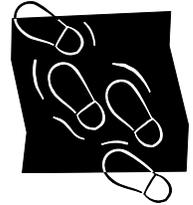




# Step-By-Step Guide to Debate



**Alberta Debate and Speech Association**

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## The Basic Philosophy of Debate

What is a debate? If you look in the dictionary you might see one of the following definitions:

- a formal discussion
- a consideration of issues
- a formal presentation of contrasting ideas.

If you ask the average person they may say that a debate is an argument. Whether you look at a debate as a discussion or an argument, a key point is the notion that it is a formal procedure. This doesn't mean that you have to wear your best clothes, but it does mean that there are certain rules and traditions...

- There are two sides in every debate. One side is called the Affirmative or Government and the other side is called the Negative or Opposition.
- Every debate has a subject which is known as the resolution or the bill. For example: *"Be it resolved that debate is the greatest activity."*
- The Affirmative always promotes the resolution, while the sole job of the Negative is to disagree, or clash, with the Affirmative.
- The role of the Affirmative is seen as more difficult because the Affirmative has fewer opportunities to win the debate. The theory here is that the principle way in which the Affirmative can win is to prove that the resolution is true. The Negative can win by attacking the issue, but can also win by attacking the Affirmative's methods, logic, definitions, evidence, and so on. This is not to say that the Negative is safe from attacks in these areas, but it tends to be the case that the Affirmative is more vulnerable to these types of attacks.
- As a result the Affirmative speaks first and last in any debate.

There are three types of debate depending on the nature of the resolution.

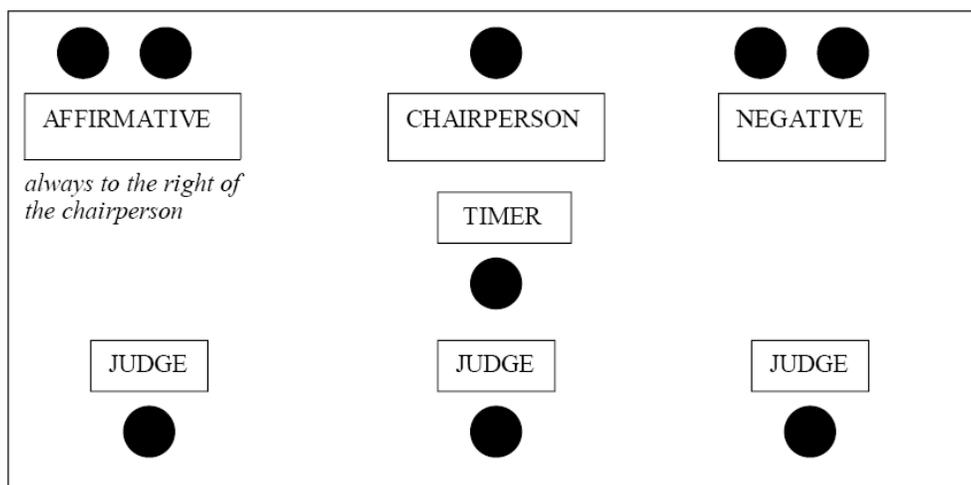
- 1) **A proposition of fact.** Resolutions of this type are not common because a debate can only occur if evidence is vague and leaves the question open. *"Be it resolved that aliens have visited the earth."*
- 2) **A proposition of value.** Propositions of value tend to be debates about opinion. *"Be it resolved that these are the best of times."*
- 3) **A proposition of policy.** Here a particular course of action is proposed. *"Be it resolved that the legal drinking age be lowered."*

This guide will deal with both propositions of value and propositions of policy.

## The Physical Layout of a Debate

For a debate to occur the following is required:

1. Two teams, one Affirmative, one Negative, each with two or three people.
2. An odd number of judges, preferably three or five. No ties are awarded this way.
3. A Chairperson/Timekeeper. This person is like the host of a talk show. He introduces the debaters and topic, starts the debate, introduces the respective speakers, and at the end, announces the Judges' decision. The Chairperson/Timekeeper also times the speeches and signals to the speaker, through a sign or signal, the amount of speaking time left.
4. A room with sufficient furniture to ensure that everyone has a seat and a bit of table space. Only one debate should occur at a time in a room; otherwise, it will be impossible to concentrate.



