

Argumentative Presentation: Courtroom Debate

Who: 7th graders

What: Debating through a court-room structured class presentation

When: Wednesday, March 9 and Thursday, March 10

Where: During ELA and SS class

Why: So we can practice our argumentative and presentation skills and use critical thinking

Homework: Due on the day of your presentation. Each role needs to have his/her “prep-work” (see list at the bottom of this document) done by the time they get to class on the day of your presentation. We will be collecting it.

On the day of your trial, you will be given 5 minutes to prep with your team. The more prep work you do, the more teamwork will be able to be done at school--this will be key. After the 5 minutes is up, we will start the debate. The outline goes like this:

- General Overview (Judge/Teacher)
- Opening Statements (Lawyer)--2 minutes
- Questioning Lawyer from YES side asks Witness questions to show evidence--5 to 10 minutes
- YES Witness speaks to give evidence--included in previous time limit
- Questioning Lawyer from NO side asks Witness questions to show evidence--5 to 10 minutes
- NO Witness speaks to give evidence--included in previous time limit
- Closing Statement (Lawyer)--2 minutes
- Jury Deliberates

Throughout the trial, lawyers will be able to openly discuss ideas with their group and will have access to an iPad for additional information. However, the court case will be on a time limit. Here are the teams and roles:

Prep Work Tasks by Role: Everyone can have notes with them during the trial.

- **Opening Lawyer:** You will be the person that starts your entire argument. You will want to really focus on persuasive techniques (ethos, pathos, and logos) to hook the jury. You will want to talk in a confident and convincing way. For prep work, I would brainstorm from persuasive phrases or strategies that go with your side of the argument. Then, you can run them by your team. Plan to speak for 2 minutes.
 - Thank everyone for coming
 - Introduce your claim
 - Outline evidence (not too specifically though)
 - Close with pathos

- **Questioning Lawyer:** Works with the witness to prepare specific questions that will lead to the answers you want the jury to hear in order to lead to evidence. You have 5/10 minutes to ask as many questions as you want--but 2 is recommended.
 - Call witness to the stand (Judge _____, I would like to call _____ to the stand)
 - Thank witness for appearing
 - Ask question (leading them to the answer/fact)
 - Clarify their answer with a “So you’re saying...” question as follow up

- **Witness:** You are the EXPERT on the facts for YOUR SIDE. You need to bring in prep-work that is research on your topic. You should know everything there is to know (well, maybe not EVERYTHING, but a lot) so that you can give a 2-3 minutes speech when you are called on during the case. You will also be asked one question by a lawyer during the case. The more information you know on your topic, the better.
 - Answer question as you have rehearsed with your lawyer. Be sure to provide enough information in your answer that you get your point across.

- **Closing Lawyer:** You will be the last part of the argument... the lasting impression for your team. You are going to want to take notes throughout the trial to be sure you have a rebuttal for the opposing side’s main claims. You also want to include good persuasive techniques as part of your speech. You will also want to give an outline of all the evidence you have seen used in the case that proves YOUR SIDE IS THE BEST. Your prep work can be brainstorming different persuasive techniques you want to use (and then you can plug in your facts and rebuttal later). Plan to speak for 2 minutes.
 - Use pathos to draw the audience in
 - Strongly restate your claim
 - Re-state key evidence
 - Add a rebuttal to prove other sides evidence void
 - Thank jury for their time
 - Restate claim again... lasting impression