COLLEGE CLASSROOM & FORMAL DEBATING

Why We Love Classroom Debate

The great thing about classroom debating is that it's not an add-on to what educators are doing; it's not "one more thing I have to do". Classroom debating is a proven way to incorporate more learning in what educators are already doing with less wasted effort and better learning outcomes for every student. We cite published research throughout the book that validates the learning power of all kinds of debate at all levels. We have written this book and our other Debate series books to demonstrate how a simple approach using classroom debating can result in new ways of thinking, teaching and learning WITHOUT any changes to curriculum, scheduling, or mandated activities.

The "NoHateNoViolence" books – "Primary School Debating", "High School E{Debating", "College Debating", "Debate Judging"" and Your Debate Foundation" – **are about helping educators, parents and students develop simple, successful classroom (& formal) debating programs from the earliest grades not just as a competitive intellectual sport but as an important "upgrade" to many different classroom & extracurricular activities.**

LET'S REALLY TALK - REALLY!

Besides being a lot of fun and a great way to grow personally and meet a lot of interesting people, debating can help anyone learn how to apply critical analysis and to prepare a supportable argument using sound research. It also is one of the best ways for college students to learn communication, public speaking, teamwork and collaboration skills that will enhance every aspect of their college experience as well as opening doors for them throughout life. If you are interested in introducing debating into your college classroom, or even in creating a debate club or team that will compete with other schools, then this short Sourcebook is for you!

If you are a professor or instructor, you may think that the last thing you need to teach your students is how to debate. You may feel that some of them argue quite enough already! However, debating teaches your students how to put together a well-formed, researched argument or point of view which they are then able to defend. It also teaches students to listen to opposing viewpoints and to critically evaluate information that is presented to them. These capabilities are at the heart of the Common Core Standards for pre-college education, and are also at the heart of a well-rounded college education, and there are few curricular or non-curricular activities that have a better-researched relationship to the high-order development of these abilities than debating.

Debating can take many forms, both formal and informal. Classroom debating is largely informal, and we believe it is the foundation for all other forms of debate. However, if you are most interested in creating a team for competitive debating, we'll also offer some useful guidance on how formal debating works, on the rules of formal debating, and how judging works at various levels.

This sourcebook is not intended to be a definitive guide but aims instead to offer some useful resources and perhaps some useful guidance to anyone looking for an introduction to debating in the college classroom.

THE NEED FOR DEBATE

There is an especially serious need for debating and public speaking programs in smaller, community-based colleges. While many if not most better-funded private and public colleges and universities already have established debate teams, many community college students don't have access to a debate program. So why not start one? Many other schools have done it on a shoestring, and we'll share some of their experiences with you as we go along in this book, and through the extensive resource section at the end. If you're reading this book in print, we've included QR Codes with some of the important videos so that you can literally point your phone at the page and go watch the video.

Whatever the available resources, it is particularly important to train students to be active and critical listeners, speakers, and thinkers. These skills are essential to the future academic success of students across the curriculum. If students do not develop sophisticated processing and listening skills, they will not be able to fully take in and engage with other aspects of their curricular instruction. Debate provides the structure to build the skills necessary for future success.

The skills acquired in debate mean that students are more likely to succeed in classes, particularly smaller and more challenging seminar-style classes, where students are normally called upon to discuss a wide variety of subjects on relatively short notice. A student's ability to think for themselves as well as think on their feet can be an invaluable asset in college and life beyond academia.

The purpose of debate education should not necessarily be the indefinite continuation of formal debate practice. Students do not need to participate in an interscholastic debate team (if one is available) to reap the benefits of training in academic debate. In fact, introducing debate training in the classroom will give the students who might be less inclined to join a debate team a chance to develop the skills honed through debate practice.

Academic debate is a valuable exercise because it trains students to employ various component skills. To be effective in debate, students must use a variety of component skills such as argument construction, evidence analysis, organization, outlining, persuasion, oral literacy, research skills, and teamwork.

"There are certainly trends in education which encourage interactive and dialogic pedagogies, but few are as potent as debate. Teachers and students from many different schools from across the United States learn from each other as positions are built and evaluated in the laboratory of competition. A contest round reverses the narration pattern of traditional education. The student speaks to the teacher, referencing information that reflects an understanding of concrete knowledge grounded in research. Through the ballot or the oral critique the teacher reacts, refines ideas, and encourages the student, but the basis of their meeting is student driven; the basis uniquely relevant for student experiential education. In this way, students have an authentic learning experience, an experience that does not treat them like an object to be "filled," but as a person with whom a teacher shares."

Wade, M. M. "The case for Urban Debate Leagues"; (in) Contemporary Argumentation and Debate (1998)

REACHING OUT: GIVING BACK

There are many benefits for a college in having a debate team, just as there are so many benefits for the students who participate. However, one area that isn't immediately obvious, where both the college and the students can benefit enormously, are the many benefits that can come to marginalized and underserved communities in the area.

This can involve college debaters reaching out to schools in marginalized neighborhoods offering to serve as peer mentors to help build debate capacity in those schools - this is being done in many communities. But even more powerful is the kind of community-wide outreach program first developed by Augsburg University in Minneapolis.

Let the school tell its own story:

https://www.augsburg.edu/urbandebateleague/sdi/:

"Building on the foundation of our Spanish Debate Initiative, we took our existing debate model and put it in the hands of interested students and coaches who adapted it to fit topics that reflected community conversations. In 2015, with the help of community and on-campus partners we were able to host the first Somali Debate Initiative Tournament and Community Forum last spring."

"The first of its kind in the nation, students debated in English about the topic of Remittances to Somalia. After the debate rounds, a panel which included Rep. Keith Ellison, gathered to discuss the issue. The day's programming also featured performance-artists who have deep roots locally and in the Somali diaspora represented here in Minnesota.

The opportunity gap between white and students of color in Minnesota is well-documented. These outcomes are a product of structural inequities that also negatively impacts students' self-efficacy. Somali students, in particular, face unique challenges that thwart their academic achievement. Through culturally specific topics and community

involvement, the Somali Debate Initiative gives power directly to students, in order for them to guide important discussions and become leaders and facilitators of debates in multiple areas of their lives.

The structure of debate allows learners to test new ideas in a space that encourages critical evaluation and examining complex issues from multiple perspectives. The framework of debate helps students increase their understanding of a specific issue and the various factors that affect it: economic, political, cultural, etc. In these debates, students will be the idea generators, creating their own equitable solutions to large issues, and learning how to apply this knowledge to issues involving their education and the health of their communities.

Opening these debates to a community audience allows an overall increase in the collective understanding of topics such as remittances. While students may not be able to solve such a large community crisis, through debate they become powerful change-agents and self-advocates.

The Many Faces Of Debate

Using the tools of debating, we can learn to:

- Discuss potentially controversial issues using fact-based arguments.

- Use informal but structured discussion of familiar concepts and ideas as the basis of a more formal or objective grasp of those ideas or concepts.

- Listen to a presentation on a topic, then what questions have been raised by the presentation and prioritize them in order of relevance.

- Argue points of view from the perspective of agreement and disagreement through informal discussion.

"It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it."

- Joseph Joubert
(1754-1824)
French Moralist & Essayist

- Justify and defend a controversial opinion, policy or decision while trying to persuade others to support that point of view.

- Respond calmly and objectively to arguments that we strongly disagree with.

- Discuss the value, truth or relevance of both popular and unpopular ideas, positions, or causes in a reasoned, fact-based style.

Here's a simple but really useful little exercise that will help you zero in on some important qualities of debate compared to all other ways of discussing differing beliefs, points of view, or bodies of evidence:

Look at the following paragraph and discuss the difference in meaning of these words:

"The group meeting began with a general **discussion** of the issue but soon developed into a more formal **debate** as the different participants took particular sides for and against the topic. As feelings became quite heated, the various members of the group began to **argue** with each other. Finally the group leader called for order."

THE MANY BENEFITS OF DEBATE

The core purpose of promoting debate is to learn to develop reasoned arguments and respectful discourse in a fun and engaging way. However, the amazing effort that students put in to the debate process through research, discussion, and careful consideration of topics leads to numerous other benefits beyond debate practice:

Promotes of Rigorous and Critical Thinking

The development of critical thinking skills may be the most important benefit of debate practice. An increasing number of studies have reported that debate participation enhances critical thinking in students. Debate practice has also been shown to foster problem solving, innovative thinking, and the ability to synthesize information.

Develops Academic Skills

Participation in competitive debate can lead to improvement in a wide range of academic subjects and skills in older students. Participants in debate excel in reading comprehension, as well as written and oral communication. Debate can provide access to new topics and points of view which gives students the background to tackle increasingly complex problems later in life.

Develops of Mental and Emotional Maturity

Debate requires students to disagree with one another in a mature and respectful manner. Students who engage in debate develop more mental and emotional maturity when dealing with adversity, which consequentially leads to stronger peer and mentor relationships.

Promotes Academic and Future Occupational Achievement

These skills, developed through engagement with debate practice, are crucial to students' success in academia and beyond. Debate students consistently receive higher grades throughout college when compared to their peers. Improvement in academic performance is common to all debate students, regardless of their academic success prior to joining debate programs. Students who are trained in debate go on to acquire advanced degrees in greater numbers and excel in their professional fields later in life.

SKILLS LEARNED FROM DEBATE

Research Competence
Research is a crucial component of debate for students. Although primary school debating will require less research, this is a great opportunity to begin to show your students how to find information online and in the school library. As such, they learn the basics of research techniques and resources that will be invaluable for the rest of their academic careers and life challenges.

Reading Comprehension
Debate forces students to come face-to-face with information they might never consume otherwise. The debate process challenges students to tackle reading materials that would usually be considered above their level academically.

Argument Literacy
Students gain "argument literacy" when they begin to be able to recognize and understand the component parts of an argument. This skill is key to students understanding and reasoning. This will be less complex and structured in the lower grades but debating motivates young students to consider why they think what they do and how they can explain their points of view.

Evidence Evaluation
Similarly, building research competence and media literacy increases students' ability to effectively evaluate sources of evidence. Debate fosters critical thinking skills, which hones a student's sensitivity to bias and recognition of reputable sources.

Summarization and Outlining
Debate requires students to synthesize and organize their arguments in order to present them in a cohesive and persuasive manner. Debate can, therefore, be a first step to teaching students how to organize their thoughts. This can help to improve students' abilities to write and speak persuasively in later life.

Public Speaking
As speaking in front of other students is a major component of debate, students learn both rehearsed and impromptu speaking skills. Further, debating can enhance primary school children's self confidence and willingness to speak up to voice their opinions.

Floor Management and Civility
Debate puts students in a position to address each other over something they disagree on in a formal and respectful manner. Developing this core social competence predicts success in every area of school and life at every age.

Active Listening
Students are never too young to begin learning this critical skill and successful debating requires its development.

Emotional Control
Learning to channel emotional energy into clear thinking is part of learning to handle an opponent's moves and strategies in a debate.

Articulate Reasoning
Being able to marshal facts, evidence and logic while speaking is a skill that comes naturally to many young children – often to the dismay of parents dealing with their child's logic. When Debate is included as an activity many young children move easily into 'debate mode'.

Tolerance & Empathy
Young people learn from debate that you have to learn to put yourself "in the other person's shoes" in order to be able to understand their arguments well enough to defeat them. These skills then generalize to a more active understanding of others.

Cultural Intelligence
Debating can expose children to levels of interaction with other children from very different cultural backgrounds in ways that they would not normally experience and can contribute to greater cultural awareness and understanding.

Non-confrontational Assertion
Debate teaches children how to operate within the rules while also putting forth their position as successfully as possible; learning to make a forceful point in an assertive but 'soft' manner can score points with judges, and in life.

Fact-based Reasoning
Debate teaches children how to research, organize and present factual materials in support of a point of view – not necessarily one that they share.

REAL WORLD RESULTS OF DEBATE TRAINING IN URBAN SCHOOLS

College students from marginal educational backgrounds but who have experienced debate in high school are far better prepared than their non-debating peers, even those who come to college from more privileged backgrounds. In his seminal paper "Debate: Important for Everyone", Alfred C. Snider of the University of Vermont observes that:

"Academic performance by African Americans in the USA is an example of an education system failing an important population. Fewer than half of African American high school students finish school. Debate can make a real difference. Mezuk (2009) examines data from Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Debate League from 1997 to 2006. Overall, more than three quarters of debaters graduate, compared to barely half of non-debaters. The effects for African American males are even bigger: African American males who participate in debate are 70 percent more likely to graduate and three times less likely to drop out than their peers."

"A variety of other studies have confirmed these findings. According to the National Association for Urban Debate Leagues compendium of research (NAUDL 2010). Studies of students in Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis, Seattle and New York (2004) concluded, "Academic debate improves performance at statistically significant levels on reading test scores, diminishes high-risk behaviors, and improves academic success and student attitudes towards higher education." 5

"In another study, in Minnesota in 2005, the findings included:

- Debaters scored 36% higher on the reading post-test than on the pre-test. This improvement is 61% greater than improvements among the comparison group.
- 80% of debaters reported no attendance problems compared to 49.02% with no reported attendance problems among the comparison group.

- Debaters averaged 15% higher self-esteem than the comparison group, and this boost in self-esteem was positively correlated with the duration of debate participation: the longer he/she debated, the wider the differential.
- By the end of their first year of debate, 100% of the debaters reported an increased interest in their classes.
- Compared to the comparison group, 87% of debaters were better able to analyze information.
- On a 4.0 scale, the gross average of debaters' 2006 GPAs was 2.97, compared to 2.5875 among the comparison group. Returning debaters averaged a 0.13 increase in their GPAs, while returning comparison group members lost an average of 0.10 points.
- 100% of Minneapolis urban debate league debaters were unlikely to engage in negative risk behavior (drug use, early pregnancy, and alcohol). Debaters scored the highest possible score on this indicator."
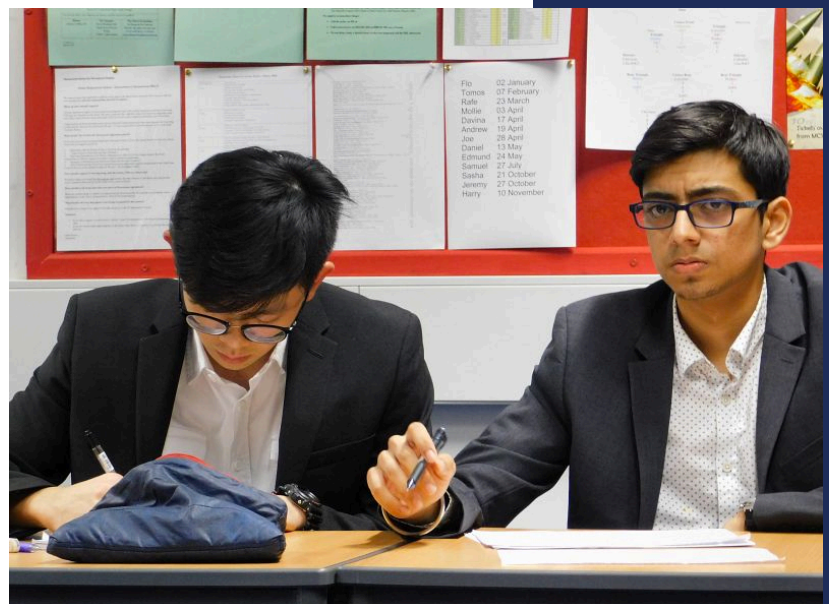
Gone On Debating – Malcolm X

"I've told how debating was a weekly event there at the Norfolk Prison Colony. My reading had my mind like steam under pressure. Some way, I had to start telling the white man about himself to his face. I decided I could do this by putting my name down to debate. Standing up and speaking before an audience was a thing that throughout my previous life never would have crossed my mind.

Out there in the streets, hustling, pushing dope, and robbing, I could have had the dreams from a pound of hashish and I'd never have dreamed anything so wild as that one day I would speak in coliseums and arenas, at the greatest American universities, and on radio and television programs, not to mention speaking all over Egypt and Africa and in England.

But I will tell you that, right there, in the prison, debating, speaking to a crowd, was as exhilarating to me as the discovery of knowledge through reading had been. Standing up there, the faces looking up at me, things in my head coming out of my mouth, while my brain searched for the next best thing to follow what I was saying, and if I could sway them to my side by handling it right, then I had won the debate -- once my feet got wet, I was gone on debating."

Malcolm X, Autobiography of Malcolm X

An Experiment With Classroom Debating (by UVM/Alfred Snider)

While classroom debating in some form has been around as long as young people have gathered together in places of learning, actually taking the principles of formal debate and adapting them to the free-wheeling environment of the classroom is not centuries old like formal debate but is a relatively recent innovation. The many, diverse educational and professional benefits of debate training have been recognized for a long time (see the many references throughout this book) but for a long time it was believed that only formal training

and a formal structure could make beneficial debating possible.

The Real Bottom Line For Students

Here's a fascinating account of one of the earliest investigations into this educational innovation – actually, it can be more like a revolution in the lives of young students.

"One of the earliest results from the application of debating as a technique to use in classrooms teaching non-debate subjects was gathered in Providence, Rhode Island by Frank Duffin (2005). He was the principal of the school, so he was able to make broad changes in the way courses were taught.

