

Meursault's Trial

Prosecution:

Premeditated murder is grounds for execution in most states; however, premeditated murder is not a crime of which Meursault is guilty. We cannot ignore that fact that Meursault shot a man 5 times in cold blood and didn't have a motive; therefore, as a community of law-abiding, principled citizens, we must analyze the law and determine a just consequence that not only fits the crime committed but reflects the value of the life lost by the unnamed Arab. By Texas law in the 1940's, prove that Meursault's sentence should still be execution.

Goal: At the end of the trial, the jury needs to vote **Yes** to the first question and **No to the second question**.

The two questions the Jury will be asked at the end of the trial:

Does there exist a probability the defendant would commit criminal acts of violence that would constitute a continuing threat to society? "Society" in this instance includes both inside and outside of prison; thus, a defendant who would constitute a threat to people inside of prison, such as correctional officers or other inmates, is eligible for the death penalty.

Taking into consideration the circumstances of the offense, the defendant's character and background, and the personal moral culpability of the defendant, are there sufficient mitigating circumstances that warrant a sentence of life imprisonment rather than a death sentence?

1. **Lawyer 1-** Prepare a list of questions for the witnesses. Lawyer 1 and witnesses work together to ensure the questions and answers they want during the trial. During the trial, as you call a witness to the stand, you're allowed to make a brief statement to help explain/support the questions you'll be asking
2. **Lawyer 2-** opening statement: research examples of opening statements as well as the Texas state law on what is delivered in such a statement.
3. **Lawyer 3-** closing statement: research examples of closing statements as well as the Texas state law on what is delivered in such a statement.
4. **Witness 1-** (see Lawyer 1)
5. **Witness 2-** (see Lawyer 1)
6. **Clerk-** assist in all legal matters, questions for witness, research for material in *The Stranger* (Research/case assistant and scribe)

Meursault's Trial

Defense:

Based on evidence from the novel, should Meursault be sentenced to death? Knowing that Meursault has a different perspective on life, be prepared to defend his right to place value on what he finds important rather than conforming to societal expectations. As a defense team, you will need to be familiar with the “Existentialism made simple” notes on Mrs. Boecking’s website in order to clearly justify and articulate Meursault’s actions/inactions/words. Prove that Meursault’s crime was unintentional and that a jury of his peers finds him valuable enough to offer rehabilitation in prison with the opportunity to rejoin society in the future. We know Meursault is guilty of killing the Arab but should he be put to death for this one mistake?

Goal: At the end of the trial, the jury needs to vote **No to the first question and Yes** to the second question.

The two questions the Jury will be asked at the end of the trial:

Does there exist a probability the defendant would commit criminal acts of violence that would constitute a continuing threat to society? “Society” in this instance includes both inside and outside of prison; thus, a defendant who would constitute a threat to people inside of prison, such as correctional officers or other inmates, is eligible for the death penalty.

Taking into consideration the circumstances of the offense, the defendant’s character and background, and the personal moral culpability of the defendant, are there sufficient mitigating circumstances that warrant a sentence of life imprisonment rather than a death sentence?

1. **Lawyer 1-** Prepare a list of questions for the witnesses. Lawyer 1 and witnesses work together so to ensure the questions and answers they want during the trial. During the trial, as you call a witness to the stand, you’re allowed to make a brief statement to help explain/support the questions you’ll be asking
2. **Lawyer 2-** opening statement: research examples of opening statements as well as the Texas state law on what is delivered in such a statement.
3. **Lawyer 3-** closing statement: research examples of closing statements as well as the Texas state law on what is delivered in such a statement.
4. **Witness 1-** (see Lawyer 1)
5. **Witness 2-** (see Lawyer 1)
6. **Clerk-** assist in all legal matters, questions for witness, research for material in *The Stranger* (Research/case assistant and scribe)

Meursault's Trial

Witnesses:

You must study your character and his/her relationship with Meursault thoroughly. You should be prepared to answer questions from the prosecution and the defense as the character. There should be no inaccuracies between your responses and character representation in the text. Direct and indirect characterization are essential to fully understand the characters. You will find examples of direct and indirect characterization, cite them correctly and write a well-written, informative 11 line paragraph clearly detailing the relationship of the witness and Meursault.

- 1) Marie
- 2) Salamano
- 3) Raymond
- 4) Celeste
- 5) The Priest
- 6) The Director
- 7) Meursault
- 8) Witness not detailed in/from the text

If you are a witness who's not detailed in the text or from the text at all, you must research your role and facts, thoroughly. For instance, a Psychiatrist MD witness must use correct terminology and information according to a real medical practice (all disease and/or labels must be legitimate). You must also prove the condition by pointing to behavioral, physical, and emotional characteristics proven in *The Stranger*.

Meursault's Trial

Jury:

It is important to dismiss all bias you developed while reading *The Stranger*. You must create a diverse Jury (think race, gender age, socioeconomic/social class and religious affiliation) Jury members can be any person that is of legal voting age. The idea is to create a balanced jury that will objectively analyze the information they are given in the trial. One of you **MUST** be Pi.

Pre-Trial: **You are not allowed to just be yourself

- Fill out the Questionnaire – type up and add picture. This is a profile of a US citizen you researched and the pictures will be displayed the day of the trial .
- Create a timeline of events leading up to murder and following the murder; include conversations and actions involving Meursault.
- In two separate paragraphs, come up with arguments for each side of the trial (prosecution & defense). You need to go back to the text to look closely and character traits, things the defense or the prosecution should've argued to make a better case either for or against Meursault.

During Trial:

Take extensive notes – include personal commentary and judgments based on arguments and evidence provided. Notes are very important as the trial might be lengthy and you want to be sure you remember all points of the arguments for the prosecution and the defense.

NOTE: At the end of the trial, the jury will have a short discussion then answer two questions individually -- Your opinions will be null and void if you do not have **extensive notes** to supply from the trial.

Meursault's Trial

Magistrates:

Your job is crucial to securing a fair trial and a justified outcome. The two magistrates are the only individuals I will consult with to decide the outcome of the trial.

Pre- Trial: (you do the pre-trial tasks together)

- Create a timeline of events leading up to murder and following the murder; include conversations and actions involving Meursault.
- Create a T-chart that includes the Defense and Prosecution. Then, make a list of points/arguments you feel each side should bring up/point out and what persuasive techniques will be most effective on each side.
- Research the witness that prosecution and defense provide so that you can check all of their facts.

During Trial: Take detailed notes objectively and separate yourself from any personal reactions you had to Meursault's actions during your reading. It will be your job to point out false character portrayals or information provided by the prosecution, the defense, and their witnesses, for which you will interject with objections.

Trial Procedures

Opening Statements:

1. Prosecution
2. Defense

Prosecution witness #1 – Pros. Questions 1st

(1 min pause)

Defense cross examines

(1 min pause)

Prosecution witness #2 – Pros. Questions 1st

(1 min pause)

Defense cross examines

(1 min pause)

Court Recess: (3 min)

Defense witness #1 – Def. Questions 1st

(1 min pause)

Prosecution cross examines

(1 min pause)

Defense witness #2 – Def. Questions 1st

(1 min pause)

Prosecution cross examines

(1 min pause)

Closing Statements:

1. Prosecution
2. Defense