event, as an additional classroom exercise, teachers and students are encouraged to expand on the materials provided.

- Independent research may be conducted, and additional witness statements may be crafted to include, for instance, arresting officers, character witnesses, expert witnesses, etc.
- Internet searches may provide updated information on the topics discussed in years past
- You may ask students to debate the issues brought forth in a particular case
- You may ask students to mediate the issues brought forth in a particular case
- Assign students the task of drafting a bench memorandum, which explains the basics of the case and synthesizes what each side must prove

Other Participants in the Trial

Not all students will be able to participate as a mock trial witness or lawyer. Other roles are open to students:

Judge
Jury
Bailiff
Timer
Court Reporter
Journalist/Reporter
Courtroom artist

Students may also be asked to read law-related books and develop mock trial witness affidavits based on the characters in the books. The ISBA Website contains a law-related reading list that can be used for this assignment.

<http://www.isba.org/Sections/lawrelateded.asp>

Or ask students to watch one of the movies listed below and create a witness statement or affidavit based on one of the characters depicted:

A Civil Action (1999)
A Man for All Seasons (1966)
Adams Rib (1949)
Anatomy of a Murder (1959)
Billy Budd (1962)
Breaker Morant (1980)

A Few Good Men (1992)
Absence of Malice (1981)
Amistad (1997)
And Justice For All (1979)
Birdman of Alcatraz (1962)
Catch Me if You Can (2003)

Class Action (1991)
Dead Man Walking (1995)
Gideon's Trumpet (1980)
Holes (2003)
In the Name of the Father (1994)
Judgment at Nuremberg (1966)
Kramer v. Kramer (1979)
Liar, Liar (1997)
Losing Isaiah (1995)
(1997)
Miracle on 34th Street (1947) (1994)
Mrs. Doubtfire (1993)
My Cousin Vinny (1992)
O Brother, Where Art Thou? (2000)
Paths of Glory (1957)
Presumed Innocent (1990)
Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves (1991)
Schindler's List (1993)
Sommersby (1993)
The Accused (1988)
The Castle (1999)
The Crucible (1996)
The Devil's Advocate (1997)
The Fugitive (1993)
The Insider (1999)
The Onion Field (1979)
The Paradine Case (1947)
The Rainmaker (1997)
The Star Chamber (1983)
The Thin Blue Line (1988)
The Winslow Boy (1999) (1948)
Time to Kill (1996)
Twelve Angry Men (1957)
Whose Life is it Anyway? (1981)
Young Mr. Lincoln (1939)
Cool Hand Luke (1967)
Erin Brockovich (2000)
Gosford Park (2001)
I Am Sam (2001)
Inherit the Wind (1960)
Knock on Any Door (1949)
Legal Eagles (1996)
Lord of the Flies (1990)
Midnight in the Garden of Good & Evil
Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936)
Murder in the First (1995)
Nuts (1987)
Paris Trout (1991)
Philadelphia (1994)
Reversal of Fortune (1990)
Rules of Engagement (2000)
Snow Falling on Cedars (2000)
Suspect (1987)
The Caine Mutiny (1954)
The Client (1994)
The Devil and Daniel Webster (1941)
The Firm (1993)
The Incident (1989)
The Life of Emile Zola (1937)
The Ox-bow Incident (1943)
The Pelican Brief (1993)
The Shawshank Redemption (1994)
The Sweet Hereafter (1997)
The Verdict (1982)
The Wrong Man (1956)
To Kill a Mockingbird (1962)
Wag the Dog (1998)
Witness for the Prosecution (1957)