



Mock Trial Scope & Sequence



By A. Weatherwax, THS Mock Trial



PARTS OF A TRIAL & ROLES

Show your students what they will be doing and how a trial works! Watch former final [rounds](#). Get them clear on the purposes of statements, directs, and crosses. Teach them about different types of witnesses (character and expert).



RULES OF EVIDENCE (ROE)

Start teaching the ROE before you get the case because they govern what evidence is admissible. You will want students familiar with the ROE so that they can annotate witness statements and exhibits for possible objectionable material. Remind students that they are never done learning the ROE. Practice making and answering objections BEFORE you even get the case.



CASE CAPSULE & THE BURDEN

Watch the OCLRE's Case Capsule video for a summary of the case and get clear on the burden BEFORE diving into witness statements.



CASE LAW

Make sure your students are familiar with the case precedents BEFORE you get into witness statements. Teach them how to read [case law](#). The case law for Ohio Mock is a beast; divide and [conquer](#) it!



WITNESS STATEMENTS

Go through each with a fine-tooth comb with your students. Start with the Π. [Annotate](#) for testimony that helps and hurts each side of the case, possible objections, etc. Make a [chart](#) for each statement. Look for possible themes.



EXHIBITS

Go through each with a fine-tooth comb with your students. Annotate for testimony that helps and hurts each side of the case. Look for possible themes. Annotate for possible objections. Make a [chart](#) for each exhibit. Remember that not every witness has the knowledge to testify to every exhibit!



CASE THEORY & THEMES

Start brainstorming your [case theories and themes](#) BEFORE you begin drafting directs, crosses, and statements. Your theory of the case and proving/disproving the burden should be in the forefront of EVERYTHING! This is one of the things that separates the top teams. They have a reason for everything they're presenting. Be sure you are choosing the two witnesses that best fit your case theory.



DRAFT DIRECTS

Begin drafting [directs](#) by creating question categories/groupings. Play around with organization. Incorporate signposts and transitional elements. ALWAYS be mindful of the foundation that needs to be laid. Practice directs and revise as you go. Add witness characterization. Brainstorm possible objections and responses.



DRAFT CROSSES

Begin drafting [crosses](#) by creating question categories/groupings. Play around with organization. Incorporate signposts and transitional elements. Leave room for what happens on directs during trial. Brainstorm possible objections and responses.



RUN DIRECTS & CROSSES W/ OBJECTIONS & TIMEKEEPING

Run for time and revise for time. Brainstorm possible redirect and recross questions. Have your bailiffs and timekeepers practice their roles. Keep working on witness character development. Always, always, always have several possible last questions in case an objection gets sustained. Experienced mockers should be improvising in practice just like they will in trial!



DRAFT STATEMENTS

Begin drafting statements. Have each witness create bullet points of their most important testimony that attorneys can use when drafting their statements. Go back to the case law. Don't forget themes!



REVISE, PRACTICE, REVISE, PRACTICE...

Run all of your material. Scrimmage within your program and with other programs. Go to invitationals. Make adjustments.



PERFECT PERFORMANCE FACTOR

Have attorneys choreograph movements for statements. Practice [introducing exhibits](#). Work on intonation, pacing, and body language. Spice up the characters of your witnesses. Practice using the well of the courtroom. Add some "wow" factor. Make sure you have clean copies of all exhibits and witness statements. Practice setting up a clean and organized counsel table. MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE!!!!



DON'T FORGET ABOUT PRE & POST-TRIAL & MAKING APPEARANCES

Practice pre and post-trial and making appearances for the court. Pre-trial and appearances are the first look at your team! Remind students to only make a post-trial objection for a gross rules violation. Anything that happened during the trial that should have been addressed during the trial (e.g. invention of fact) should not be made in post trial. Remind your students to congratulate their opponents on their great performances!