## A Step by Step Look at Debate

In Junior High, the Discussion format is used. The Discussion format is an introductory format and will be used as a model at this stage of the guide. A Discussion debate has certain sections:

### The Constructive Portion

Speeches in this section are called constructive because this is where the debaters build up their cases.

- 1st Affirmative Constructive Speech
- 1st Negative Constructive Speech
- 2nd Affirmative Constructive Speech
- 2nd Negative Constructive Speech

### The Discussion Period

An unstructured discussion period follows the constructive speeches. In this period, debaters may ask and answer questions, refute points or provide further evidence supporting contentions made in the constructive speeches.

No new constructive arguments or contentions can be introduced. The Chairperson controls the discussion, alternating where possible from side to side commencing with the first debater to catch his eye by raising a hand. Each contribution to the discussion may not exceed one minute.

### Five Minute Break

A time during which debaters prepare their rebuttals

### The Rebuttal Portion

In the rebuttal portion debaters summarize their arguments and rebut or attack their opponents' points. Rebuttal is not limited to this portion and debaters should not wait until the rebuttal section to rebut or refute their opponents' arguments.

- Negative Rebuttal Speech
- Affirmative Rebuttal Speech

### First Affirmative Constructive Speech

The Affirmative speaks first and last in a debate. Experts say that the Affirmative has the hardest job, so letting the Affirmative speak first makes up for this.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive Speech</b> (Jr. Beg – 5 min.) (Jr. Open – 6 min.)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction</li> <li>2. Definitions</li> <li>3. Theme/Caseline</li> <li>4. Arguments (Needs for Change)</li> <li>5. Introduce Plan</li> <li>6. Conclusion</li> </ol>

**1. Introduction**

Introduce the debate as a whole. Explain what each partner will be doing.

**2. Define the Terms of the Resolution**

Just so that we are all discussing the same thing, let’s define the major terms of the resolution. This is important because different things mean different things to different people.

For example, let’s suppose the resolution is *“Be it resolved that gambling be reduced.”*

*Gambling* could mean:

- all gambling
- legalized gambling
- illegal gambling
- all gambling except lotteries

*Reduced* could mean:

- 100% reduction
- 75% reduction
- 50% reduction

As you can see, it is important to define your terms. Remember that it is wrong to define the terms in a way that gives you an unfair advantage. For example, to define gambling as swimming in sewers is unfair, because no one will argue against reducing swimming in sewers.

**3. Theme/Caseline**

Present the BIG picture of your case. What will this debate be about?

**4. State the Need for a Change (Argument)**

As the Affirmative you are presenting a resolution which always calls for a big change to the present system or *status quo*. Before presenting your change you must explain why we need this change.

Your change must be significant; otherwise you fail to fulfill your duty as Affirmative. You are required to change the system, not make changes within the system.

**5. Introduce the Plan**

Part of the Affirmative case is to introduce a plan that will solve the need for change. The first Affirmative must present an outline of the plan so that the Opposition has an idea where the debate is going.

**6. Conclusion**

Summarize your speech and end with a punch line.

The flow sheet on the next page guides you through the duties of the other speakers.

## Policy Debate Flow Sheet

### Junior High – Discussion

**The Task of the Affirmative Team**

- The Affirmative will argue **for the resolution**
- Members of the Affirmative team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in support of the resolution
- If the Affirmative Team’s Position is, on balance, more credible than the Negative, then the Affirmative wins the debate

**The Task of the Negative Team**

- The task of the Negative is to argue **against the resolution**
- Members of the Negative team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in opposition to the Affirmative and in support of the Negative position
- If, on balance, the Negative’s Team Position is more credible than the Affirmative, then the Negative team wins the debate.