- He divided the school into three groups: (A) - debate across the curriculum used heavily in classes; (B) - debate across the curriculum used sparingly in classes, and (C)- debate across the curriculum used not at all in classes.

- He took baseline information from the entire school in 2002.

- In 2003, after the program had begun, the results were mixed. In basic reading comprehension, students in group A finished 20% ahead of Group B [24 vs. 20] and 33% ahead of group C [24 vs. 16.7].

- In 2004 students in A gained an additional advantage, rising to a score of 28 while the other two group reading comprehension scores had actually fallen.

- In a study of student ability to analyze and interpret world problems, all three groups improved from a score of 9.5 in 2002 to a score of 12 in 2003, but then the differences really emerged and in 2004 students in group A improved to 20 while group B improved to only 14 and group C scores actually declined.

- At this point parents of those in group C demanded that their students be included in the debate across the curriculum method and the experiment was discontinued.

CLASSROOM DEBATE & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Debate is based on simple, logical concepts and does not need to be conducted in a formal and rigid way.

Debate in the college classroom is a great way to facilitate the development of public speaking skills, critical thinking, research skills, and the ability to work with peers toward a common goal. It is also a simple, inexpensive way to introduce students to the benefits that can be realized from participation in even the most informal but still properly structured and conducted debate

It is perfectly possible to develop competency in debate without speech training. There is no question, however, that a student's competence in debate will develop more rapidly if accompanied by some training in public speaking. Still, if your class chooses to jump right into debating, competence and self-confidence in public speaking will come with time and experience.

Debate is often seen as more intimidating and more difficult than public speaking. To some extent, this perception is correct. Unlike public speaking, there is an expectation that the participant will react to and challenge contentions made by other speakers (opponents). What we are dealing with here is the challenge of learning to be resourceful thinkers who can synthesize ideas and quickly articulate them. If you think about it, this is one of the most basic, but important, skills that educators can offer students.

Elements That All Debates Have In Common

The benefits of debating are not tied to the format – participation in any kind of reasoned discourse at any level creates learning imperatives regardless of structure. There are some very simple things, however, that all debate formats have in common:

There is a resolution of policy or value that provides the basic substance of the discussion. This is usually referred to as

BIRT – "Be It Resolved That: ......"

The terms of this resolution are defined by the first speaker of the debate.

Examples of resolutions:

-BIRT: The drinking age should be lowered to 18

-BIRT: We should have universal healthcare provided by the state

-BIRT: Student loans should be forgiven in return for public service careers

There are then two teams: One represents facts and arguments in favor of the resolution (In Support or Affirmative) and the other supports facts and arguments against the Resolution (Opposition or Negative)

The "In Support/Affirmative" always has what's called "The Burden", or the requirement that it prove its side with facts and fact-based reasoning (burden of proof).

The debate closes with final rebuttals on both sides that summarize their respective positions and stress the conclusions that are supported by their arguments.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT COLLEGE CLASSROOM DEBATE?

While there are no formal rules for how to set up and run a classroom debate, there's a lot of experienced advice available online. Here's one of the best descriptions of the key elements in successful classroom debating.

1. Define the Topic

Writing a good topic is essential for a productive classroom debate. An excessively vague topic can lead to meandering discussions that ignore the material you want to cover, but overly specific topics may shut down room for debate. The best topics tend to be sentences that clearly define affirmative and negative roles. For example, if you're teaching a class on evolution, the topic "Punctuated equilibrium is a more accurate theory of evolution than gradualism" is a good wording because both sides in the debate know exactly what to argue. Phrasing such as "Punctuated equilibrium is a flawed theory" is more ambiguous and may create problems.

Classroom debates can be a valuable tool for college professors and instructors. Debating lets students participate in discussions, forces them to conduct independent research and, according to researchers quoted in Parenting Science, improves critical thinking skills. However, running a classroom debate can be complicated and requires some early legwork.

2. Define the Format

Many debate formats are available, depending on your needs. You could include the whole classroom in a congressional-style debate in which each student gives a short speech on the pro or con side. Alternatively, you might ask two students to support the topic and two to oppose the topic while the rest of the class watches. Define how long each student can speak, and in what order. Most debates start with an affirmative speech and then switch back and forth, but you could have two affirmative speakers followed by two negative speakers instead.

3. Establish Expectations

For students with no experience in formal debates, it's helpful to establish clear expectations. A useful strategy is to create a grading rubric for the debate, assigning points for speaking style, research and overall effectiveness. For example, to make sure students do adequate research, you might require five quotations from different authoritative sources for full credit on the "research" section of the rubric. You should also set rules for keeping the discussion civil. For example, you might prohibit raising voices above a level necessary for hearing, or you might require debaters to address the audience instead of each other.

4. Keep Everyone Involved

If only a portion of your class will be giving speeches in the debate, you'll want to keep the rest of your students involved. There are two good strategies for making sure everyone pays attention. First, you can allow the audience to "cross examine" the speakers by posing questions. Award extra participation points to audience members who ask particularly pressing and insightful questions. Alternatively, you could have the classroom audience decide the winner of the debate by asking them to write decisions. The decisions can be short essays explaining why they think one side won and the other lost. (Adapted from online comments by Nick Robinson)

THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF ANY DEBATE

Here is an excellent two-minute video that shows how the following elements fit together in a debate https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juuiZPQ1ZWk

FIRST PROPOSITION CONSTRUCTIVE – 5 MINUTES

This speaker makes a case for the motion for debate, providing a proof of the topic with 3-4 major points.

FIRST OPPOSITION CONSTRUCTIVE – 5 MINUTES

This speaker makes several arguments against the proposition's case and refutes the proposition's major points.

SECOND PROPOSITION CONSTRUCTIVE – 5 MINUTES

This speaker will rebuild and expand upon the proposition's position. This speaker must enhance the original position while refuting the opposition's major arguments against the case.

SECOND OPPOSITION CONSTRUCTIVE – 5 MINUTES

This speaker should enhance the position of the opposition by providing new information that supports the opposition's position. This speaker should answer the proposition's responses to the opposition's earlier criticisms.

OPPOSITION REBUTTAL – 3 MINUTES

This speaker is responsible for pulling the arguments made in the debate together and explaining why the opposition should win. This rebuttal should finalize the refutation of the proposition's major points.

PROPOSITION REBUTTAL – 3 MINUTES

This speaker should summarize the issues discussed in the debate and explain why the proposition should win the debate. This rebuttal should refute the opposition's major points.

BASIC CLASSROOM DEBATE PROCESSES

Debates in the classroom can be conducted in a variety of ways. Teams can be whatever size works for your class, from one person teams to half of your class. Assuming that we are talking about two-person teams, debates can be done one at a time in front of the class or the whole class can be involved in debating at one time.

The advantages of having the whole class involved is that everyone can debate in a much shorter span of time and students are not put in the position of having to sit and watch numerous other people having all the fun.

Having all the students involved in debating at once has the additional advantage that the shyer students are not subject to such a large audience on their first few attempts at debate. The disadvantage of this approach is that in order to have multiple simultaneous debates it is necessary to break the class into groups of teams and space may be an issue.

A team is normally two or more students: for this section we'll be assume two-person teams. Each group should ideally contain four teams. With a group of four teams, you should have two Affirmatives and two Negatives.

While one Affirmative and one Negative pair off, the other two teams can be involved in judging and chairing the debate. Let us call the two teams debating A and B and the two teams officiating C and D. Once A and B have debated, then C and D can debate, and A and B can officiate. If you end up with a cell of six students, or three teams, A, B and C, A and C could be Affirmative with B the Negative. You could then have a second round in which B challenges C and A officiates. Let's diagram a four-team cell for clarity.

1. Let's assume that you have 33 students in your class. We can make up 16 teams, 15 with two people and 1 with three people.

2. Number the teams 1 to 16, then designate odd-numbered teams Affirmative and even-numbered teams Negative.

3. Now create cells of four teams, two Affirmative and two Negative. Let's assume that teams 1 to 4 are in this cell and that teams 1 and 3 are Affirmative and 2 and 4 are Negative.

4. The following sequence should now be possible:

	AFFIRMATIVE VS. NEGATIVE	JUDGING (3 PEOPLE)	CHAIRING & TIMING
ROUND 1	Team 1 vs. Team 2	Team 3 + 1 from Team 4	1 from Team 4
ROUND 2	Team 3 vs. Team 4	Team 1 + 1 from Team 2	1 from Team 2

The chairperson's job is to:

a) introduce all the participants and then to call on them in turn.

b) act as the timer to indicate to the debaters how much time remains in their speeches.

c) at the end of the debate, after judging is complete, announce the winning team.

Judges should:

a) evaluate the debate based on the arguments and the refutation only.

b) each reach their conclusions independently.

These preliminary debates should be short. It should be possible to get through the two rounds in one class.

You may wish to use a format such as this:

SPEAKER	TIME
First Affirmative	2 minutes
First Negative	2 minutes
Second Affirmative	2 minutes
Second Negative	2 minutes
Break for Preparation	2 minutes
Negative Summary/Rebuttal	2 minutes
Affirmative Summary/Rebuttal	2 minutes

Although the debate can be conducted in one period, you will note that two periods have been designated. The preliminary period should be used to allow the students to prepare and research.

It is often helpful when introducing a format such as the one above, to give students a bit of a dry run. Set your space up in the correct configuration and have the students walk through the sequence of who speaks when, without actually speaking.

Exercise: Using "Functional" Language

As you'll see, throughout this Sourcebook we'll be looking at several different ways that classroom debate can be handled. While some of the points may be repetitive, each explanation is aimed at giving you a somewhat different perspective on either the structures or the processes involved in this kind of debate.

GOALS To present an oral argument using evidence; to use functional language related to agreeing, disagreeing, and showing contrasting opinions. Functional language phrases include:

AGREEING	DISAGREEING	CONTRASTING OPINIONS
I (absolutely) agree. I agree completely. On the whole, I agree. I see your point. You have a point there. I couldn't agree more. I see what you mean.	I'm sorry, but I can't agree with that. I'm afraid I disagree. That's not how I see it (the situation). I don't entirely agree. The facts don't support that position.	Yes, but on the other hand … That may be; however … I see your point, but … You raise an interesting point; however, … I agree to an extent, but … Perhaps, but don't you think … ?

MATERIALS

Computer/tablet with projector, or backboard and chalk, or whiteboard and markers; paper and pencils or pens; a timing device

PREPARATION

Choose a debate theme and create a set of debate topics related to the theme. Select topics that people are likely to have strong but differing opinions about. Each topic set should contain three to five related topics. Here's an example of a topic set for the theme of "Mobile Technology":

DEBATE THEME: MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

- It should be legal to talk on a handheld device while driving motor vehicles.
- Students should be able to use their mobile devices during English class.
- It is better to read books, news, and magazines on mobile devices than on paper.
- Constantly using mobile devices keeps people from interacting with people around them and experiencing day-to- day life.
- Today it is essential that all teens have a mobile communications device.

PROCEDURE

Ask students if they have ever participated in a debate or if they have seen a debate in person or on television. Ask volunteers to share their opinions about what makes someone a good debater. (Answers may include "uses examples/evidence/facts to support an argument"; "is polite to debate opponents"; "listens to opponents and makes counterarguments"; "stays calm"; etc.) Write students' contributions on the board and elicit or suggest other qualities to include in the list.

Tell students that a debate participant's goal is to make a convincing yet respectful argument. Explain that debaters must be skillful at agreeing, disagreeing, and contrasting opinions. Draw a chart on the board and elicit examples of the language used in each of the three categories; the Functional Language Chart is an example of what a completed chart might look like.

Tell students they are going to complete an exercise to prepare for two debates and that everyone will participate in the debates. Divide the class in half to make Group 1 and Group 2. (If you have a class with more than 50 students, consider creating four groups instead of two, and then adapt the procedure accordingly.)

Select a student—or ask for a volunteer— in each group to serve as the group leader.

Write the debate theme and associated topics on the board from the topic set that you selected or developed. Ask each group to vote on the topic they most want to debate; the two groups should choose different topics from the set. Give the groups two minutes to vote; ask the group leaders to count the votes and report the outcome. If both groups voted for the same topic, Group 2 can use its second choice.

Designate the left side of the classroom as "I agree completely" and the right side of the room as "I don't agree at all." Have both groups stand up and each form a line in which students place themselves according to how strongly they agree or disagree with their group's debate prompt.

Divide each group's line in half to form debate teams of equal size (it is okay to have an extra person on one team if you have an odd number of students). For each topic, the side on the left is the "For" team, and the side on the right is the "Against" team.

Have teams sit together in different areas of the room to prepare for the debate. Direct students' attention to the list of "good debater" qualities on the board and remind them that good debaters use evidence and examples, not just opinions, to support their arguments.

Tell teams, "You will have 20 minutes to work together as a team to prepare for the debate.

The time will be divided into three distinct segments:
- **Ten minutes to brainstorm evidence (information, facts, examples, and anecdotes) to support your debate position**
- **Five minutes to discuss your brainstormed list and identify the strongest pieces of evidence**
- **Five minutes to discuss possible arguments the opposing team might make and how to counter those arguments.**

Team leaders will guide the brainstorming session and discussions, making sure that everyone has a chance to share his or her thoughts."

As you explain the process, write the allocated time and goal for each stage of the team discussions on the board. Tell all students to make notes during the team discussions for use later in the activity because everyone will have to argue the team's position. Let teams begin working. Monitor teams as they work, keep time for each phase, and make sure teams focus their discussions on the appropriate goal for each phase. Ask all students to stand up and bring their notes with them. Tell the opposing teams for each topic to form two lines facing each other.

There will be four lines in all: Topic 1 Team "For" faces Topic 1 Team "Against," and Topic 2 Team "For" faces Topic 2 Team "Against." Explain that these are "debate lines," and ask students to stand so they directly face one person from the opposing side.

Tell students they will debate by using the evidence and counterarguments they developed during the team discussions. Explain that, at your signal, everyone will individually debate with the opponent across the line for one minute. (Advanced classes could debate for two minutes.) The person in the "For" line speaks first. After a minute, you will tell students to "Switch!" The "For" line will move one position to the left, with the person in the first position moving around to the end of the line, to align with a new opponent in the "Against" line, and another one-minute debate will begin. In the second mini-debate round, the "Against" team member speaks first.

(Notes: 1. If one student has no partner, have the last two students in a line work as partners who move in the line together. 2. The class might get quite noisy— students are engaged and practicing speaking! Remind students to use "inside voices" if the volume becomes too loud.)

If you feel it is necessary, model the one-minute debate process with a student. Remind students to take turns speaking during the debates. Tell students they can refer to the Functional Language Chart (see above) as well as their team discussion notes, if needed.

Begin the one-on-one debates. Have the "For" team members speak first. Keep time and monitor student progress.

After several rounds, bring the class back together. Ask teams to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of each other's arguments. Review any problematic or challenging language points, such as grammar and pragmatics topics, based on observed student performance.You can also ask students whether they found the debate easier after the first round (possibly because they had a chance to practice making their arguments) or whether it became more difficult (possibly because their opponents had a chance to practice making their arguments, too).

INTRODUCING COLLEGE CLASSROOM DEBATE TO STUDENTS WITH NO PREVIOUS EXPOSURE

An in-class debate can mirror a league tournament, or it can be much more informal depending on what works for your class. If your students haven't experienced in-class debating before, here is a great way to introduce the topic and then segway into the activity so that students feel comfortable right away before they even realize – they're debating!

TIME REQUIRED- 50 MINS.

GOALS:

To present an oral argument using evidence; to use functional language related to agreeing, disagreeing, and showing contrasting opinions.

MATERIALS:

Computer/tablet w/wo projectors, and/or blackboard and chalk, or whiteboard and markers; paper and pencils or pens; a timing device.

PREPARATION:

Choose a debate theme and create a set of debate topics related to the theme. Select topics that people are likely to have strong but differing opinions about. Each topic set should contain three to five related topics. A topic set for the theme of mobile technology is shown here:

You'll find a whole section devoted to some very motivating "Topic Sets" (here). Use any one of these topic sets or develop a set related to your curriculum or to your students' interests.

Ask students if they have ever participated in a debate or if they have seen a debate in person or on television. Ask volunteers to share their opinions about what makes someone a good debater. (Answers may include "uses examples/evidence/facts to support an argument"; "is polite to debate opponents"; "listens to opponents and makes counterarguments"; "stays calm"; etc.) Write students' contributions on the board and elicit or suggest other qualities to include in the list.

Tell students that a debate participant's goal is to make a convincing yet respectful argument. Explain that debaters must be skillful at agreeing, disagreeing, and contrasting opinions. Draw a chart on the board and elicit examples of the language used in each of the three categories; the Functional Language Chart is an example of what a completed chart might look like.

Tell students they are going to complete an exercise to prepare for two debates and that everyone will participate in the debates.

Divide the class in half to make Group 1 and Group 2. (If you have a class with more than 50 students, consider creating four groups instead of two, and then adapt the procedure accordingly.)

Select a student—or ask for a volunteer— in each group to serve as the group leader.

Now would be a great time to choose your debate theme! Here's anoher example of a "Topic Set" – you'll find plenty of others in the Resource Section and online, following the links you'll find there.

DEBATE THEME: DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Social media platforms are mostly used for trivial (unimportant) purposes.
- Texting is better than email or handwritten letters.
- The benefit of easily sharing information via social media outweighs the potential damage to personal privacy.
- Social media should be used in educational settings and can contribute to learning.
- Our reliance on texting has damaged our ability to have important face-to-face conversations (e.g., making apologies, congratulating someone, saying thank you).

