MYLAW HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION RUBRIC

	Opening Statement	Attorneys (Examination)	Witnesses (Examination)	Closing Argument
9-10: Exceptional	**Presentation -** Outstanding command of the courtroom, makes proper introductions, speaks articulately, moves with confidence, follows all rules of courtroom decorum, demonstrates an exceptional understanding of materials and trial procedures, presents the case without notes. **Theme/Theory and Case Story -** Presents a highly organized, cohesive and persuasive case theory and story, including key facts, and very clear summary of expected witness testimony. **Law -** Provides an outstanding explanation of the law and the burden of proof, requests a desired verdict.	**Presentation -** Outstanding command of the courtroom, speaks and moves with confidence, follows all rules of courtroom decorum, demonstrates a superior understanding of trial procedures. **Questions -** Appropriate for the type of examination; compelling, logically organized, effectively control the flow of direct and cross-examination. The decision to/ not to re-direct or re-cross is correct; when performed, re-direct/ re-cross is responsive and relevant. **Evidence & Objections -** Use of/response to objections and rulings shows superior resilience in adjusting questions as needed and arguing objections by accurately citing rules of evidence; properly enters and appropriately uses exhibits consistently.	**Presentation -** Outstanding command of the courtroom, maintains appropriate courtroom demeanor, speaks clearly and audibly with confidence. **Witness Persona -** Develops a credible and compelling witness persona by demonstrating exceptional knowledge of the affidavits and exhibits, chooses and maintains character attributes that are interesting and appropriate, responds to questions in a way that is natural (not scripted), thorough and persuasive; is not unnecessarily combative/ uncooperative on cross, maintains persona on cross examination.	**Presentation -** Outstanding command of the courtroom, speaks confidently and articulately, limited use of notes specific to quotes from the trial. Moves confidently in physical space. Follows all rules of courtroom decorum and trial procedures. **Argument -** Effectively and clearly organizes facts of the case and witness testimony brought out during trial; summarizes the case and persuasively supports each component of the law to meet the required burden of proof. Persuasively uses facts from the trial to show weaknesses in opposing counsel's case. Closing argument is fully aligned with facts brought out during trial.
7-8: Strong	**Presentation -** Strong command of the courtroom, makes introductions, speaks articulately, moves with confidence, follows most rules of courtroom decorum, demonstrates a solid understanding of materials and trial procedures; presents the case with limited notes. **Theme/Theory and Case Story -** Presents a cohesive and persuasive case theory and story, includes most key facts, provides summary of expected witness testimony. **Law -** Provides a clear explanation of the law and the burden of proof, requests a desired verdict.	**Presentation -** Strong command of the courtroom, mostly speaks and moves with confidence, follows most rules of courtroom decorum, demonstrates a solid understanding of trial procedures. **Questions -** Mostly appropriate for the type of examination and logically organized; mostly controls the flow of direct and cross-examination; the decision to/not to re-direct/ re-cross is correct, and mostly responsive and relevant. **Evidence & Objections -** Use of/response to objections and rulings showing resilience in adjusting questions and arguing objections by accurately citing some rules of evidence; properly enters and appropriate uses exhibits most of the time.	**Presentation-** Solid command of the courtroom, appropriate courtroom demeanor, speaks clearly and audibly with confidence. **Witness Persona -** Develops a mostly credible and convincing witness persona by showing a solid understanding of case materials and choosing interesting character attributes. Does not always maintain character attributes throughout performance and at times seems scripted. Is unnecessarily combative on cross-examination at times.	**Presentation -** Demonstrates solid command of the courtroom, speaks with confidence, some reading of notes that may or may not be specific to events from the trial. Uses the physical space appropriately. Follows most rules of courtroom decorum and trial procedures. **Argument -** Organizes facts of the case and witness testimony brought out during trial to summarize the case and persuasively support most components of the law to meet the required burden of proof. Uses facts from the trial to show weaknesses in opposing counsel's case. Closing argument is somewhat scripted, but includes most facts brought out during trial.