1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative (Beg – 5 min, Open – 6 min)	1 <sup>st</sup> Negative (Beg – 5 min, Open – 6 min)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative (Beg – 5 min, Open – 6 min)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative (Beg – 5 min, Open – 6 min)	Discussion (10 min)	Break (5 min)	Negative Rebuttal (1 <sup>st</sup> Negative) (Beg – 4 min, Open – 5 min)	Affirmative Rebuttal (1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative) (Beg – 4 min, Open – 5 min)
Introduction	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction	All four debaters remain seated. The debaters raise their hands, and upon being recognized by the chair/timer, proceed to ask and respond to questions from their opponents. When a debater is finished answering a question, he/she may then ask a question and so on. All four debaters should show participation.	Debaters use this time to work on rebuttal.	Both rebuttals summarize their position and point out the basic flaws of the opposition.	No new arguments can be introduced.
Definitions	If necessary, attack definitions	Show unity with Caseline	Show unity with Caseline				
Theme/Caseline	Theme/Caseline	Clash with Negative arguments	Clash with Affirmative arguments				
Needs for change (arguments) – why is present system bad	Clash with Affirmative arguments	Additional needs for change (arguments)	Further status quo benefits				
Introduce Plan	If necessary, counterplan. Otherwise defend status quo	The Plan	Attack the Plan and the benefits				
		Benefits of Plan					
Conclusion	Conclusion	Conclusion	Conclusion	Explain why your team should win and the other team should lose.	Remind the judges of your arguments.	Tell the judges why they should believe your arguments even after the other team’s attack.	Explain why the judges should not listen to the other team.
						Review critical evidence.	

## Formats of Debate in Alberta

The following shall be the formats for English junior high debate which shall normally encompass participants from grades 6-9.

### Junior High Discussion (2 Person Teams)

	Beginner Level	Open Level
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive	5 min	6 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive	5 min	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive	5 min	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative Constructive	5 min	6 min
Discussion Period	10 min	10 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Rebuttal Speech by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative	4 min	5 min
Rebuttal Speech by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative	4 min	5 min

### Junior High Cross-Examination (2 Person Teams)

	Beginner Level	Open Level
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive	5 min	6 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative	2 min	3 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive	5 min	6 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative	2 min	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive	5 min	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative	2 min	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative Constructive	5 min	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative cross-examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative	2 min	3 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Rebuttal Speech by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative	4 min	4 min
Rebuttal Speech by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative	4 min	4 min

The following shall be the formats for English senior high debate which shall normally encompass participants from grades 10-12.

### Senior High Cross-Examination (2 Person Teams)

	Beginner Level	Open Level
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive	6 min	7 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative	3 min	3 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive	6 min	7 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative	3 min	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive	6 min	7 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative	3 min	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative Constructive	6 min	7 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative cross-examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative	3 min	3 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Rebuttal Speech by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative	4 min	4 min
Rebuttal Speech by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative	4 min	4 min

### Senior High – Parliamentary Style (2 Person Teams)

Prime Minister Introduction	5 min
First Opposition	8 min
Second Government Speech	8 min
Leader of Opposition Speech (The last three minutes of the speech will constitute the official rebuttal and must not include any new constructive arguments)	8 min
Prime Minister's Official Rebuttal	3 min

The following format should be used for Bilingual senior high cross-examination debate:

**Bilingual Senior High Cross-Examination (2 person teams)**

	<b>Beginner</b>	<b>Open</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive in French (Definitions in both languages)	6 min	7 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by Second Negative in French	3 min	3 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive in French	6 min	7 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative in French	3 min	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive in French	6 min	7 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative in French	3 min	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative Constructive in French	6 min	7 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative cross-examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative in French	3 min	3 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Rebuttal by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative in English	4 min	4 min
Rebuttal by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative in English	4 min	4 min

The following format should be used for Bilingual junior high debate (both categories):

**Bilingual Junior High Discussion (2 person teams)**

	<b>Beginner</b>	<b>Open</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive in French	5 min	6 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive in French	5 min	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive in French	5 min	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative Constructive in French	5 min	6 min
Discussion Period (Debaters must show an ability and willingness to use both French and English)	10 min	10 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Rebuttal by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative in English	4 min	5 min
Rebuttal by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative in English	4 min	5 min

**Bilingual Junior High Cross-Examination**

	<b>(Both Categories)</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Construction in French (Definitions in both languages)	6 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by Second Negative in French	3 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive in French	6 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Negative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative in French	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive in French	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative cross-examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative in French	3 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative Constructive in French	6 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Negative cross-examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative in French	3 min
Break	5 min
Rebuttal by 1 <sup>st</sup> Negative in English	4 min
Rebuttal by 1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative in English	4 min

**Clash**

A debate is not the same thing as a speech. Two people can disagree, give speeches, but still not be debating.

