

Debate Activity

Format – Participants are split in half. There are 2 teams (an Affirmative and a Negative). Each big team is responsible for three speeches either for or against the debate topic. One different student should give each speech, but the entire group should contribute to the preparation of all speeches. Groups should establish a division of labor so that each team member is contributing to the cause.

Each Speech and its Purpose

- The speeches go in this order: first affirmative, cross-examination, first negative, cross-examination, second affirmative, second negative, affirmative rebuttal, negative rebuttal

First Affirmative – (12 minutes prep time, 5min speech) - Establishes basic rationale for your case. What do you need to prove to affirm the resolution? Define the terms in the debate to your advantage. Establish evidence, examples, and analogies that support your thesis. What existing or potential problems might be solved by supporting the resolution? Establish the advantages of supporting the resolution in detail.

***Cross Examination (2 min time period) – Speaker may be cross-examined by any member of the negative team who is not giving a speech.

First Negative – (5 minute prep time, 5min speech) – Answer the affirmative case. Expose flaws in their reasoning and/or evidence. Show the disadvantages of supporting the resolution. Build your own case, too. Establish evidence, examples, and analogies that support your thesis.

***Cross Examination (2 min time period) – Speaker may be cross-examined by any affirmative team member who is not delivering a speech.

Second Affirmative – (5 min prep time, 5 min speech) – Extend your case. Remind the audience of the advantages of supporting the resolution. Add new evidence/arguments to support your position. Most importantly, defend your case against negative arguments.

Second Negative – (5 min prep time, 5 min speech) – Extend your case. Remind the audience of the disadvantages of supporting the resolution. Add new evidence/arguments to support your position. Most importantly, answer affirmative arguments.

Affirmative Rebuttal – (3 min prep time, 2 min speech) – Wrap up your case persuasively. Tell us why the world is a better place if we all support your position. Do not try to cover everything your team has said thus far. Crystallize the case for the affirmative. What are your best reasons to support the affirmative side? What are the biggest weaknesses in the negative's case? What is your best argument(s)? Reiterate it. What is their best argument? Answer it. The point of the speech is to frame prior arguments in a way that wins the debate.

Negative Rebuttal – (3 min prep time, 2 min speech) - Wrap up your case persuasively. Tell us why the world is a better place if we all support your position. Do not try to cover everything your team has said thus far. Crystallize the case for the negative. What are your best reasons to support the negative side? What is your best argument(s)? Reiterate it. What is their best argument? Answer it. The point of the speech is to frame prior arguments in a way that wins the debate.