



Constitutional Rights Foundation's
California Mock Trial Program
Journalism Contest



Judging Criteria

All article submissions will be judged on the following criteria:

1. **Proper use of mechanics**
 - Applied good grammar (syntax, usage, punctuation) and used correct spelling.

2. **Accuracy**
 - Wrote accurate and graphic descriptions of courtroom setting, participants, their behavior, provided accurate and complete background of the case (what, who, when, where, how, why) and understood legal procedures and cases rulings.

3. **Journalistic Quality**
 - Presented the story in clear, concise language (active verbs, strong nouns), created strong one-idea sentences (active-voice) and well-structured paragraphs (important information first), develop strong lead paragraph) simple, understandable, catches reader's attention), observed fairness and accuracy (balanced reporting), and promoted most newsworthy elements to create high interest and an "angle" without editorializing or drawing opinionated conclusions.