Debating requires that participants:

1. Listen carefully to what their opponent is saying  
*and*
2. Respond specifically and directly to the statements and attacks of the opponent.

***That is what is known as "CLASH"***

The failure by either the Negative or the Affirmative to respond to key arguments of the opponents can be grounds on which to decide the outcome of the debate.

With the exception of the 1st Affirmative, all speakers must, to some degree, "clash". This means that only the 1st Affirmative speech can be written beforehand. Therefore debating requires that speakers must create their speeches on the spot.

For example, let's suppose you are the 1<sup>st</sup> Negative Speaker:

- Now you understand the issues but you don't know exactly what the 1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative is going to say. Let's pretend that the resolution is: *"Be it resolved that the legal drinking age be changed."*
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative could raise or lower the drinking age and you don't know which she will do. As a result you can't possibly write your speech beforehand.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative gives her speech... now you have to respond...

What do you do?

Let's pretend for a moment that you have a video cassette recorder and have taped the 1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative's speech and you can stop the tape at any time.

In theory you could replay the tape and write your speech ... being sure to respond to all the Affirmative's points.

A "cheaper" technique exists which will allow you to respond and "Clash" and it is called Flow Sheeting.

A flow sheet is kind of like a cheap video tape recorder... it allows you to record what the other guy said and to let you think about what you want to say.

For a flow sheet use a good size piece of paper. Some people use scrap books, others use 8½ x 11 inch paper.

When your opponent gets up to give a speech - place your flow sheet on the table where both team members can see it.

The two team members can either run a flow sheet jointly or each run their own.

THEM	US
<p><b>Needs for change:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Traffic deaths</i></li> <li>2. <i>Teenage alcoholism</i></li> </ol> <p><b>Plan:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Raise the legal drinking age to 20</i></li> <li>2. <i>Better alcohol education</i></li> </ol>	

As the "THEM" side is being filled in the member of your team who will speak can fill out the points he wishes to make on the "US" side. (See below)

THEM	US
<p><b>Needs for change:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. <i>Traffic deaths</i></li> <li>4. <i>Teenage alcoholism</i></li> </ol> <p><b>Plan:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. <i>Raise the legal drinking age to 20</i></li> <li>4. <i>Better alcohol education</i></li> </ol>	<p><i>Problems occur with all age groups, not just young people (read quote). Too much alcohol in society as a whole.</i></p> <p><i>Won't solve problem.</i></p> <p><i>Good idea but we can do this without changing drinking age, so there!</i></p>

Your flow sheet provides you with a framework on which to base your speech and your future discussion or cross-examination questions. Laid out in front of you are the opponents' points and your responses to them.

All you need to make a speech out of this is a little understanding of how a speech should be organized. Not only are your opponents flow sheeting or “flowing” your debate, but so are the judges.

The more organized your material is the more readily judges will respond positively to your material. There is an old saying that all speeches should be organized along the following principles:

1. Tell them what you are going to tell them about;
2. Tell them;
3. Tell them what you told them.

This corresponds to the notion in writing that there are three parts to all essays:

- The Introduction
- The Body
- The Conclusion

Let’s use the example again of the 1<sup>st</sup> Negative speaker who is going to give a speech based on the flow sheet created during the debate, and which we created on the last page. Based on the flow sheet shown you might hear the following speech:

---

#### Introduction

*Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.*

*In my speech I would like first to respond to the Affirmative needs for change and then second to respond to the Affirmative plan.*

#### Body

*The Affirmative presented two needs for change, traffic deaths and teenage alcoholism. These problems are not specifically related to a particular age group, but rather are problems that affect all of society.*

*The Affirmative plan to raise the drinking age won’t solve the problem and, as for the idea of more education, this can be achieved under the present system.*

#### Conclusion

*The needs presented and the plan are no good; we can make minor repairs and do more to help people; therefore the Affirmative’s case must fall.*

---

Students should strive to incorporate this type of structure into their speeches. This is easy to say when you have time to write it out, but it may be a different matter when you try it for the first time.