Write the debate theme and associated topics on the board from the topic set that you selected or developed. Ask each group to vote on the topic they most want to debate; the two groups should choose different topics from the set. Give the groups two minutes to vote; ask the group leaders to count the votes and report the outcome. If both groups voted for the same topic, Group 2 can use its second choice.

Designate the left side of the classroom as "I agree completely" and the right side of the room as "I don't agree at all." Have both groups stand up and each form a line in which students place themselves according to how strongly they agree or disagree with their group's debate prompt.

Divide each group's line in half to form debate teams of equal size (it is okay to have an extra person on one team if you have an odd number of students). For each topic, the side on the left is the "For" team, and the side on the right is the "Against" team.

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AGREEING	DISAGREEING	CONTRASTING OPINIONS
I (absolutely) agree.	I'm sorry, but I can't agree with that.	Yes, but on the other hand …
I agree completely.	I'm afraid I disagree.	That may be; however …
On the whole, I agree.	That's not how I see it (the situation).	I see your point, but …
I see your point.	I don't entirely agree.	You raise an interesting point; however, …
You have a point there.	The facts don't support that position.	I agree to an extent, but …
I couldn't agree more.		Perhaps, but don't you think … ?
I see what you mean.		

Tell students they will debate by using the evidence and counterarguments they developed during the team discussions. Explain that, at your signal, everyone will individually debate with the opponent across the line for one minute. (Advanced classes could debate for two minutes.) The person in the "For" line speaks first. After a minute, you will tell students to "Switch!"

The "For" line will move one position to the left, with the person in the first position moving around to the end of the line, to align with a new opponent in the "Against" line, and another one-minute debate will begin. In the second mini-debate round, the "Against" team member speaks first. *(Notes: 1. If one student has no partner, have the last two students in a line work as partners who move in the line together.2.The class might get quite noisy— students are engaged and practicing speaking! Remind students to use "inside voices" if the volume becomes too loud.)*

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HOW TO WRITE GREAT TOPICS – AND WHY IT MATTERS!

The importance of writing or choosing well-crafted debate topics cannot be underestimated. They establish and define the issues in controversy. They motivate students to explore unfamiliar parts of the world. They introduce students to new ideas. They frame the research that goes into debate preparation and determine the quality of evidence and arguments. A great debate topic sparks intellectual creativity and innovation. And, as students quickly realize from their experiences in challenging debates, the particular words selected for a debate topic can expand or limit the arguments that are available for the proposition or opposition teams.

Everyone involved in debating recognizes the importance of appropriately worded topics. Badly worded topics almost always result in bad debates. Because the topic is interpreted as a statement of proof - the claim that the proposition team will attempt to show is more likely to be true than false, an entire debate may collapse due to confusing, vague, or awkward wording. Given all these factors, most people would agree that it is a good idea to avoid badly worded topics. So - what does it take to create a great topic for debate?

First, everyone involved should consider the purpose of a topic statement. It ought to be designed to promote serious discussion and constructive argumentative clashes. It should provoke important and challenging questions. It ought to be a subject that is controversial or encourages an examination of both obvious and subtle differences. In other words, the subject should promote great debate!

A topic should also define an issue from which students can draw conclusions. Debates not only create an opportunity to open an issue for discussion but they also produce a definitive result, a conclusion that a particular opinion on an issue may be better than other opinions on the matter. A good debate topic allows students to identify and determine the best arguments for their side of the topic. Topics have to be interesting, challenging, and controversial - they serve to focus the discussion. The best topics are in the form of a simple declarative sentence, and they help students create powerful arguments explaining the world they know or are in the process of discovering.

Topics can be about the issues faced by students each day, e.g., "Schools should have a dress code", "Cell phones should not be permitted at school", or "Peer pressure does more good than harm." Good debate topics can teach students to advance sophisticated arguments about the subjects they may have only touched on in class: "The United States should significantly increase space exploration," "Medical schools should ban animal dissection", or "The United States should pay reparations for slavery."

In addition, well-written topics provide opportunities for new learning, a chance for students to develop research skills and understand the complex world they are beginning to explore:
"The United States is winning the war on terror," or, "NAFTA should be extended throughout the Americas."

A topic author must consider many issues. Is there enough good quality research material available that supports a debate on the topic statement? Is the information presented in a way that will engage students? Is it accessible? Is it interesting or boring? Does the research avoid technical or difficult language so that students from different backgrounds can use it? Does it grab the debaters' imaginations and help them engage the judges and the audience?

1. Avoid showing off. A motion for debate ought to be written strictly for the purpose of introducing a debate. Motions should not be written to make the writer appear particularly witty or clever. Please avoid wording with concealed agendas or points of view like: "The public education system should start doing its own homework" or "The United States should unplug the electric chair." These topics can be phrased more directly to address issues of public education and capital punishment without implying a particular perspective, such as, "The "No Child Left Behind Act" does more good than harm." or "Our state should abolish the death penalty."

2. Avoid a topic that requires multiple proofs. It is difficult enough to make one solid proof in a debate. It is unfair to require that the proposition team prove several issues simultaneously. Examples of poorly worded topics of this kind include "Standardized testing is fair and necessary," or "Columbus Day is the worst national holiday." The first topic makes the proposition team prove that standardized testing is both fair and needed. The proposition team arguing the second motion would have to compare Columbus Day to each of a half dozen other national holidays. This is too much unnecessary work to have to accomplish in a single debate.

3. Avoid extremist language. "Always," "all," "never," and other unconditional words or expressions place too high a burden of proof on the proposition team. Not only must the team establish its proof, but there can be no exceptions - even an extraordinarily rare case. Examples include "The Federal Government's power comes at the expense of all the states" or "The time for any negotiations for peace in the Middle East has passed." These topics do raise important issues, but better wording might be "The Federal Government should not surrender its authority to states" or "The United Nations should establish negotiations for Middle East peace." Can you see why the alternative wording avoids an unreasonably high burden of proof?

4. Avoid false dichotomies. In a false dichotomy, debaters are presented with two "binary" choices, when in fact there are more than two choices. For example, "If today is not Tuesday, it must be Wednesday." The fact that it is not Tuesday does not mean that it is in fact Wednesday, but because of the wording the speaker would have to make an argument to show that it is Wednesday. Other examples of false dichotomies include: "Public schools should give up freedom for safety" or "An oppressive government is better than no government." These are not bad areas for debate but the topic wording could certainly be improved. It is, once again, possible to transform these topics into meaningful non-binary statements: "Public schools should increase student surveillance" or "In this case, the United States should reduce free speech rights."

5. Avoid awkward or confusing expressions. (These are actual examples of topics used in intercollegiate debate competition. When announced, they were greeted with calls of "Shame!") "This House believes that we cannot let terrorists and rogue nations hold this nation hostile and our allies hostile." "This House would rock mob style." "Title IX is a bridge too far." "Nero's encore demands a response." Huh???

In a tournament writers need to create good sets of topics. When considering 4 or 5 topics for a league tournament it is important that topics are balanced and diverse. In particular, writers should evaluate the topics they have created to ensure that students debate some familiar issues but also more challenging and lesser-known topics.

Of course, it is important that topics have little or no argument overlap. Even when topic language changes the arguments that follow may not. For example, it is possible that the different motions, "The United States is winning the war on terror," and "Saudi Arabia is more an enemy than an ally of the United States" may produce many proposition and opposition arguments in common, as both topics would focus on terrorism and Middle East policy.

Like most serious educational tasks, topic writing is usually best when it involves the efforts of several people. Even if you are the only person tasked with creating a topic or topic set, it is a good idea to have trusted colleagues review those topics before a final topic announcement. Preparation takes time – it rarely happens in a single inspired moment. Keep in mind that patience is a virtue (but the statement, "Patience is a virtue," should never be a topic – think about and maybe discuss why that's the case.) The more care that is devoted to topic writing, the more opportunities debaters will have to examine and debate the substantive details of important issues.

Adapted from: "On Topic Writing" by John Meany. Claremont McKenna College)

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FUN WITH CLASSROOM DEBATE - HARVARD STYLE

We don't believe in re-inventing the wheel, and we definitely believe in giving credit where it's due, so we'll introduce the following essay by members of the Harvard Debate Team as perhaps the best summary of why and how college-level classroom debate can be an intensely fun learning experience that requires absolutely no resources other than time, intelligence, dedication and a commitment to fact-based reasoning. It also shows just how much fun a classroom debate can be!

"In its ideal form, debate is a tried-and-true way to get students engaging more purposefully with their studies. Not only does it allow them to see multiple perspectives on an issue, it allows them to hear those perspectives as interpreted by their peers, and encourages them to listen more carefully to each other before responding.

Preparing students to have the most meaningful debate possible, however, can prove difficult. Many students may come

to the classroom with preconceived notions about what it means to "debate," derived either from the high-intensity world of high school parliamentary debate (which can privilege speed and dominance over careful listening, generosity, and reflection) or from political campaigns (in which "debates" have become something closer to performance art than to intellectual discussion). Unless instructors address these preconceptions head-on and structure classroom debates with these possible preconceptions in mind, they risk simply encouraging their most pugilistic students, while discouraging exactly the kind of thoughtful dialogue they were seeking.

By cultivating habits of speaking and arguing that allow students more consciously to articulate and structure—and not merely report—their thought process, instructors can level the playing field among students with different degrees of expertise in debate and to keep the focus on the quality of their ideas.

OK FOR HARVARD, BUT FOR OUR SCHOOL?

What happens at an elite private school like Harvard may seem miles away from relevance to a community college, a state university, or even a small private college – but Harvard isn't as distant from the realities of the street as it may first seem.

One of the most dramatic ways to see this is by taking a look at a series of debates that took place a few years ago between Harvard debaters and debaters from the Eastern New York Correctional Facility, where they were serving long terms for serious crimes.

You can read the whole story here (INSERT LINK), where the prison team mentor makes this telling point:

"Our debaters spend hundreds of hours preparing in the three to four months they usually have to get ready for a debate, in addition to carrying full course loads.

On 18 September (2016), after facing off against Harvard at the prison, our debaters were deemed the winners by a veteran panel of debate judges – Mary Nugent of Rutgers, Steven Penner of Hobart & William Smith and Lindsay Bing of Cornell. Our debaters were honored that members of Harvard's team were willing to engage them in competition, and the contributions and character of these Harvard debaters should be celebrated.

It is critically important to remember that our debaters are students first and debaters second – and prisoners a distant third."

Three Activities That Help You Think While Speaking

In order to help students articulate their arguments, we developed three scaffolded activities that can be run as a single hour-long workshop, building from

1. A low-stakes "warm-up" round that uses a silly proposition to introduce students to the general idea of using a rhetorical toolkit, to

2. A second round that gets students to translate these basic rhetorical gestures into a set of more sophisticated "moves," and to apply them to a more serious proposition, to

3. A final set of rounds that lets students apply the unpacked moves from round two to a debatable topic from their course, with the added goal of sequencing these moves effectively in order to create the narrative arc or syntax of a persuasive argument.

Below you'll find a brief round-by-round guide for running the activities, together with the "deck" of connectors (connecting statements – see below) that you print out and cut into individual cards.

First Round — start with a really "silly" proposition.

Think of a silly (but debatable!) proposition—e.g., "Tacos are delicious" or "Mondays are the worst."

Arrange students in a circle, with professor/instructor in the middle. Introduce the silly proposition, and let students know that you'll randomly present them with a "connector" card to which they'll use to respond. A "Connector" is a response to the previous statement that signals a modification is coming, such as "However…", "On the other hand", or "To take another point of view, …".

Move around the circle, prompting students at random to continue their peers' line of argument with the next card from the deck.

E.g. if the first student says "Tacos are delicious," and the second student is dealt "However…," she might say, "However, burritos are even more delectable."

Second Round — next introduce a "serious" proposition.

Prepare a higher stakes proposition.
We've used:

- That single-gender clubs should be abolished at Harvard.
- That it is contrary to the academic spirit to deny controversial speakers a forum on campus.
- That Russian athletes should be banned from participating in the Olympics.
- That all first-year students should be taught meditation to reduce stress on campus.

As in the previous activity, arrange students in a circle, with you in the middle; introduce the proposition; let students know that you'll randomly present them with a "connector" to which they'll respond; and move around the circle, prompting students at random to continue their peers' line of argument with the next card from the deck.

This time, you might want to call time-out after a student responds and ask him/her (or a peer) how they might hone that response to make it more memorable, e.g. by rephrasing it with more parallel structure.

Third Round — order the argument

Pair students and assign them / have them choose a real debate proposition from your course.

Have them arrange the cards of debate moves in the order in which they might use them to build an argument for their proposition.

Have them practice speaking their way through the argument to each other.

CONNECTORS

Adversative Connectives: Use these to signal that two statements contradict eachother.	Additive Connectives: Use these to signal that two statements are similar.	Casual Connectives: Use these to signal that one thing leads to another (cause-effect).
Alternatively Although However In contrast In spite of the fact that On the other hand	Again Also Further Furthermore In addition Moreover	Because Consequently Hence Since Therefore Thus
Example: Although Mars is similar to the earth in many ways, its surface is hostile to humans.	Example: Going to Mars would be dangerous. Also, it would be expensive.	Example: The air on Mars contains mostly carbon dioxide. Therefore, humans would not be able to breathe there.

Some Cool Speaking Drills:

Speaking drills are a great way to warm up and focus a team's energy before practice. They are also a fun way to loosen up for a class debate. Good drills are used by competitive debaters to increase speed, which is desirable within reason, but we think that classroom debate doesn't have to emphasize speed of speaking which we're afraid could inhibit participation.

So with that in mind, here are some fun speaking drills that can warm up anyone's voice. We've gathered these suggestions from anonymous web sources to share here with you.

OVERALL WARMUP

Begin by each debater speaking extemporaneously on their choice from a short list of topics for 30 seconds – no more. On their chosen topic they have to speak either for or against, just as they would in a debate round. Let people come to the front to speak or stand and speak at their seats. The teacher has the role of traffic cop deciding who speaks next. By speaking in this focused way before beginning the drills they'll see the immediate differences that the drills can make on their speed and clarity. All of the following drills can just as easily done alone or with friends at home too.

2 MINUTES WITH PEN OR PENCIL IN THE MOUTH

This drill helps stress pronunciation of words while reading. An alternative to this is the big mouth drill, where students have to over-enunciate every word they read.

2 MINUTE "EMOTION DRILL"

While the students are reading, call out different emotions they should act out as their reading. This helps increase a speaker's ethos and ability to effectively emote in round.

2 MINUTE "BACKWARDS DRILL"

This is most helpful for a debater trying to increase speed. have the students read from the bottom of the page up, reading the words in a sentence backwards. This trains the eye to look for the next word while reading.

2 MINUTE "A DRILL"

Have students put letter - A - in between each word in sentences they are given to read. This will help students with seeing each word individually, while making sure not to muddle words together in a speech.

2 MINUTE "TAKE A BREATH DRILL"

You can either, have the students take one breath in and read as long as they can in one

FUN WITH FLOWING
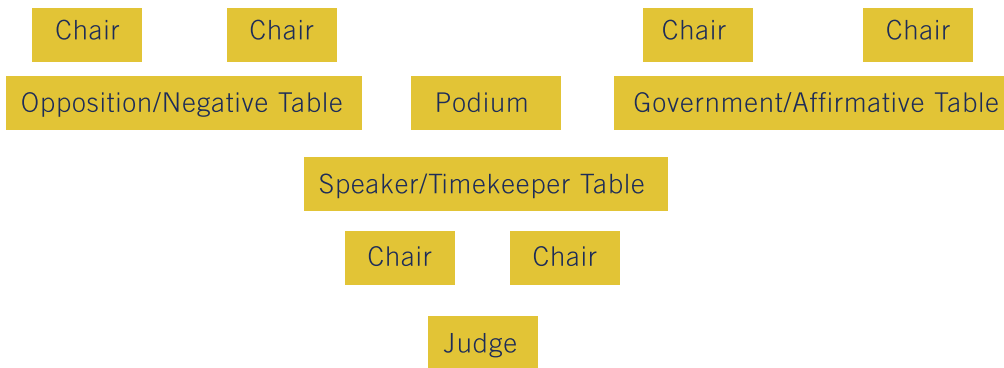## INSERT EXAMPLES OF FLOW CHARTS HERE

- Some people think that flowing is one of the most boring skills that debaters have to learn – but we really do have to learn it, and it can actually be fun!

- To help make it fun and interesting, try this: put on some popular music, and have the debaters take notes on the message of the song as if it was the Pro or Con side of the debate and they were the opponent. Encourage them to pick out opposing claims and warrants in the songs too, and have them mark the differences in their notes

- A great flowing practice is to have students mock judge and flow other practice rounds. It can also help for more interested debaters to start watching debate videos (like some of those in our Resource Section) and picking out as much as they can from them.

- To illustrate the importance of using abbreviations and symbols, ask the students to flow cards that you flip from a standard deck of playing cards. Start off slowly, then increase the speed at which you read off the names of the cards.

