



Courtroom Journalist Contest

The Courtroom Journalist Contest allows students to experience a courtroom setting from the perspective of a news reporter and learn about the American legal system from actual judges and attorneys. Through the voice of a newspaper reporter reporting on a criminal case, students observe and report on their schools mock trials. Student's have 24 hours to



Mock Trial Competition Sample Journalism Competition Article (courtesy of CRF)

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RIVERSIDE —Following a tense two-hour trial Saturday at the Riverside County Courthouse, Pikesville resident Jesse Woodson was convicted of assaulting a 19-year-old high school student with a deadly weapon, during a confrontation last March.

The victim, Jane Smith, had difficulty adjusting to Pikesville after moving from out of state. She was involved in a series of conflicts with a group of her fellow students, and lodged complaints with the school concerning the group for acts of bullying and harassment both at school and online.

Smith's woes escalated on Feb. 21 when she interrupted a burglary in her home, resulting of the trespassers grabbing her hair and threatening to "brick her good." Smith testified that the voice sounded like Woodson's.

According to the prosecution, on March 13 Woodson, 29, followed Smith to an alley on her way home from school and attempted to prevent her from speaking about the brick-smashing the back of her head with a brick found nearby, leaving her unconscious for two days.

In a passionate summation, prosecuting attorney Emily Robinson underscored the strength of the government's case. "Our evidence is as solid as the weapon in this case," Robinson said. "To assault someone is criminal, but for an adult to hit a young female with a brick is simply





Journalism Judging Score Sheet

Judges Name: _____

Entry #: _____

Did the reporter:

Score

1. Find the most newsworthy developments that occurred during the portion of the trial on which she/he was reporting?
(40%) Score 0 to 4
2. Strive for fairness and accuracy
(15%) Score 0 to 2
3. Present the story in clear, concise language?
(10%) Score 0 to 2
4. Develop a simple, easy -to -understand lead paragraph?
(5%) Score 0 to 1
5. Properly structure the story with the most important elements early in the article?
(5%) Score 0 to 1
6. Understand the legal procedures and rulings that were used in the judicial process?
(5%) Score 0 to 1
- 7.