



Running Order, Floor Rules, and the Day-Of Check

The sequence from five days out to the closing act, the three floor rules to read aloud, and a nine-item check before you publish the agenda.

College and high school.

The design decisions are in the companion handout. This one is the sequence: what to do when, from the week before to the minute the room closes. The intervals assume a hundred-minute period and a class of twelve to twenty-five. Scale the preparation window, not the floor rules.

Five days out

- Send the agenda, the roles, and **the real questions**. Say in writing that these are the real ones and there is no hidden set.
- State the one sourced fact per question requirement, and say what counts as a source.
- Name the artificial devices in the student document, with the reason for each.
- Give the three floor rules and the time limit in the same document, not on the day.

The day before

- Run the speaking-turn grid one last time against the final agenda.
- Decide the closing act and write down what counts as its failure.
- Decide what you will cut first if the opening runs long. The answer is an item or a role inside an item, never the suspension and never the debrief.
- Arrange the room so a standing suspension is physically possible.

The running order

0–10	Opening. The chair states the agenda, the three floor rules and the time limit. Do not explain the format at length; it is in the document they already have.
10–40	Item 1, in a fixed speaking order, with the named questions put to named roles. A required answer to a prior speaker closes each round.
40–50	Suspension. Ten minutes, standing, finding allies. Say that a student who stays seated has wasted it.

50–75	Items 2 and 3, with positions now visibly conditional on what was agreed during the suspension.
75–85	The binding act. The vote, verdict, ruling or roll call, in front of everyone, with the possibility of failure real.
85–100	The debrief. Not optional and not the leftover time. See the debrief handouts.

If the opening runs to twenty minutes, take it out of item 2 or item 3. Going to the suspension early is a repair, not a loss: a stalled room almost always restarts there.

The three floor rules, to read out and to post

“Three rules for the floor, and only three.

One: address the chair, not each other.

Two: speak as your role and not as yourself. “Spain believes,” not “I think.”

Three: name the party you are answering. A room of unconnected statements is not a negotiation.

Ninety seconds each. I will cut you off, and it will not be personal.”

Two lines worth having ready

When a student answers out of character, in their own voice:

“Hold on. Would [the role] say that? If the answer is no, say the thing [the role] would say, and then tell me afterward what you actually think.”

When an assertion arrives with nothing behind it:

“Where does that figure come from? Everyone brought one sourced fact per question. This is the moment it is for.”

The one-page check before you publish

1. Can you say in one sentence what the day is for, without using the word coverage?
2. Does at least one item put a question to a role whose constituency pays for the answer?
3. Is every role at two scheduled turns or more?
4. Is every artificial device named in the student document?
5. Are there exactly three floor rules?
6. Is there a suspension in the middle, and is the room arranged for it?
7. Is the closing act something the room can watch fail?

8. Have the real questions gone out, with a line saying they are the real ones?
9. Is the debrief in the running order with time of its own?