- Cross examination drills- have partners cross ex each other/ or a coach asking questions based on arguments the team has either run in the past or that they have heard other teams run against them

- Rebuttal re-dos- have debaters save their flows, and then have them rewrite and perform them in class

- Debate terms trivia- have a round of jeopardy around debate terms: uniqueness, solvency, impact, floating pic etc…

- Make believe creature debates: Have teams of debaters make up an animal and debate in a group about whose magical animal is best and what evidence they have for their argument. Have a constructive and rebuttal for each group.

- "I couldn't disagree more." Gather the group in a circle. The first speaker makes a claim. The second speaker says "I couldn't disagree more" and then gives a reason to disagree with the claim. They then make a claim of their own, rebutted by the next speaker, etc. This teaches the importance of being able to argue both sides of an issue (since they may agree with the statement they are charged with rebutting). You can focus this game by requiring claims to be associated with a particular issue/topic.

- Zombie Apocalypse. Create groups of 3-6 students. Each student should choose an occupation for themselves. The setup is that the members of the group are fleeing from the zombies that have taken over most of the town. They encounter a bunker nearly filled with others seeking shelter from the zombies. There is only enough space in the bunker for 1 additional person. Each member of the group has 1 minute to explain why they should be chosen. Each group member then has 1 minute to explain why the others should be excluded.

- "The Worst Thing in the World" Create a list of terrible things that could or might happen anywhere in the world. Then students have an impact debate weighing any two of the harms against each other to determine which is worst, with the "winner" moving on to the next stage, which is to compare the "winning harm" against the next one from the list. Repeat this process until you've finished the list and the "worst thing in the world" is determined.

- Triple Speak.
  - Have students brainstorm a series of random words (e.g. "Beauty" "Catfish" "Bill Gates" etc.) and write these on the board. Aim for 3 words per student. Feel free to add words yourself. Silliness is absolutely permitted.

  - Have one student come up to the front of the room with her back to the board, speaking to the class.

  - Give her a randomly selected word from the list to begin her speech. She can say anything she'd like about the word. If the word was catfish, she might tell a story about catching a catfish or make an argument that catfish are the best fish. The point is for her to keep speaking coherently and constantly on the subject.

  - Around 30 seconds into her speech (or when she seems to be slowing down or struggling), give her another randomly selected word (e.g. "Bill Gates"). She then has to try to smoothly transition her speech to the new topic. ("…so I sold the catfish for $200, which made me the richest girl in my house, but nowhere near as rich as Bill Gates, the richest man in the world…")

SOME SIMPLE IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

A ROLE-PLAYING DEBATE

If you really want to challenge your students, a role-playing variation on debate may be right for your class. One of the most difficult argumentative skills to master is defending a position that is not your own. To conduct a role-playing debate, you can follow the format of a classic formal debate and assign students roles or positions to play. This kind of debate can help students more carefully consider opposing viewpoints and learn to develop stronger counterarguments.

A typical room layout for a debate,

Chair	Chair		Chair	Chair
Opposition/Negative Table		Podium	Government/Affirmative Table	

Speaker/Timekeeper Table

Chair	Chair

Judge

A FISHBOWL STYLE DEBATE

A fishbowl debate is a fantastic way to get your entire class involved in a single debate. In a fishbowl debate, the classroom is arranged with a circle of chairs in the center of the room and a circle of chairs surrounding it. The inner circle students (those inside of the "fishbowl") are the speakers for that debate and will actively debate with other students in the inner circle about the resolution at hand.

Behind each seat in the inner circle, a student is sitting in the outer circle and is expected to listen and take notes on the debate that is taking place. At regular intervals, the inner and outer circles switch places so that all of the students in the class are engaged.

In some variations of the fishbowl style debate, the inner and outer circle students are partners and work together to take notes and build arguments as they would on a formal debating team. Other versions of this style also have a "hot seat," or a chair that is empty in the inner circle that students

Fishbowl style layout,

Set up chairs in two concentric circles. The inner circle will be debating, while the outer circle will be taking notes. Switch every so often to make sure all students are engaged.

A MORE STRUCTURED CLASSROOM EXERCISE:

Timed Panel Debates

- Depending on your class length, you can complete all parts of this activity in the same class period, or you can complete the panel debates in a subsequent class period.

- After all students complete several rotations in the debate line, ask each team to select four to six volunteers to represent their team in two traditional panel debates. Provide examples, as needed, for each step as you explain the following:

- For the first topic, the Group 1 "For" team will have two minutes to present an opening argument, and then the Group

- 1 "Against" team will have two minutes to do the same. Give the volunteer representatives and their teammates about ten minutes to review their notes and prepare their opening arguments.

- Each team should make notes on the opposing team's opening argument so they can make specific counterarguments during the next step.

- The Group 1 "For" team will then have two minutes to present counterarguments addressing points their opponents made, and the Group 1 "Against" team will have two minutes to do the same. One member on each team should close with a brief restatement of their group's main argument.

- The two Group 2 teams addressing the other debate topic will be the audience. Audience members should make notes on the performing teams' arguments and counterarguments and then vote on who made the strongest case for their team's position.

- Next, the Group 2 teams will debate their topic following the steps above while

- The Group 1 teams serve as the audience evaluating the performance.

(Exercise written by Heather Benucci)

A KINETIC LEARNING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY:
WHERE DO YOU STAND?

The activity Where Do You Stand? allows students to explore the gray areas that lie between black and white polar opposites of an issue. It asks each person to find a place on the continuum between absolute agreement with a position and absolute disagreement. While everyone must take a position, the activity does not ask participants to defend territory or try to convince others that they are right. Rather, its salient feature is recognition of the knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and values supporting various positions. This emerges as people discuss their current position and the reasons they chose it.

Students whose stands are based on poor information or reasoning are not considered wishy-washy if they change their positions after listening to others; rather, they are encouraged to recognize that this is what responsible, open-minded, thoughtful, learning people do as they acquire more information. Thus, the activity encourages an open mind and a willingness to change as a result of learning and listening.

The activity can be used at many levels, from primary to secondary, and requires involvement from everyone in the group. Even though some participants may not express an idea, they must choose a place to stand. Because at any given moment the range of opinions on an issue is visible, students can develop an appreciation for the spectrum of possible views.

Where Do You Stand? shows students that many issues are complex, that there are no easy answers, and that black and white thinking does not reflect the complexities inherent in many of the problems facing us. Learning to be flexible, open, and responsive is what this activity is designed for, and it does not depend on students' having any special expertise on an issue. Used at the beginning of a unit, it may stimulate further research, writing, and discussion. Repeated at the end of a unit, it can assess what the students have learned over a period of time and how their views have changed as a result of their learning.

ACTIVITY PROCEDURE

1. In a space large enough to accommodate the group, designate one end as "Totally Agree" and the other as "Totally Disagree."

2. Connect these opposite poles by marking a line on the floor with masking tape or string to represent the continuum of positions that lies between them.

3. Read an issue scenario aloud (see examples below), perhaps twice if needed.

4. Ask students to stand at one end or anywhere along the tape or string to reflect their position or opinion on the issue.

5. Once everyone is in place, ask each student in turn to explain why he/she decided to stand in that place.

   • Encourage students to respond to opinions, reasoning, or ideas expressed by others but do not allow attacking of another student's choice.

   • Explain that they are free to adjust their positions when they hear ideas they had not previously considered. (from:Greenteacher.com)

AN ENERGIZING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY:
LET'S GET CONTROVERSIAL

During this exercise, we will be encouraging students to discuss a controversial issue. You may wish to determine the issue yourself, but it is better to get your students to suggest it or embrace it. You could provide a list of a few topics and allow the students to choose the one they feel most passionate about. It is important to pick a topic for which there are clearly two sides. Although debates often cover more complex issues with multiple sides and middle grounds, it is best to start simply. Be careful to pick a topic (value or policy), that will not offend or embarrass your students.

Once you have picked a topic, there are several ways in which to proceed.

Approach #1

Have the students form pairs. In each pair, designate one person as A and the second as B. A is given a set period (5 minutes) to outline why he or she supports the topic. B is given a set period to explain why he or she opposes the topic.

You should encourage the students to make notes on each other's points of view. You may also wish to give the students time to respond to one another's comments. Discuss the different views expressed; compare and contrast arguments.

Approach #2

Have the students vote on whether they are opposed to or in favor of the resolution. After recording the vote, ask those in favor to each give a brief account of why they support the resolution. Then repeat this process with those students who oppose the resolution.

Try to encourage discussion between the two factions. If this does not occur naturally, you may wish to stimulate discussion by asking pertinent questions.

Conclude this unit by pointing out that the students have now taken part in an informal debate and that, over the next few classes, they will be learning some more formal debate skills.

WATCHING DEBATE VIDEOS TOGETHER

Watching debating videos together as a class is a great way to learn new concepts and see how other debaters work together and have fun doing it! There are several things to keep in mind when you're watching.

WHAT YOU USUALLY DO NOT SEE (BUT WANT TO DISCUSS):

The Judge: The judge is usually sitting behind the camera during broadcasted debates. The judge will be diligently taking notes on a flow sheet and timing the debate.

The Audience: Audience members are often present during filmed debates. Audience members cannot communicate with the debaters directly, but they may "heckle" the debaters.

WHAT YOU ALWAYS DO SEE (AND MAY WANT TO DISCUSS):

The Proposition Speaker(s): The proposition sits to the left of the judge and makes a case for the motion.

The Opposition Speaker(s): The opposition sits to the right of the judge and argues against the case made by the proposition.

Use of Flow Sheets: The papers in front of the debaters are flow sheets. Debaters, judges, and audience members take notes on flow sheets to help them stay organized during a debate. (See our section on Flow Sheets)

WHAT YOU MAY ENCOUNTER (AND IS A LOT OF FUN TO DISCUSS):

(especially in videos of Parliamentary debate):

Heckling: Banging desks, shouting 'Hear! Hear!' and saying 'Shame!' are all appropriate forms of heckling during a formal, parliamentary-style debate but NOT IN ANY OTHER KIND OF DEBATE – ESPECIALLY CLASSROOM DEBATE. Also, even in Parliamentary Debate it is not appropriate to shame every argument made by an opposing team. There is such a thing as having too much fun at your opponent's expense, and classroom debates are not supposed to create anything but fun and excitement – never anything resembling bullying or shaming.

"He who decides a case without hearing the other side, though he decides justly, cannot be considered just"

Seneca the Younger

FLOW SHEET EXAMPLES

Students should use flow sheets like these to take notes on the different sections of the debate to stay organized while following debates.

Affirmative Constructive	Negative Constructive	1st Affirmative Rebuttal	Negative Rebuttal	2nd Affirmative Rebuttal
Your notes about the Affirmative Constructive go here.	The negative's attacks on the affirmative case are written here.	Jot down notes about the affirmative's rebuttal to the negative's attacks here.	Negative's response to the affirmative's rebuttal goes here.	Since the Affirmative only has three minutes for this speech, what usually happens is that instead of covering every argument on the flow, the affirmative simply selects a number of points to re-iterate, Jot them down here.
You can use this space to record possible questions to ask during the cross-examination.	This space contains notes about the negative case.	The affirmative's attacks on the negative's case go here.	The negative's responses to the affirmative's attacks go here. Also, any final points of summary can be recorded here as well.	

Affirmative Constructive	Negative Constructive	1st Affirmative Rebuttal	Negative Rebuttal	2nd Affirmative Rebuttal
Your notes about the Affirmative Constructive go here.	The negative's attacks on the affirmative case are written here.	Jot down notes about the affirmative's rebuttal to the negative's attacks here.	Negative's response to the affirmative's rebuttal goes here.	Since the Affirmative only has three minutes for this speech, what usually happens is that instead of covering every argument on the flow, the affirmative simply selects a number of points to re-iterate, Jot them down here.
You can use this space to record possible questions to ask during the cross-examination.	This space contains notes about the negative case.	The affirmative's attacks on the negative's case go here.	The negative's responses to the affirmative's attacks go here. Also, any final points of summary can be recorded here as well.	

EXPLORING AFFIRMATIVE CASE STRUCTURE

For purposes of instruction, let's make two assumptions.

First, let's use a proposition of policy. A proposition of policy calls for a change to the way things are currently done.

For example:

- *B.I.R.T. United States increase its foreign aid.*
- *B.I.R.T. capital punishment not be allowed.*
- *B.I.R.T. all guns be banned.*

In a policy debate the duties of the respective teams are clearly defined. One of the teams, the Affirmative, always supports the resolution and is therefore advocating change. This is a key concept in debate.

Change consists of two elements: the need for change and the plan (a procedure for change).

Here is how the debate "flows",

SPEAKER
First Affirmative
First Negative
Second Affirmative
Second Negative
Discussion Period
Break for Preparation
Negative Summary/Rebuttal
Affirmative Summary/Rebuttal

CHANGE = NEED(S) FOR CHANGE + PLAN

For example, if you argue that capital punishment shouldn't be used, you must give compelling reasons (or needs for change) and then you must provide a plan. The plan must answer questions such as what will be used instead of capital punishment.

Once you are satisfied the students understand this concept, move to discussing the specific duties of the first Affirmative.

The first Affirmative speaker commands a most important role in the debate. This debater presents and clarifies the resolution for debate and is the first person to speak in favor of accepting the terms of the resolution.

The first Affirmative speaker therefore sets the initial tone and direction of the debate. The first Affirmative constructive speech is the only speech that can be prepared in its entirety before the debate.

FIRST AFFIRMATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECH

1. Introduction; state the resolution.

2. Define the terms of the resolution fairly, in such a way as to prevent ambiguities or "definitional debate" later in the competition. Choose straightforward language. Restate the resolution using your definitions in place of the original words/phrases.

3. Present the Affirmative need(s) for change by demonstrating flaws in the current system (or status quo).

4. Present evidence which affirms the needs for change.

5. Introduce a plan which initiates the necessary changes.

FIRST AFFIRMATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECH: A DETAILED EXAMINATION

1. INTRODUCTION

Get the audience's attention and introduce the subject. For example:

"Ladies and gentlemen, imagine, if you will, that you are going for supper at a friend's home. You arrive at the home, but no one answers the doorbell. The light is on and the door unlocked, so you go in. You are greeted by a horrifying sight: your friend has been murdered. After the police arrive they tell you they suspect an escaped murderer. This murderer killed a prison guard when he escaped; the police tell you that, had this individual been executed, your friend might be alive today. At present, the United States does allow capital punishment at the discretion of the states. The subject of the debate today is, "Be it resolved that capital punishment remain legal in the United States."

2. DEFINITION OF THE RESOLUTION

Depending on the topic, the words may be ambiguous. For example:

"what does capital punishment mean?" When students are asked this question they often respond with, "the death penalty" or "execution." This is essentially correct, but specific definitions are important in a debate context. The Affirmative team may define capital punishment along these lines: "Capital punishment is the death penalty carried out by the state for the crime of murder."

Providing definitions theoretically gives the Affirmative a slight advantage (to offset the disadvantage of having the more difficult side of the debate). Ask students to identify the terms they feel require defining, and have them suggest definitions. Encourage discussion on why one definition might be better than another.

3. PRESENT THE AFFIRMATIVE NEED(S) FOR CHANGE

This can be done by demonstrating flaws in the current system or status quo.

The needs for change are essentially the compelling reasons that will justify the plan. Typically, the Affirmative will have time to present three to five needs for change. In a debate on reinstating capital punishment, the needs for change might be:

    a. *The use of capital punishment ultimately saves money.*

    b. *The existence of capital punishment deters others from murdering.*

    c. *Most Americans are in favor of capital punishment in some circumstances.*

    d. *Murderers should forfeit their lives.*

Ask the students to suggest other needs for change and list them on the board.

4. PRESENT FACTUAL EVIDENCE THAT AFFIRMS THE NEEDS FOR CHANGE:

Novice teams will often limit their cases to simple recitations of points. Ideally each of the needs for change should be presented in three stages. The need should be stated, described in more detail, and finally evidence should be offered in support of the contention.

Ask students to elaborate on a need as they would during a debate. Ask questions if their explanations are inadequate. The biggest mistake debaters make is assuming that, because they understand an issue, their audience will understand it as well.

5. INTRODUCE A PLAN WHICH INITIATES THE NECESSARY CHANGES:

After presenting all the needs for change, the first Affirmative speaker usually has just enough time to give a brief outline of the plan before concluding the speech.

If there is a significant amount of time left, the first speaker will then present the plan. The Affirmative should provide at least an outline of the plan in its first presentation so the Negative team has an opportunity to respond to the proposed plan.

DEFINE THE TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION FAIRLY:

To prevent ambiguities or "definitional debate" later in the competition. Choose straightforward terminology. Restate the resolution using your definitions in place of the original words/phrases.

EXPLORING THE NEGATIVE STRATEGY CASE

The presentation by the first Negative is perhaps the most difficult in the entire debate. The job of the Negative may be more broadly described as clashing, using any means possible to convince the judges not to accept the Affirmative proposition. Some wild and wonderful strategies flow from this; however, outlandish strategies are better left to another presentation.

In clashing with the Affirmative, the Negative should consider the items listed below. You may discuss these concepts with your students, asking questions such as:

- What would happen if the Affirmative lacked evidence for its main points?

- Does the source of evidence affect its validity?

- Does the plan need to be a major change?

FIRST NEGATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE CHECKLIST

1. DEFINITIONS

If the Affirmative has failed to define any key terms of the resolution, you may offer definitions. If the Affirmative definitions are illogical or unreasonable, you must contest them immediately by providing compelling reasons to reject them. Otherwise, it is assumed that your team is in complete agreement with the terms as defined.

