

## USING IRAC IN LAW SCHOOL EXAMS



ISSUE



RULE



ANALYSIS



CONCLUSION

IRAC is the traditional method for structuring legal analysis in a law school exam. While your professor likely has preferences as to how you should structure and approach each element of your analysis, you can use this guide as a starting point to organize your thoughts and analysis.

Jackson was working the grill at the Ventura Diner when he fainted. Left unattended, the hashbrowns caught fire.



Smelling the smoke, Jackson's colleague Tim grabbed the money from the cash register and fled the restaurant with the rest of the customers.



Jackson regained consciousness and started to leave the restaurant but, on his way out, came across two-year-old Charlotte who had been left unattended. Jackson lifted Charlotte from her highchair and ran to the safety of the parking lot.



After washing her hands, Charlotte's mom, Tina, left the bathroom to find the restaurant ablaze and Charlotte gone.



Tina ran to the parking lot where she found Jackson holding Charlotte.



The fire department was unable to save the building which burnt to the ground.

### ISSUE

Identify the issues raised by the fact pattern. Each issue warrants its own IRAC. Articulate the issue in the form of a legal question you will seek to analyze. Issues should be stated concisely.

- There is an issue as to whether a kidnapping occurred when Jackson carried Charlotte from the restaurant to the parking lot.

### RULE

State the controlling law engaged by the issue. Move from general to specific, providing the authority, definition, and any relevant exceptions, limitations, and defenses.

- According to the California Penal Code, any person who forcibly takes another person in California, and carries the person into another part of the county, is guilty of kidnapping. Kidnapping does not apply to any person who takes any child under the age of 14 years if the act is taken to protect the child from danger of imminent harm.

### ANALYSIS

Apply the rule to the fact pattern and analyze the implications. Your analysis should follow the scope and order of your articulation of the rule.

- Jackson forcibly carried Charlotte from the restaurant to the parking lot—one part of Ventura County to another. In doing so, Jackson seemingly committed a kidnapping. However, given that Charlotte is 2, kidnapping would not apply if it can be shown that (1) Jackson acted to protect Charlotte, and (2) the fire posed imminent harm to Charlotte. Due to her age, Charlotte is unable to protect herself, and due to her absence, Tina was unable to protect Charlotte. Given that there was nobody else to protect Charlotte, it's likely that Jackson acted to protect Charlotte. The fact that the building was burned to the ground demonstrates that the fire posed imminent harm to Charlotte. The facts support the argument that Jackson acted to protect Charlotte from imminent harm. Therefore, while the act pattern ostensibly meets the definition of kidnapping, the crime likely does not apply.

### CONCLUSION

Your conclusion should flow from your analysis. Arrive at your larger conclusion by stating your conclusions with respect to each part of the rule. Remember that you're concluding whether the rule applies based on the facts of the case.

- The Court is likely to find that Jackson acted in order to protect Charlotte from imminent harm, and therefore is unlikely to find that a kidnapping occurred when Jackson carried Charlotte from the restaurant to the parking lot.

