

DEBATING NOTES

Important Vocabulary:

Moot: The 'topic' of the debate

Affirming: Supporting the moot.

Negating: Disagreeing with the moot.

Model: The course of action proposed by the affirmative team

Rebuttal: Points made in reply to the opposition's argument

Leader's Reply: The 1st or 2nd speaker of each team gives a short 'reply speech' at the end of the debate summing up the main points brought up in the debate, what has been said by each side, and why their team has 'won' each of those points.

Time Limits: 6 min substantive speeches, 3min leader's reply.

General points

- Structure:
 - Signposting and explicit labelling of points is always good because it helps organise your speech and create a logical structure for your argument
- Speak clearly and fluently

Types of Debates:

Model:

This type of debate is usually identified by the use of the word 'should/would' and will be about making a change from the status quo. Eg. This house would legalise euthanasia

- The Affirmative team:
 - Must identify a problem with the current situation
 - Must come up with a solution/model to deal with the problem
 - Must establish causality: show how/why model will solve the problem
 - Should illustrate benefits that accrue as a result of this proposal
- The Negating team:
 - Must minimise the problem or show why it doesn't exist
 - Must show how/why model won't work/is bad
 - Must show how even if the model did work it wouldn't solve the problem
 - Should show why benefits won't accrue
 - Should illustrate some harms from the proposal

Judgement:

This type of debate is usually identified by 'is', and usually requires a judgement to be made about something or about which is better from two options. In this type of debate it is particularly good to use a lot of examples. Eg. This house believes National is better than Labour

- The Affirmative team:
 - Should make a positive/negative judgment about the subject or show that one option is better than another
 - Should come up with criteria (usually 3 is a good number) upon which to base the judgment
- The Negating team:
 - Challenges the judgement
 - Challenges the suitability of the criteria or the decision made under each criterion
 - May bring new criteria to the debate

Speaker Roles:

- **Affirmative**
 - First Affirmative
 - Outline Context of the debate ie. explain why the issue has come up
 - Explain the problem and the need for it to be solved
 - Outline the model. Make sure it is simple, sensible and feasible or in a judgment debate, set up the criteria and explain why each is important
 - Lay out your team's case and introduce your substantive matter
 - Second Affirmative
 - Respond to attacks from the Negative team
 - Continue with substantive case of team
 - Address points in order of importance and make explicit the key issues that need to be driven home for the aff to win
 - Have cohesion with 1st affirmatives speech/points
 - Third Affirmative
 - Step back from the debate, identify key issues and show why they are important and why they fall to side affirmative
 - spend time on rebuttal to consolidate your points and defend them against the attacks to show how you have won
- **Negating**
 - First Negating
 - Rebut the affirmative team's case.
 - Critique the problem, attack the model, bring down the benefits
 - Sometimes a counter model may be introduced
 - Introduce negative team's case by way of 'harms' to the proposal
 - Second Negating
 - Continue to attack the affirmative team's case
 - Develop negative's substantive matter
 - Identify key points of clash and highlight the more important ones
 - Third Negating
 - Don't introduce new material
 - Go over rebuttal and explain difficult points
 - Spend time identifying important issues/main areas of clash and on each why negative has made superior arguments to that of the affirmative's

Replies

- Can be given by either first speaker or second speaker
- Identify overriding themes in the debate
- Link rebuttal and substantive points together and group under 'issues'
- Prioritise issues and explain why your team has successfully won on each issue

Points of Information

- These are interjections in a speaker's speech and should be phrased as questions
- Can be given between 1 and 5 minutes of substantive speeches. (Not in replies)
- Should accept 2 and give 4+ per speaker
- Can be used to disrupt the flow of the speaker, raise your own points, point out contradictions/misrepresentations/fallacies