2. NEED(S) FOR CHANGE

Are the major needs for change supported by evidence or logic? Do not accept a need simply because the Affirmative says it is needed.

3. EVIDENCE

Is the evidence current and from a credible source? Usually, the more recent the evidence, the better. Also, attempt to identify reasons the source may be biased. For example, one would likely question the objectivity of a car manufacturer or petroleum company writing about the Kyoto (greenhouse gas) Accord.

4. THE PLAN: DOES IT SOLVE THE PROBLEM?

Does the plan constitute a significant change? Does the plan meet and solve the needs for change? For example: if a need raised in support of capital punishment is that murderers are escaping, the Negative might respond that the more rational plan is to increase the security of prisons.

> **Generally, the Negative will argue there is no need for change, or that any existing problems can be solved through small changes known as "minor repairs." (Yes, the Negative can make small changes!)**

5.THE PLAN: DOES IT CREATED NEW OR WORSE PROBLEMS?

Does the plan create new problems that potentially outweigh the suggested benefits of its implementation? For example: the Negative might attack capital punishment on the grounds that the jury would find the prospect of a capital sentence so repugnant they might acquit rather than convict, thereby creating a situation in which society was in greater peril as a result of reinstating capital punishment.

Unlike the first Affirmative speaker, the first Negative speaker can't draft a speech beforehand. Since the specifics of the first Affirmative speech are unknown before it is presented, "clash" requires special preparation.

There are three things that the Negative may do to prepare.

1. The first thing is to be familiar with the subject matter, to be aware of the potential Affirmative arguments, and to plan responses.

2. The second is to prepare documentation for the various Negative responses, knowing that the evidence prepared may not be used. This documentation is essentially quotations that may be used to support assertions made in the Negative speech. Each quotation should be recorded, along with its source, on an index card. The appropriate cards may then be retrieved and organized as the Negative speaker prepares comments.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FAILS!

Studies of American states with and without capital punishment show that the murder rate per hundred thousand is marginally higher than states with capital punishment.

3. The final tool at the Negative's disposal is a technique called "flowing." This is simply a method of taking notes, in which the observer records the comments of the opposing speaker on the left side of a flow sheet and writes down responses to the speaker on the right side of the sheet. Evidence cards may be retrieved to support the Negative speaker's noted responses. Typically, a Negative speech will consist of observations based on the team's research and comments based on the flow sheet comments.

Although the use of the flow sheet is shown in two stages, generally Negative responses are written in response to Affirmative statements. Normally, one would not wait until the whole Affirmative case has been made before filling in the Negative side.

If the Affirmative case is still on the board or screen, it's useful to pretend that the board is a giant flow sheet and try to fill in the Negative responses on the board. It's a good idea to use the left side of the board or screen for the Affirmative and leave the right-side blank for the diagraming of the Negative argument.

AFFIRMATIVE SPEECH	NEGATIVE RESPONSE
Definition: Capital punishment = Death penalty imposed by state	OK
Needs: 1. Murder rate is climbing 2. Majority of citizens favor 3. Would save money	1. Murder rate higher in state with capital punishment 2. Government has voted twice to abolish 3. What is price of human life?
Plan: Lethal injection for first degree murder	Jurors acquit if capital punishment is option; therefore, more murderers go free

KEY ELEMENTS IN BUILDING ARGUMENTS

The essential parts of building an argument are assertion, reasoning, and evidence. An easy way to remember these components is the abbreviation A.R.E.

The **Assertion** is a claim made about the world or a statement of position. Statements like, "homework should be banned," or, "open borders are good for the U.S.," are examples of assertions.

The second part of the argument is the **Reasoning**. An assertion on its own is not an argument; it is simply a baseless claim. In order to build an argument, the assertion needs to be supported. The Reasoning is the "because" part of the argument. For example, "homework should be banned because it interferes with effective learning," could be the reasoning portion of an argument.

ASSERTION. REASONING. EVIDENCE.

The final component of the argument is the **Evidence**. Evidence is used to back up the reasoning behind or provide proof of an argument. Evidence may take the form of simple examples or more formalized research, depending on the complexity of the topic. Making charts where students may organize their thoughts may be helpful.

EXAMPLE

Assertion:	The minimum driving age should be raised to eighteen.	The U.S. should not have the death penalty.
Reasoning:	Raising the driving age will save lives by reducing accidents.	Using the death penalty can lead to the death of innocent people.
Evidence:	Sixteen-year-old drivers are three times as likely to be in a crash than drivers aged eighteen and nineteen.	Since 1973, 108 people in 25 states have been released from death row after DNA evidence proved their innocence.

WHEN REASONING GOES BAD:
LOGICAL FALLACIES

To be successful debaters, students will need to learn the difference between good argumentation and bad argumentation… Sometimes the reasoning part of an argument can seem fine upon first inspection but prove to be flawed if given a closer look. A "logical fallacy" is an incorrect conclusion that arises from flawed reasoning. There are many kinds of logical fallacies but the most common are:

The Appeal to Tradition

An argument that we should do something a certain way because it has always been done that way is not good reasoning. Although good reasons for preserving tradition in some circumstances exist, the simple fact that something has been done for a long time is not a strong argument.

The Appeal to Authority

Debaters should refer to reputable sources and authorities to support their arguments. If a student was arguing, for example, that the drinking age should not be lowered, they might reference a study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control. However, saying that teenagers will always abuse alcohol because an article on Facebook said so is not a strong argument. Statements are not true simply because someone, somewhere previously said it.

The Straw Man Setup

the opposing team introduces an argument without serious intent, just to set up to rebut it. They may use an extreme example of your proposal or make a false projection of outcomes based on your argument – in any case you should "call out" this tactic at the first opportunity.

The Fallacy of False Cause

This logical fallacy occurs when a speaker says that one thing happened and another thing happened, so therefore the first thing caused the second. Order in time does not prove causality. It is weak reasoning to jump from correlation to causation in an argument.

The Fallacy of Self-Contradiction

this is a fallacy introduced into the argument when an opposing team contradicts one of their previous arguments. You should point out that the arguments cannot be true simultaneously and then explain how this reduces their case's credibility.

The False Dichotomy

this is where the speaker is trying to divide the debate into only two sides even though there are more alternatives than they state. It's likely the speaker is doing this on purpose but in some cases they do not understand the debate.

False Projections

The opposition asks rhetorically "What would happen if what the other team is suggesting were implemented?" and then proceeds to supply a description of consequences that would forcefully (and wrongly) invalidate the proposition being advanced.

The False Assertion

this is when a speaker presents a statement which isn't actually an argument because they offer no reason to believe that the statement is valid. You can point out that there has not been enough evidence offered to prove the assertion's validity and then show your own evidence of why the assertion is not valid.

The Morally Flawed Argument

Arguments can be morally flawed, for example, "Convicted violent criminals should be given the death penalty because taxpayers should not have to support them in prison." What has been argued may be accurate or true but it's obviously morally flawed.

The fallacy of composition

The fallacy of composition occurs when a debater assumes in his or her argument that what is true of the part is also true of the whole. For example, just because seven people in your class are great at art does not mean that the entire class is great at art.

The fallacy of division

The fallacy of division is the inverse of the fallacy of composition. It occurs when a debater assumes that something that is true of the whole is also true of all of its parts. For example, it may be that the average American family has 2.5 children, but that does not mean that the Jones family down the street has two children and a half child.

Informal Logical Fallacies: This website organizes logical fallacies into three categories, fallacies of presumption, fallacies of ambiguity, and fallacies of relevance. Lots of fun examples illustrating different kinds of these errors.

http://sun-design.com/talitha/fallacies.html

The Fallacy Files: This website offers diverse examples and solid explanations of many common logical fallacies as well as some interesting and obscure ones. It's an advanced treatment of the topic and a great – if somewhat challenging - place to expand your knowledge.

http://www.fallacyfiles.org/index.html

OVERVIEW OF DEBATE:
FIRST AFFIRMATIVE AND NEGATIVE SPEECHES

Second Affirmative Constructive Speech

The second Affirmative speech is the first opportunity the Affirmative team has to directly address the arguments made by the Negative team. It is also the Affirmative's last chance to present new contentions which support the resolution and their proposal.

The approach is to:

1. ***Attack the Negative philosophy while defending the Affirmative perspective.***

2. ***Clash!*** Directly address each of the specific challenges issued by the Negative. Explain why the Affirmative's evidence should be accepted as authoritative.

3. ***Detail and defend the Affirmative plan.***

4. ***Describe the benefits of the plan.***
   (If you were using three-person teams, this could be done by the third person.)

5. ***Anticipate the second Negative's points,*** and further clarify the Affirmative position in contra-distinction.

In the case of capital punishment, the plan would have to answer such questions as:

- What method of capital punishment would be used?

- For what crimes would capital punishment be used?

- Would the judge have discretion in sentencing?

Second Negative Constructive Speech

This final constructive speech of the debate gives the second Negative speaker an opportunity not only to criticize the Affirmative plan, but also to present the final contentions that complete the Negative case.

The approach is to:

1. ***Attack the Affirmative plan*** as unworkable, undesirable, unable to solve the needs, and/or unnecessary.

2. ***Deny the supposed benefits of the plan.***

3. ***Clash. Counter all Affirmative challenges*** directly and specifically.

4. ***Refute the Affirmative*** case as a whole. Defend and strengthen Negative arguments, including those presented earlier by your partner. Try to refine and solidify your best points without sounding repetitive.

This ends the constructive portion of the debate. The debate now moves into what is called the discussion period. We will discuss this later and press on with the rebuttals.

The Break

Both sides may use this time to review the debate and focus their ideas for the concluding speeches.

- A well-developed final speech requires teamwork; both debaters should be fully involved in contributing ideas.
- The rebuttals are extremely important because they are the last opportunity for each team to convince the judges before the final evaluation.
- The rebuttal speeches are for response and refutation only; they are used to review and crystallize central issues by challenging the other side's strongest arguments and tracing the progression of important contentions.

Although new evidence or sources may be used to strengthen ideas introduced in the constructive speeches, no new contentions may be presented. This ensures that the teams do not wait until the end of the debate to introduce new ideas that their opponents would not have ample time to refute.

Rebuttal by First Negative

1. ***Begin by reviewing major case arguments*** presented in the first Negative speech. Reaffirm, by applying additional evidence and logic, why it is that arguments which have come under Affirmative attack still stand.
2. ***Remind the judges of any significant Negative attacks the second Affirmative has failed to clash with.***
3. ***Attack the Affirmative plan from all possible angles:*** needs for change, course of action, benefits and overall justification.
4. ***Clearly, concisely and forcefully sum up the Negative's key points.***

Rebuttal by First Affirmative

1. ***Execute final attack on Negative case***, while defending Affirmative needs for change, plan, benefits and philosophy.
2. ***Briefly review your case, restating powerful points*** in favor of the adoption of the resolution. Make sure that you try to counteract successful Negative closing arguments and that you indicate where the Negative team failed to advance argumentation.

Note:

If three person teams are used the third person could be responsible for the rebuttal.
Some formats of debate allow each team member to give a rebuttal speech.

For Example,

1st Negative rebuttal
1st Affirmative rebuttal
2nd Negative rebuttal
2nd Affirmative rebuttal

FORMAL DEBATING: EXPLORING THE MANY VARIATIONS

Through this Sourcebook we've focused on classroom debate primarily because there is relatively little written for debaters in this area but there's a lot of great material for formal debaters. Nevertheless we felt that we should include a summary of the major elements of formal debate here for anyone who wants to get a taste of the differences between the kinds of debate we've been discussing and the more formal styles of debate that are familiar to many people. We've reviewed a lot of online resources and think that the following summary, prepared by debaters at the University of California over 20 years ago, is still one of the best descriptions of the varieties of formal debate for college-level students and professors who want to understand

Team Policy Debate

Team policy debate is the oldest, and still probably the most popular, format of debate practiced in American high schools. The proposition side is called the Affirmative or AFF and the opposition side is called the Negative or NEG. Each side is a team composed of two debaters, so that there are four people participating in the debate (not including the judge and audience).

Format

A round of team policy debate consists of eight speeches. The first four speeches are called constructive speeches, because the teams are perceived as laying out their most important arguments during these speeches.

The last four speeches are called rebuttals, because the teams are expected to extend and apply arguments that have already been made, rather than make new arguments.

Here is a table of the eight speeches and their time limits:

SPEECH	TIME
1 Affirmative Constructive	8 min.
1 Negative Constructive	8 min.
2 Affirmative Constructive	8 min.
2 Negative Constructive	8 min.
1 Negative Rebuttal	4 min.
1 Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min.
2 Negative Rebuttal	4 min.
2AR Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min.

Two things are of interest in this structure. First, the affirmative team both begins and ends the debate. Second, the negative team has two speeches in a row: the first negative rebuttal (1NR) immediately follows the second negative constructive (2NC).

In general, the members of each team alternate giving speeches, so that the same person gives both the 1AC and the 1AR, the same person gives the 2NC and the 2NR, etc. Occasionally, the rules will allow a change in this format. For example, affirmative teams will sometimes go "inside-outside" so that one person (usually the weaker member) gives the 1AC and the 2AR, while the other (stronger) debater gives the 2AC and the 1AR.

Usually, there is a 3-minute cross-examination period after each of the first four (constructive) speeches. The person who does the cross-examining is the person who will not be giving the next speech for his side. For instance, the person who will give the 2NC will cross-examine after the 1AC. (An exception to this rule is made when the affirmative team goes "inside-outside.") When team policy debate is done without cross-examination periods, the speech times are often extended to 10 minutes for constructives and 5 minutes for rebuttals.

Resolutions

Resolutions in team policy debate are always of a policy nature, usually governmental policy. The affirmative team almost always defends the resolution by means of a particular example, known as a "case"; if they can show the example (case) to be true, then the general proposition is also shown to be true.

Style

Team policy debate is focused on evidence gathering and organizational ability. Persuasiveness is not considered important -- or at least, not as important as covering ground and reading plenty of evidence. The best teams have huge fileboxes packed to the gills with evidence on their own affirmative case and all the possible cases they might have to oppose. If you ever walk into a high-level team debate round, expect to see debaters talking at extremely high speeds, reading out the contents of page after page of evidence, gasping for breath between points, and using lots of jargon ("I cite Jorgenson, Jorgenson post-dates Bronstein, that kills PMR 4, flow that Aff!").

There is very little discussion of values such as freedom, justice, equality, etc.; usually, the ultimate criterion on any issue is how many dead bodies will result from taking or not taking a particular action. This form of debate can be fun, it encourages good research and organizational skills, and it is good for getting novice debaters used to speaking in front of people. But if you want to learn how to speak persuasively, this form of debate is not for you.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Lincoln-Douglas (or L-D) debate began as a reaction to the excesses of team policy debate in high school. The idea was to have a debate focused on discussing the merits of competing ethical values in a persuasive manner. The famed debates between senatorial candidates Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas in the 1850s inspired the name and format for this style of debate. L-D is a one-on-one debate, and as in team policy debate, the proposition and opposition teams are called the Affirmative (or Aff) and the Negative (or Neg), respectively.

Format

A round of L-D debate consists of five speeches and two cross-examination periods. The speeches and their times are as follows:

SPEECH	TIME
Affirmative Constructive	6 min.
Cross-Ex of Aff by Neg	3 min.
Negative Constructive	7 min.
Cross-Ex of Neg by Aff	3 min.
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min.
Negative Rebuttal	6 min.
Affirmative Rejoinder	3 min.

Notice that the Affirmative has more speeches than the Negative, but both have the same total speaking time (13 minutes).

Resolutions

Resolutions in L-D debate are usually stated as propositions of value. Although the propositions are sometimes related to issues of policy, this is not always the case. Typical resolutions include: "The spirit of the law ought to take precedence over the letter of the law to enhance justice," "Cooperation is superior to competition," "Violent revolution is a just response to oppression," etc. Unlike in team debate, the debaters are expected to debate the resolution as a whole, not just a particular example.

National Debate Tournament

This is the oldest, and probably most popular, form of debate at the college level. NDT is just like the team policy debate of high school, except more so. The format is exactly the same as in team policy debate (4 constructive speeches, 4 rebuttals, 4 cross-examination periods, etc.). And the style is also the same: huge quantities of evidence read at high velocity, with little pretense of persuasion.

Cross-Examination Debate Association Debate

This is a newer form of college-level debate than NDT, and it was born as a reaction to NDT in the same way that Lincoln-Douglas debate was born as a reaction to team policy debate. CEDA is a two-on-two debate, with a structure very similar to that of NDT and team policy debate. The difference is in the style of resolution; while NDT resolutions are policy-oriented, this is not always the case in CEDA. In addition, CEDA was intended to be a values-driven debate.

By the way, in case you've seen that movie "Listen to Me," starring Kirk Cameron: CEDA is the form of debate they were doing in that movie. Of course, they were doing it more persuasively in the movie than most debaters can achieve in real life.

Parliamentary Debate

Parliamentary debate is yet another form of debate that arose as a reaction against the excesses of NDT and team policy debate. The emphasis in this form of debate is on persuasiveness, logic, and wit. Unlike in other forms of debate, where the resolution is established well in advance of a tournament and is the same for every round in the tournament, in Parliamentary debate the resolution is usually not established until 10 minutes before the debate round begins, and there is a new resolution for every round of debate. Since it would be unreasonable to expect teams to research every topic they could be possibly be asked to debate, parliamentary debate requires no evidence whatsoever.

