Law and Order: The Death Penalty Decided in the Court Room



Next class, we will have mock trials based on the facts of certain death penalty cases. Each class member will serve as a speaker in a trial and a jury member in a trial.

Each team will consist of 3, 4 or 5 members:

* An opening statement member
  + Explain the case IN A DETAILED WAY in a way that helps your argument
  + Begin to convince the jury to side with your argument in the case
* A witness
  + Can be anyone that could help your case and does not alter the facts of the case (probably a character witness)
  + Should write and answer a minimum of 5 questions
  + Cross examination is allowed
* A cross examiner
  + Should have prepared questions to attack the opposing side’s witness
  + Should be able to come up with questions on the spot to make the witness look as bad or unimportant as possible
* If 5 members: An attorney questioning the witness
  + Should have prepared questions for the witness
  + Should come up with questions on the spot to help witness be as effective as possible
* A closing statement member
  + Summarize the arguments of the case
  + Counter the arguments the other side made
  + Convince the jury to side with your case

Opening and closing statements should be a minimum of 2 minutes.

Each group will have a different scenario based on real life actual crimes. **All criminals have already been convicted, this is only a sentencing hearing**. At the end of every trial, the members of class not involved in the case will act as the jury and decide whether or not to give the death penalty.

All work needs to be completed on a google doc and shared with the rest of your team (in case one of you is absent when we do the trial). Note: If you are absent, there will be a makeup assignment.

Everyone will be graded based on their knowledge of the case and their effectiveness in speaking to help their side convince the jury.