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5-6: Good	**Presentation** - Some command of the courtroom, makes introductions; shows some confidence, articulation, courtroom decorum; demonstrates a general understanding of case materials and trial procedures; may read substantial portions from notes. **Theme/Theory and Case Story** - Presents a case theory and story, includes some key facts, provides limited summary of expected witness testimony. **Law** - Provides some explanation of the law, references burden of proof, may struggle to recover after rulings. May request desired outcome, but not specific verdict.	**Presentation** - Some command of the courtroom, speaks with some confidence, does not use the physical space, follows some rules of courtroom decorum, shows some understanding of courtroom procedures. **Questions** - Some are appropriate for the type of examination, some organization, some irrelevant questions; direct and cross-examination sounds rehearsed; re-direct/re-cross is somewhat responsive but at times irrelevant. **Evidence & Objections** - Some response to objections and rulings, some adjustment of questioning, may miss opportunities to make key points in case and struggles to recover from rulings. Argues objections with little citation of the rules of evidence; enters and uses exhibits but must sometimes be prompted to do so.	**Presentation** - Maintains courtroom demeanor with some exceptions, may exhibit nervousness in speech. **Witness Persona** Develops a somewhat credible and convincing witness persona by showing some understanding of affidavits and exhibits, and choosing some discernable character attributes. May not be especially interesting or compelling, largely appears to be rehearsed and not portraying a character. Is unnecessarily combative or evasive on cross-examination.	**Presentation** - Demonstrates general command of the courtroom, speaks with some confidence, reads substantial portions of notes that may or may not be specific to events from the trial. Limited use of the physical space. Follows some rules of courtroom decorum, demonstrates a general understanding of courtroom procedures. **Argument** - Organizes some facts of the case and witness testimony brought out during trial to summarize the case and support some components of the law to meet the required burden of proof. Uses some facts from the trial to show weakness in opposing counsel's case. Closing argument is scripted, but includes some facts brought out during trial.
3-4: Ineffective	**Presentation** - Little to no command of the courtroom, hard to understand, lacks consistent courtroom decorum, struggles to understand case materials/ trial procedures, reads verbatim from notes. **Theme/Theory and Case Story** - Case theory is weak or fragmented; few key facts with limited or no summary of expected witness testimony. **Law** - Provides little or no explanation of the law or burden of proof; does not request outcome or desired verdict. Misses many opportunities to use/respond to objections, often struggles to recover after rulings.	**Presentation** - Little command of the courtroom, nervous, fidgeting, hard to understand, does not use the physical space, weak demonstration of courtroom decorum and trial procedures. **Questions** - Inappropriate for the type of examination, disorganized questioning, irrelevant questions; direct and cross examination sounds rehearsed, argues with witnesses; re-direct/re-cross is mostly irrelevant. **Evidence & Objections** - Little response to objections and ruling, does not adjust questioning, misses opportunities to make key points in case, and struggles to recover from rulings. Limited argument of objections with no citation of the rules of evidence; does not enter or use exhibits and/or must be instructed on procedures.	**Presentation** - Inconsistent in courtroom demeanor; nervous, inaudible or jumbled speech; limited eye contact; does not follow instruction by the Court. **Witness Persona** - Witness persona is not convincing; shows limited understanding of the affidavits and exhibits; direct examination responses sound stiff and rehearsed; fails to answer on cross, evades response, argues with hostility, or is unresponsive. Testimony is impeached on cross-examination.	**Presentation** - No command of the courtroom, nervous, hard to understand, lacks confidence, reads entirely from notes and does not make necessary adjustments. Does not use physical space. Follows few rules of courtroom decorum, demonstrates little understanding of trial procedures. **Argument** – Lacks organization of facts, little or no use of witness testimony brought out during trial, limited or no summary of the case. Few components of the law supported or addressed with little/no reference to burden of proof. Does not address weaknesses in opposing counsel's case. Closing argument is read verbatim.
1-2	A score of 1 or 2 should be reserved for students who demonstrate disrespect for the process or whose performance shows little to no preparation or effort.			