This form of debate is called "parliamentary" because of its vague resemblance to the debates that take place in the British parliament. The proposition team is called the "Government," and the opposition team is called (appropriately) the "Opposition." The Government team consists of two debaters, the Prime Minister (PM) and the Member of Government (MG). The Opposition team also consists of two debaters, the Leader of the Opposition (LO) and the Member of the Opposition (MO).

Format

A round of parliamentary debate consists of six speeches: four constructive speeches and two rebuttal speeches.

Several things are notable about this structure.
- First, as in team policy and NDT debate, the proposition (Government) team -- specifically, the Prime Minister -- both begins and ends the debate.
- Second, again as in team policy and NDT, the Opposition team has a block of two speeches in a row (the MO followed by the LOR).
- Third, unlike in team policy and NDT, there are only two rebuttals instead of four.

SPEECH	TIME
Prime Minister Constructive (PMC)	7 min.
Leader of Opposition Constructive (LOC)	8 min.
Member of Government Constructive (MG)	8 min.
Member of Opposition Constructive (MO)	8 min.
Leader of Opposition Rebuttal (LOR)	4 min.
Prime Minister Rebuttal (PMR)	5 min.

Consequently, two people in the debate (the PM and the LO) have two speeches each, while the other two (the MG and MO) have only one speech each. There are no cross-examination periods in parliamentary debate. But there are various motions on which the debaters can rise during others' speeches. These points are,

1. Point of Information.

During one person's speech, another debater (presumably from the opposite team) rises from his seat and says something like, "Point of information, sir?" The speaker has the option of whether or not to accept the point of information (it is usually good form to accept at least two points of information in a speech). If he accepts the point, the person who rose may ask a question of the speaker -- usually a rhetorical question designed to throw him off. The speaker then answers the question (or ignores it if he can't come up with a good answer) and moves on with his speech. There are two main rules for points of information: they may only be asked in constructive speeches, not in rebuttals; and they may not be asked during the first or last minute of any speech.

2. Point of Order.

A debater rises on a point of order when he believes one of the rules of debate is being broken. The most common use of the point of order is to say that the speaker is bringing up a new argument in a rebuttal speech, which is not allowed. (The rebuttals are reserved for extending and applying old arguments.) The person making the point of order rises, says, "Point of order, argument X is a new argument." The judge makes a judgment as to whether the point of order is valid. If so, she says, "point well taken," and the speaker must quit making argument X. If not, she says, "point not well taken," and the speaker may continue with that argument if he wishes. The procedure is similar for other points of order.

3. Point of Personal Privilege.

This rarely used motion has a couple of different uses. The most common is to protest a gross misrepresentation of one's statements or an attack on one's character. For example: "Mr. Jones says he likes lynching black people." "Point of personal privilege! I merely said sometimes the death penalty is justified." As with points of order, it is the job of the judge to rule the point well-taken or not-well-taken. A point of personal privilege can also be used to ask for a personal favor or exception from the judge; for example, "Point of personal privilege – bathroom break?"

Resolutions

In parliamentary debate, the resolution is usually in the form of a quotation or proverb provided to the debaters shortly before the round (say, about 10 minutes). Theoretically, the government team is supposed to come up with a specific case that is an example of the resolution, or at least in the spirit of the resolution. In practice, nobody really cares whether the case that the government team runs has anything to do with the resolution, so long as the prime minister makes some small pretense of linking the case to the resolution.

For example, the resolution might be "Religion is the opiate of the masses." A good case to link to this resolution might be that "creation science" should not be taught in public schools. A mediocre link might be something about the drug war, inspired by the word "opiate." A lousy link would go something like this: "This resolution made us think about how people

believe things that aren't true. For example, some people think that rent control is a good idea, but that's not true. So in this debate, the government will argue that rent control should be abolished." At most parliamentary debate tournaments, nobody would even blink an eye at that link.

The upshot is that the government team has broad latitude to run almost any case they want. Although theoretically the government team is supposed to devise its case only after hearing the resolution, most often a team already has an idea what case it wants to run long before then.

There is also no requirement that the government run a public policy case. All that is required is that the government team must establish a topic that has two (or more) clashing sides and is debatable.

Broadly speaking, there are only three types of cases that the government team cannot run:

A tautological case is one that is immediately and logically true by construction. For example, "Bill Clinton and Barack Obama have been the best Democratic presidents since 1981" would be a tautology, since Bill and Barack have been the only Democrats to have attained the presidency in the specified time period.

A truistic case is one that no moral person could possibly disagree with. For example, "Infants should not be skinned alive for entertainment purposes" would be a truism. Of course, the definition of truistic is contentious, because it is almost always possible to find someone who disagrees with a proposition, and what is considered moral is often culture-specific.

A specific-knowledge case is one that would require the opposition to know more about a topic than it could reasonably be expected to know. In general, debaters are expected to be familiar with current events and popular culture. If the case requires more particularistic information, the government must provide all necessary information in the first speech of the round. If the government fails to do so, then the case is deemed specific-knowledge and hence against the rules. An example of a specific-knowledge case would be, "My partner should dump his girlfriend." Unless the faults and advantages of his girlfriend were well known, it would be unreasonable to expect the opposition to refute the case.

As much as these are the only constraints on the government's choice of case, there is an astounding variety of cases that may be run. One popular variety is the "time-space" case, in which the government puts the judge in the shoes of a particular person or entity at some point in time, and then argues that she should make a particular decision. An example would be, "You are Abraham Lincoln in 1861. You should let the South go in peace."
At some tournaments, those running the tournament will provide a "tight-link" resolution (either in addition to or instead of the usual weak-link resolution). A tight-link resolution must be defended literally and in its entirety. For instance, if the tight-link resolution were, "The federal government should abolish the minimum wage," the government would be expected to argue for (you guessed it) abolishing the minimum wage. There are also some tournaments that provide "medium-link" resolutions, by which they mean that judges will be strict about the requirement that government cases be reasonably within the spirit of the quotation or proverb provided.

Style

Unlike CEDA, parliamentary debate has managed to preserve its emphasis on persuasion, logic, and humor; this success is most likely a result of eschewing excessive preparation and evidence. The spontaneity and openness of the format makes parliamentary debate free-wheeling and exciting, whereas other styles of debate can become boring because every debate round at a tournament revolves around the same topic. The downside is that in the absence of any evidentiary burden, debaters are free to spew utter nonsense, or even outright lies, without providing any support for their assertions. (The prohibition against specific knowledge fortunately helps to curb this problem.) All things considered, parliamentary is the most entertaining of any debate style I've found, and also the most conducive to the development of good rhetorical skills.

Variations

Parliamentary debate is actually a world-wide phenomenon, but the rules differ greatly from country to country. In Canada, for instance, the format is just as in the United States, with the following exceptions: the speeches are all one minute shorter; the two back-to-back opposition (MO and LOR) speeches are combined into one long speech delivered by the LO; and the Member of the Government (MG) is called the Minister of the Crown (MC) instead. In the United Kingdom, there are actually four teams in every debate round -- two proposition teams and two opposition teams -- and each person speaks for only five minutes. (Courtesy: California State University Northridge 2000)

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR JUDGES

Volunteer judges should not expect that their services will be universally appreciated, although ultimately they are. However the fact is that debates can be a highly charged environment with a lot of tender young egos involved who are sometimes feeling bruised and even threatened, means that a mature person serving in the role of debate judge should expect a bit of undeserved criticism. Learning that the judge isn't the problem if you get a low rating is a big part of the learning that young debaters have to experience if they hope to move forward in debate, and in life.

Here are some "heads-up" admonitions from debate professionals to debaters.

Debaters – don't be conceited! Debaters shouldn't assume that they have a superior understanding to that of the judges regarding how the teams in the debate should have been ranked. A debater cannot make a reliable judgement call on what the 'right result' should have been in a debate they competed in. This is not just due to the inescapable bias a debater has towards their own team.

Debaters also cannot hear everything that is said in the debate in the way the judges do: debaters have to spend time conferring with their partner(s), writing their own speeches, coming up with POIs, thinking of rebuttal, and a host of other activities. Even one-on-one debaters can't listen all the time because they have to make notes and focus their thoughts. Thus all debaters are quite likely to miss considerable sections of the debate compared to what they judges hear and take into account.

Moreover, debaters, when making their own arguments, know exactly what they mean to convey – judges do not, and have to judge based on what the speaker conveyed to them, which may not always perfectly match the debater's intended meaning. The debater may think they expressed their idea perfectly but they have no way of knowing how it was received by the judge.

And, quite naturally focused on winning the debate, each debaters' thinking towards every argument coming from the other side is orientated towards seeing its weaknesses and deficiencies which may or may not correspond with the judge's perception.

Even the very best judge could not reliably judge a debate they themselves were debating in. This is particularly important where debates have been very close. In those circumstances, judges are unlikely to have overwhelming reasons for some teams beating others – by virtue of the closeness of those positions. Debaters should remember that sometimes very small issues are all that separate winning from defeat.

So if, as a debater, you are disappointed with or disagree with a call, that's OK. Judges are not omniscient. However, debaters should take the time to listen openly to the reasons given for a result by judges, rather than treating unexpected results as being 'wrong'; and they should voice their concerns via an organized and thought-through feedback process involving their coaches, rather than behave aggressively or dismissively towards a judge at the time of the event. (from: The World Universities Debating Championships Debating and Judging Manual)

Although informal debate is wonderful for promoting class discussion and student growth, you may also want to hold formal style competitive debates. Formal debates can be held in any venue from a classroom to an auditorium or other large, formal space like a gym. What distinguished=s formal from informal is the structure and processes used, not the size or kind of venue.

In classroom debates either the professor/instructor or one or more students take on the role of judge, and the judging is less formal because the debate is less competitive. In classroom debate the emphasis is more on having fun and exploring a topic rather than on competing to 'win'. It's the difference between playing a game of touch football among friends and an NCAA tournament.

In competitive debates, judges are responsible for deciding who wins and who loses by applying fair and impartial processes. At the end of a debate, the judge will reveal their decision and will also frequently provide individualized feedback to the students who have participated.

Some decisions are better than others – a lot depends on the preparation and dedication of the judge. In general, there are a few things to keep in mind if you want to judge fairly:

1. **Remember to identify your biases** and to not let them influence your judgment.

2. **Presume that the debaters are acting in good faith.** If a debater makes a factual error, do not presume he or she is attempting to lie. It is likely that he or she does not know the information is wrong.

3. **Be patient – really.** Impatience communicates itself and has an impact on young people who are trying their best.

4. **Give debaters the benefit of the doubt** about their choices. They may not make the arguments or choices that you would make, and that's okay. You task is to interpret how well they are communicating their ideas and the facts that support them.

5. **Do not pre-interpret the topic.** When debaters get a topic for debate, it is their job to interpret the topic. Their interpretations are being debated.

6. **Be open-minded** and fair to both teams.

7. **Do not make comments that indicate** how you feel the debate is going during the debate. Your role as a judge is largely nonverbal until the debate is over.

8. **Do not arbitrarily manufacture rules** or ignore the rules of the debate to suit your own preferences. You are free to make up whatever rules you want before the debate, but do not change the rules once the debate has begun. Watch your body language carefully.

Although all judges should follow the rules and conscientiously be fair, there are as many ways of judging as there are ways of debating. That said, there are two basic decisions all judges need to make: (1) deciding on a winner and (2) assigning individual points (or evaluations).

> **"There is always a multitude of reasons, both in favor of doing a thing and against doing it. The art of debate lies in presenting your reasons most effectively."**
> **Mark Rutherford**

DECIDING WHO WINS

So, how do you decide who wins the debate?

Debates are about widely different issues and all are are conducted somewhat differently, so there is no universal rule for deciding who wins. Ideally, you will decide the debate based on the criteria set forth by the debaters over the course of the debate.

Debaters should not win or lose for isolated things they did or did not do, like setting up the debate well or contradicting another team member on their side. Crucially, there are no such things as automatic winning or losing moves. This is a matter of logical necessity: however good or bad something a team does is, another team could always do exactly the same good or bad thing and do something else that made them even better or even worse.

Note that speakers don't have to use the word "rebuttal" to respond to an argument. It may be tidier if they do, but judges should not ignore material that adequately deals with an argument just because the speaker doesn't point out that it does. Equally, this doesn't mean speakers should be "punished" for not refuting everything: some claims do not do any harm at all to the opposite side. For example, in a debate about the legalisation of drugs, if the affirmative side says "pink elephants are cute because they have those nice ears and are a pleasant color", this flawed argument can be safely left unrebutted by the opposition as it isn't a reason to legalise drugs. There is, therefore, no need to point out that blue elephants are obviously more tasteful. So too, if they said "some drugs are less harmful than others", this could also be ignored. While it is clearly more related to the debate than the cute pink elephants argument, it is pre-argumentative – that

is, it has not yet been given sufficient surrounding words to actually provide a reason to do or not do the policy. The other side can quite happily say "yes, some drugs are more harmful than others" and move on, or just ignore this argumentative non sequitur.

During the debate, the teams or individuals will present different kinds of arguments. The proposition will make a case for the motion being debated and the opposition team will make arguments for why the proposition's case is misguided, dangerous, or inadequate. You will have to make a judgement based on the merits to decide whether oppositions arguments or the proposition's rejoinders were more convincing.

During the debate, debaters may set out criteria for your decision. Encourage your student to offer these criteria. They are even permitted to address you directly, saying that you should or should not base your decision on a particular argument or kind of argument.

Although you are basing your decision on which team or individual was most effective at arguing a position, do not decide the debate based on the number of arguments won by each side. Instead evaluate the qualitative significance of each argument on the overall outcome of the debate.

For example, probability and risk calculation can play a role in the significance of an argument. However, it is not your job to interject your own risk calculations or value judgments into the debate. The debaters have weighed the options for you – it is their job to address why their arguments outweigh or are more important than or more instrumental to the decision than those of the other team.

Try to provide a balance of positive feedback and constructive observations. But if you are going to have more of one, students would prefer you had more constructive comments. Constructive comments help justify a ranking in the round; saying "Great job" doesn't little to help a student understand why he/she earned a 3 or 4 rank in a round. You should always time the speeches and write the time on the ballot.

Coaches and competitors can get a good deal of information from how long the student's speech was in your round. If you indicate the student is rushing but the students time is consistent with their other rounds or their practice sessions, they know that their practiced rate is too fast. But if their time in your round is a full minute shorter than practice, they know they did

something anomalous in your round. Providing the time helps provide a context for the other comments.

Justify your rank and rate: The students should be able to understand, based on your comments on the ballot, why they received the ranks they did. We call it a "Reason for Decision" or RFD. Some judges will even write "RFD" on the ballot and then explain why the student did/didn't "win" a round. Forensics students are trained to accept criticism to the point they crave it. Two types of useless ballots a student can receive are a ballot with almost no comments and a ballot telling she/he how wonderful one is yet a low rank or rate. If a presentation wasn't perfect, they want to know why.

Individual Evaluations

Whether you intend to do it formally on a scoring sheet or as informal comments, it is important to provide students individualized feedback after a debate. If you are not grading students strictly on a debate, this feedback may come in the form of some notes written on a grading sheet explaining a few things the student did well and a few things that he or she should work on for next time.

If you plan to grade student on their performance, or simply want to use a more detailed scoring system, here's an example of a commonly-used grading format for in-class debate. However, please feel free to create your own version that reflects your teaching goals for your class.

Suggested Debate Scoring Rubric – Rank Presenters Within Each Range

Score	Argumentation	Refutation	Structure	Presentation
91-100	Sophisticated understanding or issues and strategies. Presents powerful arguments with substantial evidence to support sound reasoning. Able to think on their feet.	Understands how their arguments interrelate. Recognized and investigated inconsistencies in the opponent's claims.	Showed strong narrative structure. Persuasive introduction and conclusion. Speech was sophisticated and easy to follow. Seamlessly integrated arguments.	Effectively used rhetorical devices (humor, inflection, pausing) to add depth to the argument. Thoroughly engaged and highly effective. Strong eye contact.
81-90	Able to establish clear positions that demand a sophisticated reply. Adheres to ARE format and effectively presents evidence to support issues. Is well prepared to discuss issues.	Maintains his own/team's positions, supplementing them with thoughtful analysis and examples. Effectively refuted major arguments made by opposing team.	Simple, effective narrative structure for own arguments; some difficulty integrating multiple counter-positions. Uses speaking time effectively. Sufficiently organized so that listeners not taking notes could follow.	Speaks in a clear and engaging manner. Only occasional use of entertaining or persuasive style. Confident and credible. Occasional verbal pauses (um). Strong eye contact.

