

FROM CLASSROOM TO COURTROOM
MOCK TRIAL PROGRAM

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The Classroom to Courtroom Mock trials help students learn about courts and trial procedure in an interesting and enjoyable way. Although students obviously will not be as polished as they are in more lengthy mock trial programs, their abilities to quickly become familiar with trial process, to learn their roles, and to discuss rules of evidence and constitutional protections will surprise even the most seasoned observer.

Students will:

- Become familiar with the role of a trial court in solving disputes. They will also be introduced to court procedure and decorum.
- Develop an appreciation for the importance of various people in the courtroom.
- Practice communication and critical thinking skills as they prepare and present their case.

Handouts needed:

- ♦ Mini-Mock Trial Cases (*see "handout distribution page"*)
Do not give these copies to jurors! Attorneys and witnesses only!
- ♦ Juror activities

DAY ONE and TWO – Classroom Activities

1. Introducing the courts. Because most students have seen television programs about trials and courts, they already have some basic information. Ask them what programs they have seen. Ask the students to list the people who are present in the courtroom.

This list should include:

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| • judge | • plaintiff or prosecutor | • public |
| • lawyers | • bailiff | • sketch artists |
| • jurors | • police officers | • media reporters |
| • witnesses | • clerk | |
| • defendant | • court reporter | |

2. Discuss what these people do in the courtroom. Who do you think is the most important person in the courtroom? Why?
3. Discuss the steps in a trial. Use the handout and worksheet provided.

Optional activity: cut out each individual "step" and hand out to students. Allow them to arrange themselves in order using the "step" that they have been given.

4. **Choose which case the class will do.** Please do not share specific facts of the case with your students, so that those who will become jurors will not hear about the case. Assign or ask for volunteers to play the roles. There should be (depending on class size):
- 2-3 prosecutors
 - 2-3 defense attorneys
 - 1 bailiff
 - 3 witnesses for the prosecution
 - 2 witnesses for the defense
 - 1 defendant
 - The rest of the group will be jurors for the case.

5. **Provide the Facts of the Case and Witness Statements to All Attorneys and Witnesses.** Do not give to the jurors – in order to simulate the trial as close to a real trial as possible, the jurors should not know the facts.

6. Provide the following instructions:

Attorneys

- Attorneys will each need a copy of the Mock Trial Script to guide them. The Mock Trial Script provides guidelines and suggestions for the attorneys for all stages of the trial.
- Read the facts and all of the witness statements (including the witnesses for the other side).
- Divide up parts: who will prepare an opening statement, questions for all the witnesses, and a closing argument?
- Bring all of their Mock Trial papers with them when attending the Courthouse Tour.

Witnesses

- Read his or her statement at least three times so that he or she will be prepared to answer questions.
- Work with the attorneys from their side to help prepare questions. Witnesses can improvise any details that are not contained in the Witness Statements, but they cannot go outside of the fact pattern. The details given within the Witness Statements may not be altered.
- Bring the Witness Statements with them to remind them of details during the mock trial.

Bailiff

- Bailiff will also need a copy of the Mock Trial Script.
- Review the procedure for the oath that he or she will administer to each witness.
- The Bailiff should be familiar with the case name to announce to the court.

Jurors

- Jurors need a copy of the Juror Questionnaire Packet.
- Ask them to imagine who they will be in twenty years and complete the forms.

Allow class time for the students to work on their roles over the course of these first few days.

DAYS THREE and FOUR – Prep for Field Trip/Mock Trial with Guest Speaker

Preparation: Students should have their materials from the previous class days.

- Introduce the Guest Attorney/Judge to the class and allow the attorney 10 minutes to talk about what they do in the legal profession. They will also discuss courthouse and courtroom decorum.
- Break up class into 3 groups: prosecuting attorneys/witness and defense attorneys/witnesses, and jurors.
- Guest will provide brief instruction as to what to expect on the upcoming field trip, courthouse procedures, security, dress code, etc.
- Guest will work with prosecution and defense groups on developing their case for the Mock Trial. Discussion will include opening statements, direct and cross-examinations, closing arguments, evidence, and objections.
- At the end of the class, collect all attorney and witness papers to bring for the mock trial to be held at the Leon County Courthouse.

DAY FIVE (Courthouse Field Trip - Tour and Mock Trials)

**See Sample Field Trip Itinerary*

- The Field Trip consists of the students/teachers going through security, observing an actual court proceeding, a tour of the building and presenting their mock trial in an actual courtroom. The judge will be a volunteer judge, attorney, or other court staff.
- **Students playing roles will need to bring their scripts with them!** Students will be able to keep all belongings in papers in the reserved courtroom while touring the building.
- After the verdict has been reached in the mock trial, there will be a brief Q & A with judge.

**** Important Field Trip Information! ****

Teachers should emphasize the following to all students and chaperones:

- Security procedures: any weapons, scissors (including medical), metal utensils (forks), etc. will be confiscated.
- Appropriate dress: no shorts, torn jeans, hats, hoodies, flip flops, etc. (skirts/dresses must of an appropriate length; sandals must have a back strap.
- Appropriate behavior: no cell phones on in courtroom, no talking in courtroom, orderly and quiet in the hallways
- How to address the judges: stand up when speaking to the judge, answer "yes, your honor" or "no, your honor", etc.

Handout Distribution

The roles for each class and the papers needed for each role are as follows:

*Roles should be assigned **BEFORE** the guest speaker arrives to your class!

✓ **6 Attorneys*** (3 Prosecution, 3 Defense)

- Attorney Tips and Instructions
- Rules of Evidence and Objections
- Mock Trial Script
- Prosecution Witness Statements
- Defense Witness Statements

*For smaller classes, you might choose to select only 4 total attorneys (2 for each side) so that you will have enough jurors.

} all attorneys need **both** sets of statements so they may prepare both direct and cross-examination questions

✓ **3 Defense Witnesses (includes defendant)**
per side

- Facts of the Case
- Witness Statements

*NOTE: The Tony Garcia case only has 2 witnesses

✓ **3 Prosecution Witnesses** *NOTE: The Tony Garcia case only has 2 witnesses per side

- Facts of the Case
- Witness Statements

✓ **1 Bailiff**

- Mock Trial Script – Bailiff may look over the oath and the name of the case

Note: The bailiff won't have anything to work on before court day so he or she may work with the jurors during class.

✓ **Jurors** (rest of the class)

- Juror Questionnaire – to be filled out as if students were 20 years older than their present age

These items can also be downloaded from our website
<http://www.leoncountyfl.gov/teencourt/index.php>.

EXAMPLES OF HOW TO DIVIDE ATTORNEY RESPONSIBILITIES

*You might choose to give a copy of this sheet to each team of attorneys to keep track of who will be completing each part.

Option 1

Attorney #1 →	Opening Statement	Closing Argument	
Attorney #2 →	Direct-Examination of all 3 Witnesses from their own side:		
	Witness #1	Witness #2	Witness #3
Attorney #3 →	Cross-Examination of all 3 Witnesses from opposing side:		
	Witness #1	Witness #2	Witness #3

-----OR-----

Option 2

Attorney #1 →	Opening Statement	Direct-Examine Witness #1 from their own side	Cross-Examine Witness #1 from opposing side
Attorney #2 →	Closing Argument	Direct-Examine Witness #2 from their own side	Cross-Examine Witness #2 from opposing side
Attorney #3 →	---	Direct-Examine Witness #3 from their own side	Cross-Examine Witness #3 from opposing side