



Wyoming High School Mock Trial

Scoring Judge Checklist

Welcome to the Wyoming High School Mock Trial competition. This checklist will help scoring judges fill their duties consistent with the mock trial rules of competition and evidence.

BEFORE THE TRIAL

- Print and read the case materials and rules of competition and procedure, available on the Wyoming State Bar Web site, <http://wyomingbar.org>.
- Judge orientation is at 7:30 a.m. (room will be announced on the day of competition). You will receive a name badge and courtroom assignments. This is the time to ask questions about the rules and scoring.
- Your presiding judge will have your ballots.

DURING THE TRIAL

- Enter the courtroom, take your place in the jury box, remain standing for the announcement of the presiding judge and then be seated.
- Assign points based only on student presentations, including knowledge of the facts, law and rules. Do not assign points based on your opinion of the legal merits of the case.
- A scoring judge may award points to a team despite an adverse ruling from the bench. (Scoring judges are not bound by decisions of the presiding judge.) Evaluate the students on presentation, not outcome.
- We expect every student to observe proper courtroom decorum and abide by the Code of Ethical Conduct at all times. However, students should not be evaluated based upon their dress, jewelry, hairstyle or any other aspect of physical appearance.
- As part of the evaluation of a student attorney, the scoring judge may look at how well that attorney raises and responds to objections. Do not reward obstructionist behavior and excessive technical objections.
- Witnesses who engage in excessively long, excessively non-responsive answers to a majority of the questions asked of them in order to deliberately run the clock down on an opposing team's attorney should not be rewarded for this type of obstructionist behavior.
- Scoring judges may take into consideration when scoring an individual participant that participant's reliance (or non-reliance) on notes. It is up to individual scoring judges how much weight to give this matter and whether to deduct or award point, within the overall scoring structure.
- Scoring judges may take into consideration when scoring an individual participant that participant's use and knowledge of specific rules and rule numbers. Students may demonstrate knowledge by citing rules and/or rule numbers on their own or upon request of the presiding judge. It is up to the individual evaluator how much weight to give this matter and whether to award or deduct points, within the overall scoring structure.
- Team members who ask questions that require an unfair extrapolation or team members who offer an answer that includes an unfair extrapolation should have points deducted from individual performance scores. Teams have been advised the best way to handle unfair extrapolations is through impeachment on cross-examination and in closing argument, if appropriate.
- Rule 4.11 limits the use of costumes and illustrative devices. Scoring judges should interpret Rule 4.11 strictly and narrowly.



AFTER THE TRIAL

- Join the presiding judge and observers to give the teams a round of applause.
- When the presiding judge announces the recess, retire to the deliberation room with your judging panel.
- If necessary, the presiding judge will conduct a dispute resolution process according to Rules 6.1-6.4 and will inform you of any dispute and the outcome. You will have the option of altering your scores after considering the dispute.
- Review the Explanation of Presentation Ratings and Criteria for Scoring a Trial Round. Finalize and total the scores on your practice ballot, ensuring you have not given a tie score. **DO NOT** confer with other panel members regarding individual scores. It is important that you complete your scoring independently of other panel members.
- Record your scores on your ballot and fill in the date, round number, team codes, scores, tiebreaker box and name and signature.
- Make sure all boxes are filled, no fractional points are given, total scores are **NOT** tied and there is a P or D in the tie-breaker box.
- Give your official ballot to the presiding judge.
- Return with your panel to the courtroom to conduct the debriefing. Limit comments to 3 minutes. Debriefing tips:
 - Humor can be a welcome tension reliever. Remind everyone their experience should be exciting and enjoyable.
 - Be respectful. The round you have observed has been conducted by high school students, some as young as 14 years old, from diverse backgrounds. For most, this is their first mock trial competition, and they have been working on this case for only 10 weeks, outside their regular school assignments. Please recognize their hard work and be positive and constructive.
 - Today, you are a teacher. The mock trial program is for and about these young people, and the goal is for them to conclude their mock trial experience as young citizens who are smarter, more appreciative and more knowledgeable about the law and lawyers – and also more knowledgeable and appreciative about themselves. One goal of this competition is for everyone to finish the day a more thoughtful, more committed and more empowered person.
 - Maintain confidentiality. No one knows the results of any trial or ballot until all three rounds are scored. Please be careful to keep scores, ballots and trial results confidential.
 - Do not refer to “real world” rules during the trial or debriefing.

THANK YOU!