71-80	Speaker clearly understands argumentation but only occasionally uses ARE format. Speaker confuses reasoning and evidence, often offering only one or the other. Struggled to identify debate's major issues.	Speaker discusses own arguments without answering opposing arguments, though there was some refutation addressing a combination of both general and specific issues.	Speaker has a basic structure (intro, body, conclusion) but strays from it. Speaker can organize own points but loses structure when addressing opponent's points. Could allocate time more effectively.	Speaks clearly but is not overly engaging or persuasive. Some distracting verbal interruptions (ums, pauses). Good but not outstanding nonverbal communication.
60-70	Did not follow the ARE format, with some exceptions. Used little evidence to support arguments. Has inconsistencies, logic gaps, or fallacies in major arguments. Little integration of issues from teammates.	Does not respond or reply to major arguments from the opposing side. Repeats previously stated ideas/ positions rather than develop, analyze, or compare them. Speaker does not use well-developed refutation techniques.	Full speech is not well organized. Lacks an attention-getting introduction and a powerful conclusion. Difficult to follow for a significant period. Unclear when moving from one point to the next. Ineffective allocation of time.	Loses clarity for sustained periods. Poor eye contact and infrequent use of gestures. Speaker does not sound confident or convincing and is not engaging. Does not present effectively with teammates.
Below 60	Scores below 60 are reserved for students who are unsuccessful as debaters as well as otherwise uncooperative, mean-spirited, or disruptive during the debate.			

Use of Flow Sheets

It is important for judges, like debate participants, to keep track of the arguments made during a debate on a flow sheet. As a judge, it is easy to make the mistake of deciding the debate largely based on the final rebuttal speech. The proposition rebuttal speech needs to be both a response to the opposition's arguments and a summation of the proposition's final position. When deciding the debate, you need to evaluate whether the proposition failed to answer/address any of the oppositions arguments and decide how to weigh those conceded arguments. Teams may also change or drop arguments over the course of the debate. The flow sheet will help you track the arguments as they progress.

Things to Remember When Judging:

1. You're responsible for time management. You must signal the beginning and end of protected times and the debaters will rely on you for these time signals.

2. Take notes on a flowsheet. Flowsheets make it easier to track arguments made by students throughout the debate, making it easier to judge when its over.

3. Leave your opinions out of it. The only facts known in the debate are what the teams bring forward. Do not bring your life-long held opinions into your judgement.

4. Don't fill in for speakers. Do not "fill in" what you believe a speaker meant to say, was going to say, or should have said. Only base your judgment on what was actually said.

5. Reveal your decision and the reasoning for it. Judges are required to reveal their decisions, their reasoning, and to give constructive feedback to the students when the debate is over.

6. Debates are a learning opportunity more than a contest. Your feedback should not stress winners and losers but should focus on the positive accomplishments of each participant. The feedback you provide is critical for students to be able to evaluate their performance, build on their strengths and address their shortcomings.

THE FOUNDATION: SUPPORT AND SUSTAINABILITY.

The Fun Part

College debating is probably the most prestigious of all debating because, well, it is college level interaction and it based on higher levels of learning and skill. There are some private debating groups, but that's a different matter.

Well, everybody hears about the great debates of prestige schools like Harvard, Yale, and Stanford. These schools have huge budgets and huge numbers of people, but if your school is small, and less well-financed than one of the majors, and if maybe you don't even have a team yet, all you really need is to get together with a few other interested students and a facukty member or two and just set p shop – call yourself the XYZ Community College Debate Team and guess what? That's exactly what you will be.

One of the first things that should be talked about is how much money the Debate Team will need – usually not that much compared to any other activity – and the path we recommend is to create a Foundation. Not an IRS-style 501.c.3 foundation, but an organization, even just on paper at first, that will be your vehicle for raising the funds you'll need. The foundation for a small college could be as many as 20 people and those are usually people that are donors, and volunteers and to help support whatever needs to be supported. In college, you have a coach, and the coach is more than likely compensated in some way for doing this job because it is a lot of extra work, or it's part of the curriculum, and they are usually compensated, sometimes not in the beginning until the fundraising becomes sufficient. The sacrifice for the organizers will be greatly appreciated and will uplift the self-esteem of everyone involved. Instead of teaching six classes, they teach four and handle the

debating team. Now, different colleges will handle this very differently and its irrelevant which way you do it, as long as you do it.

We are providing an outline. You can do it differently. There is formal debating in many different categories from high speed debating to parliamentary level debating, and more. It's really important that you do it the way you feel the most comfortable with, and what you think fits the community. If you're going to a national level, then you're going to have to follow some more rules on whatever the national level competition is, but none of them are more demanding than others. Some are just more formal. They're not complicated. They all follow the same basic rules of everything from how you do it to judging, etc.

Having a foundation is key. Their job is to oversee the organization. Help to raise money is obviously one of their biggest jobs. A college foundation and a college debating team can be from $30,000 to $60,000 in needs and there are a few that are higher than that. Some actually have millions of dollars in reserves that have been donated from previous students who have done well and been on debating teams. You want testimonials from anybody you can think of that's ever been on a debating team in your school. It is important to get debating people from your school who are on the debating team, to give you testimonials. This can be as easy as talking into their phone and send it to you but have them tell you how debate helped them. How it helped them in school; go from a C student to an A student; gave them confidence; taught them how to speak, organize, and research; how it helped them become better happier and more successful in life.

> *"When I am getting ready to reason with a man, I spend one-third of my time thinking about myself and what I am going to say; and two-thirds of my time thinking about him and what he is going to say."*
> *Abraham Lincoln*

FUNDRAISING & SPONSORSHIPS

If you can get funds from the college or your university curriculum, great, but don't depend on it. Really the less you get from the administration, and the less you get from the school the better your debating team will become, because you won't have to deal with their bureaucracy. The college professors and instructors will be free to form this into something that is really is effective.

Make sure you involve people that have positive attitudes towards debating. A lot of people make the mistake of taking the debating team and only run it out of the social sciences, speech, or literature. That is not what you want to do. You want to enhance it and make this better. Have all departments involved, the more the merrier.

Obviously, the communications department has got to be one of the better choices to be involved but be sure to bring in the business department. Bring in the MBAs. Bring in the accountants. They're the ones who can realize the value of this more than anybody, because they know how to use it every day of their life. Lawyers, doctors, all of those people were on debating teams. Tons of celebrities who are highly successful today; Oprah Winfrey, Brad Pitt were debaters and they say debating helped them more than any one thing they ever did in college. These are examples of ways the foundation can really help. Help put together a whole information program. Put up a web page that kids can go to and download. Have a chat room for educators and students. We're going to have lots of samples of debates and, testimonials from different parts of the country, but the more personal, the more local, the better it will be.

It is imperative that all the positions are set up in such a way they have a backup, so if you lose any one person nothing stops. Losing a person will always have an impact, especially if it's a top person like the debating team coach. Every debating coach should have an assistant coach, even if it's just a foundation member that's an assistant coach for a while until you find another new coach, but never let a position go unfilled and let things stop because one person

leaves. That's not the way we want to teach these children to organize themselves or their companies. Also, the judges. There should be two judges ready to go and maybe a couple in training. So, at all times you're going to always have judges.

Have foundation members and coaches that maybe work with the AV department for setting up the debate and speakers, microphones, podiums and a camera. You should record all of this even if on a smart phone. Download your recordings wherever you possibly can. Download it to all the students you can in your school. Make it available to them. Let all the debaters have it to send to all their family. Maybe get it on TV. Go to PBS or go to your local community channel.

You want to get money from outside the school, from parents, ex-students and alumni. Don't be afraid to go to the local tire dealer, clothing store, shopping center, or grocery store and have your school's debating day where they give 5% to your school and foundations. Who do I know that I can ask to do something like this?

We are also planning to put together a national program where somebody will say I'm going to sponsor 20 debates on this subject matter. I'm going to put $100,000 up, so that means $5000 for every school that participates and then maybe we'll find an opposing view company--for example, Bloomberg for anti-gun and they'll find somebody that will pay for the other side, pro-gun. They will probably not ever put their name on it, but that's where No Hate/No Violence comes in. You get the money, No Hate/No Violence arranges for the national money and you get the money. You always want to have a main sponsor and it could be presented by No Hate/No Violence. We'd love No Hate/No Violence to be a presenter wherever possible. You don't have to do it. You can do it all yourself. Take credit for all of it yourself. But promoting our ideology as a basis of your debating can only make your school look like peaceful activists. That's fine, but we really want to promote attitude and civility and tolerance.

That's what No Hate/No Violence is about, and we think debating is one of the best ways that we can do that. Don't be afraid to have the students go to their family, friends and relatives and do a little bit of betting with them. Say okay, I'm going to be in this debate. You're going to give me $50 for being in this debate. If I win the debate you've got to give me $100 or $25.00 Everyone says, $100 that's not going to mean much—not if of the student does it 10 times with 10 different relatives or friends. If I win the debate, you've got to pay my debating team. This money never goes to the general fund. It's kept separate from the school. If the school is going to support the debating team, then some of these rules may not apply, but there are schools out there that raise $100,000 a year in about a month's time. There are schools that struggle to raise $10,000 or $15,000. Mostly on the effort and commitment of the students, educators and mainly the Foundation.

A lot of the debating in the college level has actually gone away, kind of under the auspices of funding shortages, but we believe there is more to it than that. We just want to try and fund debating outside the curriculum or the budgeting process because it's so red tape-ish and so political. We want to depoliticize debating. The best way to do that is to raise our own money. Let's learn while we're raising that money how to raise money and how you can do things. I've been doing it my whole life for charities. We're going to apply the same theory right here for debating and it's very easy to prove what comes out of debating as a benefit to society. I don't think anybody can think of it as negative in nature.

I would have a pitch piece and a handout. Every student should have dozens of them on them at all times. They will be driving by someplace; oh, I'm going to stop there and ask them. Believe it or not, that stuff can really work. You can have a dinner at a restaurant where they donate 10% of their revenue for that night. You make sure you fill that restaurant. Generally, you're going to a restaurant that's not full all the time, because that makes it difficult for them to do it. If you have a really good loyal restaurant, especially if the manager is an ex-alumnus, that's who you

go tap. This is networking.

This is networking at its ultimate level in college. If I've been on a debating team for college, which I was, I'm not only donating to a debating team that I was on, I'm actually funding the debating team I was not on and I'm may or may not be the foundation. You need to figure out what you want to do. In the first year, it's a learning experience. If you're already doing it, try and move away from the education system for funding and go to private funding. You can do more debates, bigger debates, have more prestigious debates and have a lot more fun and get to a lot of people.

The one thing that we do want to tell you is, don't say no to anybody who wants to join the debating team. That's who we are at No Hate/No Violence. We bring in all comers. Help unite people. Do they all get to get on the stage? Maybe not, but they can learn and contribute. I can tell you Harvard has never said no to somebody who wants to be on their debating team and half of them never make the stage, but they improved their grades and opportunities in life. There are some that started at Harvard debating and have won national championships and gone on to be billionaires and they attribute debating to a lot of what gave them the drive.

You may have a foundation supported by many people or maybe have three major sponsors in your town that sponsors the debating team. Give all contributors lots of credit, lots of thank you, lots of memos thanking them at the end of the year as testimonials of what it did for you and how it did for you.

Why would you do that? So, they'll come back next year and maybe give you more money. I've found that to be extremely effective in different areas of donations. But think of donating just like you do. It's not a charity, but it kind of is, and we're going to help the school system because we're going to help the school system have better students, less pressure, less financial pressure and open the eyes to a lot of people, students and professors, to the effects of debating, because we believe debating is a great way of teaching in class, out of class and in life.

Talking one on one, not through the phone or by texting. Not through the media to interpret everything that you say. Not through anyone else. We debate one on one and we do it with facts, and we back everything up with as many facts as possible, and we never have unnamed sources or make up facts. Those are two no-noes' in debating, and you can't do any power points. I know a lot of kids that would be great at it. I wish our politicians would go back to doing this, so let's teach them.

The debating foundation is the presenting sponsor of all your school debate. No Hate/No Violence could be another presenting sponsor. Be sure to list all the financial sponsors. " This debate is made available to you thanks to the generous contribution of!!!!! Have the art department make as large of a poster as possible, to use as a backdrop to your debate and debating video. Let the art department put their name on it as a sponsor. Always give accolades to the debating foundation.

THE COMMUNITY OF STAKEHOLDERS

Your Success Depends On Them.

(Adapted from: "How To Start A Debate Society: iDebatePress")

Your friends, and those who will become your friends, are the key to your success. Hard work, personal initiative, persistence and dedication are all important individual and team qualities, but it is vital that you create and main¬tain a network of people who support your debate program because they like and understand what you are trying to do. These stakeholders include everyone, no matter how close or distant, who for whatever their reasons want to help you and who have the ability to assist you financially, offer you their expertise, and introduce you to others who can also help. Your primary job in establishing your debate program is to establish, build and maintain personal and professional relationships with the following people in your community and beyond:

Your Personal Network:

Tell everyone about your project. Show them how excited you are about it. Post what you're thinking, doing and planning on Social Media; Tweet about what's going on with regularity. Consider writing old-fashioned letters to key people – not just an email or a tweet. You might be amazed at the impact a written letter that comes in a stamped envelope has in this day of instant, often poorly written communications. Show pride – if you are proud of the accomplishments of members of your debate program, share that pride. People will sense your confidence and your pride in what you're doing and feel attracted to the project because of that.

Your Parents:

Many university students are still close to their parents even while striving for independence. College debaters travel a lot, spend late hours organizing events, or skip classes to go to a debating workshop, so make sure their parents support what they are doing. Persuade parents that debating is good for their children who may be away in college but who still maintain a close family connection. Remem¬ber, parents will probably be your biggest sponsors and supporters at workshops, tournaments, etc.

Many parents are eager to take part in their kids' lives, so help them be involved by finding ways they can help, support

or simply come to your debates and cheer you on. If you are in school in your hometown, invite them (and their friends) to presentation debates. If you are away at school, link them them to videos of each debate that you post online, keep them up to date on what you are doing and how it is relevant to you and your college community. Don't forget that your parents are networked with people or institutions that you may not even be aware of but that might want to spon-sor your events or could be of help in other ways.

Your Deans, chancellors, professors/instructors:

Try to earn the respect and admiration of those who call the shots. The success of your debate program will be vulnerable if they decide to make your life difficult, which they may do if they are left to misunderstand or misinterpret what you propose to do. Explain to each key person individually and personally what the university/faculty/department stands to gain from a debate program. Try to understand what kind of people they are and what they value. Read their published strategic plans, go to their public meetings and conferences, introduce yourself and try to make yourself memorable in a polite way, and be ready to show them(if asked) how you can help them realize their goals and how they can help you achieve yours. Earn their trust personally as well; show them you are reliable and accountable.

The Media:

As far as many people are concerned, if it's not in the news, it didn't happen. Even if you don't have access to the local and even regional/national media at first, work with your own student media first. Keep in mind this simple rule for dealing with editors – they don't care about what you care about. They will only run your story if it fits into their agenda. They have two priorities – filling their available space and keeping their advertisers happy. This means that the best approach to any editor is by showing them how the story (a) fits in with their editorial perspective and with other stories they have run in the past; (b) will appeal to their readers and – more important – to their advertisers and (c) will make them look good to their publisher and others who they report to like their editorial board.

VIPs:

People love VIPs; they treat them like they were demigods and they will rush to your events if you have a VIP attending. VIPs may seem distant from everyday life but, in fact, political, economic, showbiz, academic, and other kinds of celebri¬ties are just people; many times they are good-natured, easygoing individuals who don't even perceive themselves as celebrities. Every¬one you see on TV actually exists as a person with a personal life and set of interests, passions and prejudices, and almost always has a cell phone, an email address, and one or more Social Media pages. More than that, VIPs have friends., colleagues and associates. In fact, they are usually very well connected, and they have a lot of people who want to do them favors. Your challenge is to find a personal link that will open the door and get you an introduction. Even a major celebrity won't be more than six degrees removed from you or someone in your group and in reality you will probably be no more than two or three steps away from some key VIPs.

Administrators – especially staff:

You'll find that many activities are only possible because staff members with some authority are willing to close their eyes when, for example, you need an extra room for a practice right now for just a little while and have no time to wait for higher-level approval. Truth be told, support staff are usually the people who make things happen inside most institutions; in most schools informal connections play a big role in how things actually get done. In reality, the Department secretary usually has more real power than the Dean.

Other student groups:

Sometimes they are your competition (peo¬ple can't join every group), but most times they are your allies. In most colleges and universities, many students don't take part in a lot of extracur¬ricular activities. They just go to classes and go home, unless there's a party somewhere. Indifference, lack of attachment to the school, over-focus on studies and/or parties are your biggest challenges, not competition from other student groups for resources and attention. Becoming engaged with one group usually leads to engaging with others. Collaborating with other groups maximizes your impact and helps your message reach new people. But keep your eyes open: people that enjoy making little effort and claiming all the credit may lead or influence some of the organizations you want to approach, and they may use the proposed partnership with you just to get access to your valuable know-how, connections or contacts. Be careful but not paranoid – and be practical too. Decide who you really need as a friend and focus on them, and don't make commitments until you are sure of who you'r dealing with.

Public officials:

When you are preparing a big event, you may find that there are local or state government agencies that might be willing to help you. In some countries, city coun-cils can offer significant sponsorships for debating events like tournaments, or they can provide nice public spaces for your debates and events. Many public institutions have grants for youth activities and can help you with resources and equipment or help you spread the word about your program. They are rarely a source of funds, and when they are those funds may require more paperwork than they are actually worth.

Business/Professional Sponsors:

We will deal with sponsors in detail in the section on creating a Debate Foundation and doing fundraising; here, we just want to emphasize that you should think of sponsors as long-term stakeholders. Create value for them, establish trust with them, and you will receive many benefits in addition to financial support.

