

## Oral Argument Outline :

- Oral arguments start when the panel enters the room (or you enter the room). You are “on” from the moment the panel has the opportunity to see you. Similarly, you are not finished with your presentation until the panel can no longer see you.
- Your presentation is a CONVERSATION with the court.
- To answer the question you are asked. In most cases, the thing you say after a question is asked is “Yes, your Honor” or “No, your Honor”.
- Know the first amendment including the meaning of the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses.
- Avoid statements like “I think”, “I believe” – the court wants to know what the law says about their question.

## Introduction

“**May it please the Court...**” These are the first words the first team member says to begin your argument. This is not a throw-away phrase. You are asking the court for permission to begin.

“**Our names are \_\_\_\_\_ and we are here today representing \_\_\_\_\_, the petitioner/ respondent in this case.**” Keep it simple, straightforward, and be confident.

“**\_\_\_\_\_” your clients name) respectfully asks this court to affirm/reverse the \_\_\_\_\_ courts decision.** Your Honors, this case is about \_\_\_\_\_. A brief summary of the case.

## The substance of this section below “mirrors” the written brief created earlier:

### 1. “**First, \_\_\_\_\_ Answer this question:**

Is the banning of the Sikh tradition to carry kirpans to school a breach of the First Amendment?

### 2. “**To our first point...**”

This is the simplest way to transition into your actual argument (s) . This is when you state your claim (s) with “evidence” or your best reasoning based on the law regarding free exercise, and the circumstances relating to the case.

### 3. “**Which leads us to our second point...**”

### 4. “**Your honors, we realize that the opposing counsel may claim \_\_\_\_\_.** “ Give specific reasons as to why this is simply not true.

### 5.. “**For these reasons, \_\_\_\_\_ present your conclusion, restating the position and most important points. (Your client) respectfully asks this court to affirm/reverse the court’s decision.**

“**Thank you, Your Honors**” (all team members)