

FIRAC

A Practical Guide for Law Students

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What Is FIRAC?

FIRAC is a method of legal analysis used in case briefing and exam writing.

1. FACTS

Purpose

The Facts section provides a concise, legally relevant summary of what happened.

What to Include

- The parties
- The relationship between the parties
- Key events in chronological order
- Procedural posture
- The remedy sought

Key Question

"Who is suing whom, for what, and why?"

2. ISSUE

Purpose

The Issue frames the precise legal question the court must answer.

How to Write It

- Phrase it as a question
- Include legally significant facts
- Connect facts to the legal rule

Strong Example Format

"Whether [specific facts] constitute [legal standard]."

3. RULE

Purpose

The Rule states the governing legal principle.

What to Include

- The rule applied by the court
- Definitions of key legal terms
- Any relevant exceptions
- The policy or reasoning behind the rule

4. APPLICATION OR ANALYSIS

Purpose

This is the heart of FIRAC. It explains how the rule applies to the facts.

What to Do

- Apply each element of the rule to specific facts
- Address arguments from both sides
- Explain why one side's reasoning is stronger

5. CONCLUSION

Purpose

State the court's holding clearly and directly.

What to Include

- The final answer to the issue
- Who wins
- The legal effect of the ruling

Why FIRAC?

- Promotes logical reasoning
- Prevents missing elements of a rule
- Clarifies thinking
- Mirrors judicial analysis
- Improves exam performance

Advanced Tips for Law Students

1. The Rule Must Be Precise

Define legal terms clearly and specifically.

2. The Application Section Should Be Longest

Most exam points come from analysis.

3. Always Argue Both Sides When Appropriate

Show why each party might prevail.

4. Be Structured

Use headings and paragraph breaks for clarity.

Sample Mini FIRAC Template

Facts

[Brief summary]

Issue

Whether...

Rule

Under common law...

Application

Here...

Conclusion

Therefore...

Final Thought

FIRAC is a disciplined way of thinking like a lawyer. The goal is to demonstrate careful reasoning from rule to result.