Alumni:

In the beginning, your debate program won't have an alumni group since most of those involved will likely still be students, but your college or university always has an alumni organization. If it works well, you will have access through the alumni association to a network of thousands of highly educated people who still feel connected to their alma mater. Usually the individuals heading alumni groups are former student leaders, and so they will likely empathize with your struggle and try to help you in whatever way they can. Sometimes these groups even have access to influential people you might want to invite to speak or act as judges; sometimes alumni groups are very well-funded and will able to sponsor some of your events if you can make your case effectively.

Other debating groups:

You are not alone. Large numbers of people around the world are involved in debate. These are articulate, great fun, inspiring, smart people who organize wonderful events for one another, who like to learn, talk, listen, and socialize with others. Many in this global community will be thrilled to learn that you are starting a debate program where none has existed before and will gladly help you. Inspire yourself by learning what's being done elsewhere, talk to people about their experiences, ask them for advice, visit different groups just to see how they run their programs, organize workshops together and ask trainers from other schools to come and help train your debaters and judges.
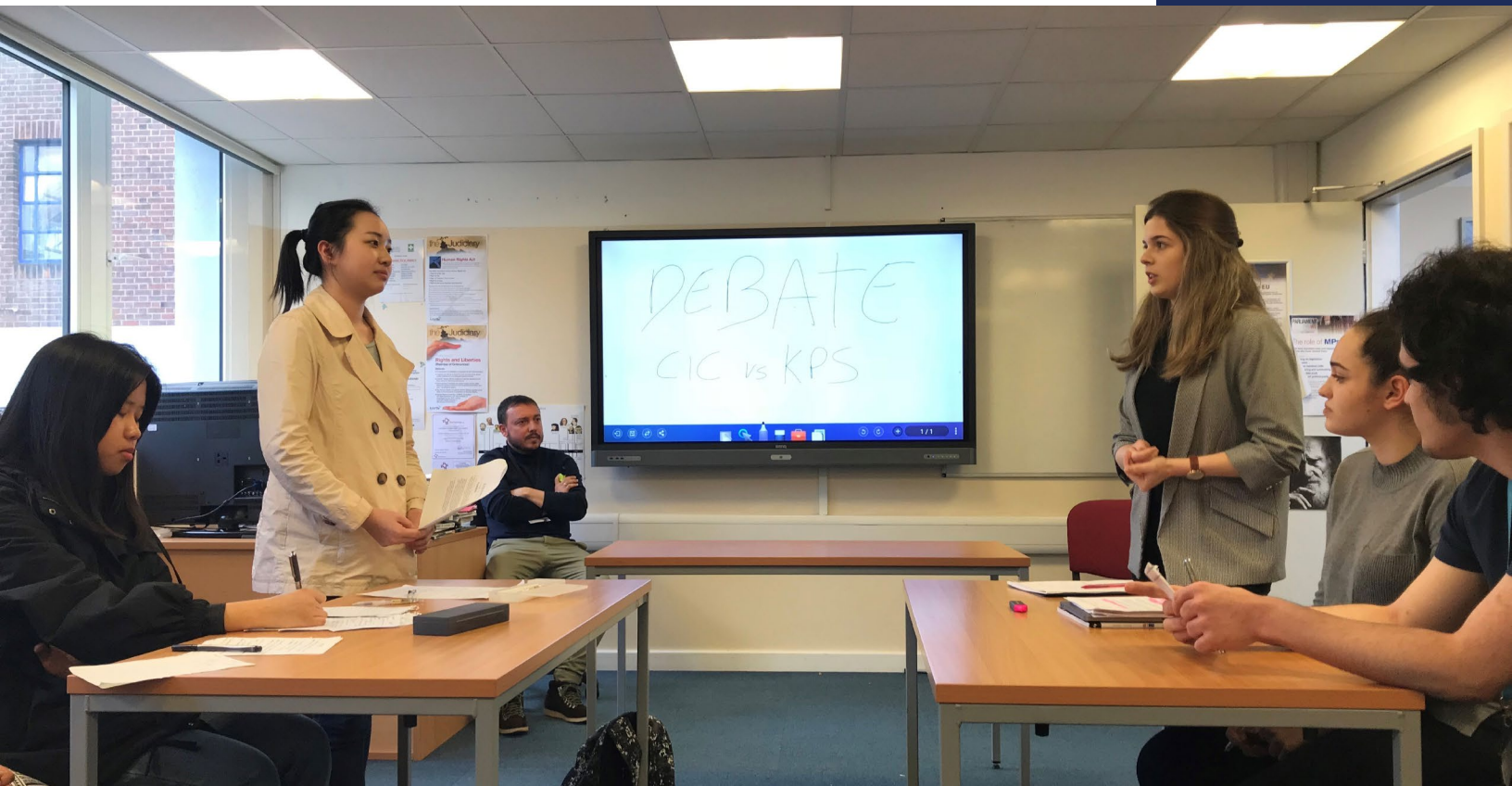
How To Get Your Program Sponsored: The Inside Story
(Adapted from: "How To Start A Debate Society: iDebatePress")

The Nitty-Gritty Of Fundraising

Just as many people are automatically suspicious when asked to give money to by someone on the streets, people can be suspicious when asked to give money to students. Just as we tend to be afraid the street person will spend it on drugs, cigarettes or alcohol; potential sponsors tend to be afraid that students may waste their sponsorship money on partying and other frivolous expenses.

Start out behaving like a businessperson and not like a street person. Show and tell potential sponsors specifically what sponsoring your program can do for them, what their business or organization stands to gain by supporting you. Show by your attitude that you understand the value of money and help them see that you will be a good steward of the support they are being asked to give. You are a debater; you know how to present pro and con arguments – use those skills to win this debate!

Create a printed or digital sponsorship book that presents your activities and plans, and which outlines the advantages to specific businesses and organizations of sponsorship. That book should also contain categories of sponsorship with cool names. Aim at having a pyramid-shaped set of sponsors, with just one Top Sponsor but several layers of (equally valuable and respected) other sponsors. Develop proposals that would make sense to you if you were in the decision-making position. To do this, you must understand the business's philosophy and strategy, especially toward the kinds of students you represent: smart, urban, educated, responsible young people.

A business might be interested in sponsoring you for many reasons. It might want to promote awareness of its products and services among young people or to directly stimulate their sales; it might want to hire smart young people; it might want the public to perceive it as engaged in community activities; it might want to associate itself with some aspect of your brand.

Some multinational companies are known for sponsoring debate, but you can also try to get support from local businesses. Global firms like KPMG, PwC, Deloitte, Bain, Morgan Stanley, J. P. Morgan, T-Mobile, Accenture, Clifford Chance, McKinsey & Company or Grant Thornton have all supported debating events, and so have media compa¬nies like the newspapers Die Zeit (Germany) or The Irish Times (Ireland). Beer brands also seem to have an interest in sponsoring debate events - could that be because student debaters frequently drink a lot of beer?.

Think hard about what you can offer to a sponsor before you approach them. Don't go in with just an appeal to their good nature. Many times the best idea is to start by selling a specific event, perhaps one of your flagship events, and then build up a relationship over time so the business becomes more comfortable with long-term commitment. They have to get to know you before they can justify making that commitment – for them it is as much a business decision as a public service decision. Especially in smaller owns and cities, businesses get approached hundreds of times a year to give money to all kinds of causes and organizations – they have to be given a great reason to pick you out of all those appeals.

Don't forget that a big debate competition attracts many people. This means many businesses, even small ones, can potentially obtain great business from sponsoring you. You can also use this argument to win support from your city council and even tourism promotion offices—and also from such local businesses as restaurants, bars, hotels and hostels, taxis and buses, souvenir shops, and museums.

Regardless of who you approach, focus on how their sponsorship will create real value for you and for them. It's a lot harder to establish a partnership than it is to maintain it and renew it once the sponsor knows you and has experienced the benefits of sponsorship.

Don't ask for more than you really need – show them that you have thought through your needs carefully and are being conservative and careful. If possible, propose a sponsorship in which the level of support is tied to results. Potential sponsors might be a bit more willing to donate money if they know that they will be able to see and even measure the results – again, from their point of view this will be at least partly a business decision, not simple charity.

Get as much information on a potential sponsor as you can, but don't forget to know your own position even better. What's your budget? How many debates did you have last year and this year? Can you demonstrate growing community support for your debates? How many peo¬ple attended last year compared with this year? How many people have visited your website? Your Facebook page? What percentage of your members would you consider active?

Use your personal connections to reach the right people. Using these connections is not illegal or unethical. You just want a fair chance to present your case to the right person. Before you meet with anyone, make sure you know all you can about them. You need to talk very differently to someone from marketing than from human resources or sales, and a small business owner has different responsibilities and obligations than a corporate executive.

At a meeting, don't be afraid to use your charm, and be sure to dress appropriately for the occasion. Show yourself to be confident and at ease, but pay attention to how much formality or informality is comfortable for those you are meeting with. If there is more than one person, don't just focus on the one who you think is the decision-maker – the real decision maker may be the person who sits back and doesn't say a thing, not the one doing all the talking. Smile and be friendly, but don't force it. Be polite and be honest. If you don't know how to begin the interview, take your cue from the other person: if they are informal, be informal; if they get right down to business, get right down to business; if they like to chat, then chat

away but stay alert for their signal that it's time to get down to business.

Be ready to make a complete proposal at this first meeting. This pro¬posal should include the duties for each party, the time frame for the arrangement, and a figure for the value of the sponsorship. If you don't have the authority to seal an agreement, discuss what you'll be pro¬posing with those who do before you meet a potential sponsor. Don't seal the deal unless you have power to do so. Many times, the peo¬ple you are meeting with will have also to talk with their superiors.

Try different angles. If a potential sponsor is reluctant to give you an regular grant, ask him to sponsor an event or to fly a team to a tour¬nament. If a company makes or sells something your society needs, ask them to donate stuff instead of money; if they can't give it to your program for free, ask for their most generous discount.

Learn to say no to unacceptable offers. Sponsorship spots are not unlim¬ited. You cannot sell 10 "platinum sponsor" places the same way it's unlikely that you will manage to have two banks sponsoring the same event. Firms and brands use you as a way of standing out from the crowd, they value visibility, exclusiveness, and access to the participants. You can't give multiple sponsors the same visibil¬ity you can give to one in a poster or a newsletter; and even if you could have little stands for all of them at your venue, firms prefer undisputed attention and access to the participants. So if you have McDonald's, you can't have Burger King.

But learn to say yes gratefully to small offers of support. When you're just starting out, accepting low proposals from high-profile companies makes a lot of sense. First, it's an opportunity to show the sponsor that you are trustworthy, so that in the future it might want to increase its sup¬port. Second, the fact that a company is sponsoring you gives other companies a sense of security. If you are good enough for one com¬pany, you should be good

Be persistent, but learn when to quit. "No" sometimes means "no," but it can also mean "I'm not sure" or "I didn't understand" or "I can't fit that in my budget right now." Even when you have to take no for your answer try to learn from your experience. Ask people if they liked the way you approached them, the way you negotiated with them, what you can do to improve your proposal, and then ask them when they would like you to contact them again with another proposal.

Always keep in mind that just by talking with you they have shown interest in what you're trying to accomplish, or their door would never have been opened. They wouldn't have wasted their time if they weren't at least feeling positive about you. Your exit line should be something like: "Thank you for your interest in what we're trying to do. I can see that you want us to succeed, and I hope we can talk again sometime soon."

(Adapted from: "How To Start A Debate Society: iDebatePress")

Keep The IRS In Mind – But Don't Worry

At some point if you are raising and handling money you will want to be sure that you have all your IRS ducks in a row. If you don't have a parent who is a lawyer or an accountant on board already, try to find someone who can help you structure your finances so that they conform with all the rules from the very beginning when you first open a bank account for your fundraising efforts. Fortunately for anyone organizing a debate program this is well-charted territory. Whether or not you want to become an IRS tax-exempt organization

now or later, it's worth knowing that the IRS considers a properly organized independent debate club, team or program as tax-exempt for purposes of receiving donations.

Here's the ruling (an easy two-page read):

"The IRS Has Ruled That Debate Programs Can Be Tax-Exempt"
Rev. Rul. 66-256, 1966-2 C.B. 210

Avoid Confusing Financial Overlap

Increasingly stretched school budgets are a key reason that debate programs need to be independent fundraisers whenever possible. We believe that debate programs have such inherent value, not only to students but to the community, that they can be financially independent and not impose a burden on their schools – unlike many other student activities. So, assuming that your debate program is able to raise money that covers all of its expenses but also, for example, uses school property for meeting, practice and presentation, it becomes important that financial responsibilities are clearly defined. Unless the lines between the school's financial and non-financial responsibilities and the responsibilities of your debate program are clearly defined there's always the potential for confusion and even conflict.

Here is an excellent article on how booster clubs, debate clubs and other student organizations engaged in fundraising can be set up to avoid conflicting with their school's financial responsibilities. The article is secondary-school oriented but applies to any debating program that is engaged in fundraising at any level.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

The use of debate has educational value in both curricular and extracurricular activities. The most obvious benefit is the opportunities debate provides to develop and practice oral skills. These skills are extremely important to academic and personal development, yet few curriculum materials are available to support the professor or instructor in fostering them.

What makes debate especially valuable for fostering development of oral skills is that it is not only structured, but also interactive. Debate requires that participants listen, think and respond. It is not enough for the debater to simply memorize and perform a speech. Instead, debaters must listen to their opponents, engage in a questioning process, and incorporate this information into their own presentations.

Debate is also an excellent way to develop critical thinking skills. The process of researching a debate is one of examining the pros and cons of an issue, determining what the problems are and considering alternative solutions. The research and presentation of a debate is clearly a team effort, and participation in activities like debate explicitly develops the skills needed to work in teams.

Debate can also be used to explore issues in a variety of areas including social studies, economics, history, and more. For example, one could have a debate on whether human aggression is innate or learned. Whether or not a debate topic is related to a class curriculum, debate has a lot to offer participants.

We believe in the power of civilized debate to resolve every kind of issue from the relative desirability of cats vs. dogs as pets to whether the death penalty should be abolished, but we've come to realize that much of the underlying social and even economic value of debate has yet to be explored.

Specifically, we're beginning to realize that debate can be a great tool for seeking real-world solutions rather than being simply a competition between ideas that results in one position being declared a winner and then everybody goes home.

Debate can be a way that schools and students provide their communities with desperately needed reasoned, factual information and generate funding from a brand-new source in the process.

Stepping Outside The Proverbial Box

Here are some hypothetical scenarios – we hope you'll come up with other even more innovative scenarios for lining up sponsors and then go make it all happen!

1. What if a government agency was in the process of making a decision that would impact a particular city and, as part of their due diligence, they sponsored a series of debates in schools throughout the city where students could take positions on the proposed regulations, research them, analyze them, and then come up with the best pro and con arguments they could muster?

2. What if a politician really wanted to know what their constituents thought the best policy options were and instead of commissioning a poll they sponsored schools in their district to debate the proposed policy and give them feedback on the results? Instead of a paid pollster popping in by phone or on the doorstep and asking a few questions of somebody who might never have given the matter a moment's thought, how about getting the best and the brightest minds in the community really digging into the issue and coming up with in-depth reasoning and facts pro AND con on the proposal? Then publicize the hell out of the results.

3. Perhaps a manufacturer wants to know whether young people think their new product is environmentally friendly, or just cool. A debate or two in target cities could tell them more than a lot of other kinds of much more expensive market research. Or what if a pizza restaurant wanted to know what people really thought of their new menu items and sponsored a series of debates in schools in their market area – like "Be It Resolved That: pineapple has no place on a pizza." Or "Be It Resolved That thin crust is better than thick crust."

4. What if a metro police department wanted to know how they could serve the community better and commissioned a series of debates in schools in impacted precincts on controversial police policies, seeking not just opinions but reasoned, researched pros and cons on the policy under discussion. Police departments and other agencies hold "Public Hearings" all the time, and most of the time these hearings get no more than a few retirees with nothing better to do than show up with coffee and donuts and kibbitz, but the agency rarely gets any real thoughtful input. Even people who show up to "testify" are there to present one side of an argument – their side. If others 'testify' with opposite opinions, then what? Nothing gets resolved because there is no process. Debate would add process and focus outcomes.

5. What if an attorney was about to try a case where they needed to know the kinds of issues that the evidence might raise in the minds of jurors. Attorneys routinely put on (very expensive) mock trials to 'road test' their defense arguments, but how about having six teams of student`s from six schools in the community where the jury pool would be drawn from research and debate the pros and cons of the defense arguments? Could it be that the attorney could learn more about what jurors from the community might think from six teams of bright young debaters than from a single "mock trial"?

We think the possibilities here are broad, and the great thing is that by engaging with student debaters in each of these cases the sponsor would be way ahead of where they could be with any other kind of "market research" or "issue research". Even better, this would be a great way for students in debate to perform real service to their community, and to raise money for their team's regular debate competitions in the process.

Finally, having issues raised and debated regularly in public by our brightest kids might give each us all better perspective on issues that we really care about but don't have the time to dig into. Let's ask the children to lead us, and then give them all the support they need to be able to overcome all the obstacles that will be put in their way by forces that we all know are locked and loaded to resist change in the status quo.

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Resources