

PLANNING FOR A MOCK TRIAL

1. **Time Factors**

Teachers need to evaluate specific learning objectives, sophistication and skills of students, and amount of time available when planning the depth and breadth of mock trial.

2. **Suggested Concept Lessons**

- Purpose and procedure of trials
- Vocabulary
- Persuasive Writing: Opening and closing statements
- Facts vs. opinions
- Direct and cross-examination questions
- Rules of evidence
- Bill of Rights
- Drama / Acting

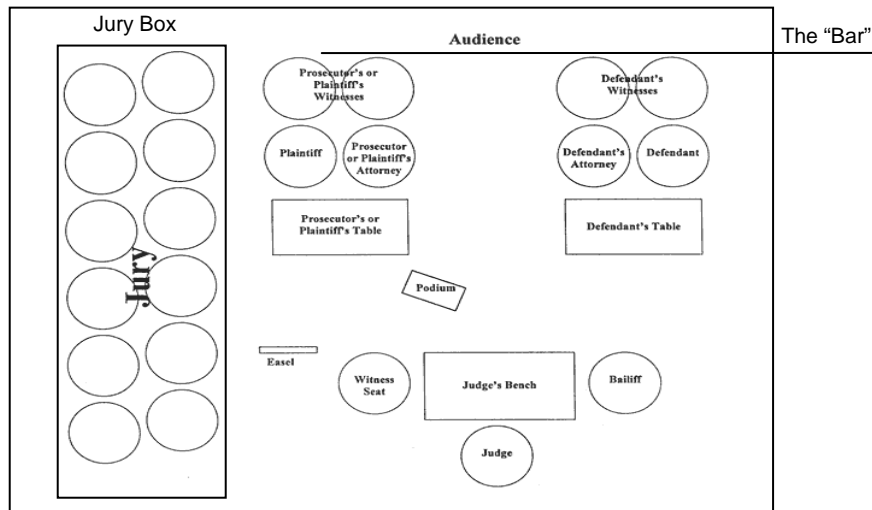
3. **Student Involvement**

It is advised to involve each student in a specific, active role. In large classes, perhaps several cases involving a few small groups might be more practical. Active student roles include eight possible attorneys and six witnesses. Additional roles include alternate positions, bailiff, and timekeeper.

4. **Student Materials**

- The case and witness statements
- Trial overview – steps in preparing for trial
- Vocabulary
- Analyzing a witness's statement – dissecting statement for pertinent information
- Just the facts – facts vs. opinion
- Using rules of evidence – objections during questioning

5. **Typical Court Room Arrangement** ***Note: The Prosecution/Plaintiff sits on the same side as the jury box. In some courtrooms, the jury box may be on the opposite side of the room, which in turn means side presentation will change so that the Prosecution/Plaintiff will be next to the jury box.



6. **Suggested Administrative Checklist**

- Case for each student
- Schedule to meet / practice
- Attorney-coach commitment
- Involvement from fellow teachers and parents
- Student objectives and roles assigned
- Sample materials selected and copied for students, e.g. famous opening and closing arguments
- Students begin trial preparations
- Court field trip
- Student preparation finalized
- Trial conducted
- Trial debriefed