

33rd MARIN COUNTY 2020-2021 MOCK TRIAL

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Mock Trial History

In 1977, the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) introduced the concept of Mock Trials to Los Angeles schools. In 1980, the program expanded to the state level. The program was created to help students acquire a working knowledge of our judicial system, develop analytical abilities and communication skills, and gain an understanding of their obligations and responsibilities as participating members of our society. The California Mock Trial Program currently involves more than 36 counties and over 8,000 students.

The Case

Each year CRF creates and produces a new set of Mock Trial materials based on an important issue facing America's youth. The materials include a hypothetical criminal case (including summaries of case law, witness statements, official exhibits, and simplified rules of evidence), lesson plans on the central issues in the case, and competition rules and guidelines.

The Students

Each team works with teacher and attorney coaches to prepare their version of the criminal case, both from the prosecution and defense perspective, and present their case before volunteer judges. Students assume the roles of trial attorneys, pretrial motion attorneys, witnesses, clerks and bailiffs. Through these role-playing techniques, students learn about the content and processes of law in an exciting and vibrant way. In addition, by studying the case and preparing strategies and arguments for trial, students increase their analytical ability and refine their public speaking and team cooperation skills.

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