

Using the right resources makes teaching with children's literature easy.

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Teaching Simulation: Mock Trial at Kennesaw State University

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It has become trite to point out that learning takes place in multiple settings. The traditional situation in which the teacher professes and the student ingests is no longer viewed as the only way or even the primary means of instruction in all instances. But, in our rush to embrace new methods, we must be careful not to "throw out the baby with the bathwater." Lectures and "professing" continue to have a place in the learning environment. Supplementary and complimentary modes of teaching and learning, however, frequently fill gaps and reinforce the learning process. One such mode is found in co-curricular activities, where students engage in active learning with the teacher acting as coach. Simulations of trials and legislative bodies offer such opportunities for learning. At Kennesaw State University, we offer Mock Trial and Model United Nations simulations. This note focuses on Mock Trial

Each year, the American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) furnishes a fictitious case for the competition - one year a civil case and the next year a criminal case. There are six roles, three attorneys and three witnesses. A team is composed of no more than eight persons and each team is required to present both sides of the case, i.e. prosecution or plaintiff and defense. Each team is required by AMTA to have an educator-coach and an attorney-coach. In regional qualifying tournaments, teams are selected to compete in the national tournaments, one in Des Moines, Iowa and the other in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Prior to the Qualifying Tournaments, numerous Invitational Tournaments are held throughout the country.

To participate in a Mock Trial Team at KSU, students must enroll in a class held in the fall. Class time is spent in

instruction in trial techniques and court procedures, defining roles, developing theories of the case and role playing. Students enrolled in the course are not required to participate in competition, however, most do. Teams are selected from members of the class and continue to participate in regular practice sessions through the Qualifying and National Tournaments.

The benefit to students from this activity include both *knowledge* and *skill enhancement*:

Skill Enhancement. The skills enhanced are: 1. listening - attorneys must listen to witness responses and witnesses must listen to questions asked by attorneys; 2. articulation - the ability to speak with fluency, to be clear and intelligible; 3. conceptualization - to comprehend a chain of events; 4. participation - success of teams depends upon group effort, strong peer pressures for substantive participation; 5. evaluation - peer evaluation is significant in role assignment, team assignment, final grade and evaluation of relevant facts to develop a theory of the case; 6. demeanor - stresses formality, civility, respect required in courtroom and poise in presentation.

Knowledge Enhancement. Includes the following: 1. adversarial process; 2. role of procedure, law, facts, witnesses, attorneys; 3. self-knowledge.

The pedagogy includes the use of a variety of teaching tools including textual materials, lectures, discussions, role play, group activities and modeling. Student response to the program is exemplified in the following quote, "Mock Trial gave me my voice." What more could a teacher ask for?