## Gathering Information

There is nothing worse than a debater who doesn’t know the material. You can’t answer or ask questions and it is difficult to make intelligent comments.

Let’s work through some steps...

### **1. Talk to people**

This is the most important step. Talk to people who know something about the topic. They can tell you what is important, current or noteworthy on a particular issue.

- a) First talk to parents and your teachers - they can get you started.

- b) Telephone:
- Reporters at newspapers or T.V. and radio stations;
  - Anyone working in the area you are studying;
  - University professors;
  - Provincial or federal offices. Federal and Provincial Government offices have information on just about everything. Check your phone book for the number of the Government Inquiry Centre.

## 2. Collect Information

Information can also be obtained from the following sources:

- a) All government offices will mail information;
- b) People you visit will often supply copies or direct you to where you can get material.
- c) The library (if in doubt talk to the librarian) - books, magazines, government information.
- d) The Internet

Remember: You must establish the credibility of your Internet sources as you would for any other source.

For the purposes of authentication, bring to the debate a hard copy of any e-mail correspondence including the source's email address or a printout of the web page your evidence is from including the URL of the site.

## 3. Sorting Information

This is more important than it sounds. The trick to debating is having the right facts and knowing where they are when you need them.

- a) Read/skim all information;
- b) Discard useless material
- c) Make note of material more suited for Affirmative arguments or Negative arguments by highlighting or making notes.
- d) The theory in debate is that you are familiar with the issues and can discuss them casually without notes. When you make a specific point you will require evidence. Specific points should be recorded on cards.

## 4. Formulate Arguments

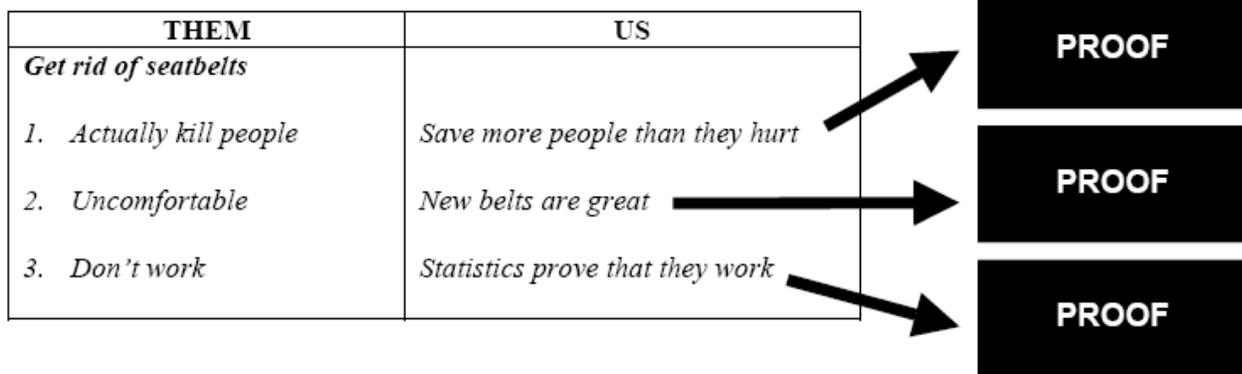
You are now ready to formulate your cases:

As the Negative you must be prepared for anything which the Affirmative could bring up. If you have done your research you will have a fair idea as to what alternatives the Affirmative has. All you can do now is wait to hear their case. Remember that, in addition to attacking the Affirmative, you may wish to present material defending the present system.

As the Affirmative you will have to pick the case or cases which you are most comfortable with. You must always consider what the Negative will say. The first Affirmative speech may be prepared ahead of time. If you use a "Needs Case" the second member is presenting the plan; the plan part of her speech can also be prepared ahead of time.

With the exception of the above noted instances, debaters should not prepare speeches ahead of time. Given the nature of debate, (the emphasis on confrontation) familiarity with issues is the key aspect of preparation.

As a speaker you now have two aids, a flow sheet and evidence cards.



## Delivery

### Speech Mechanics

Physical mannerisms of your voice and body can either distract people or intensify their enjoyment of your speech. It is important to realize this and observe the rules of good speech mechanics.

#### Stance

- Stand firmly on two feet - do not lean or slouch.
- Avoid leaning on chairs or tables.
- Hands - best clasped in front of you, moving them for useful and effective gestures when necessary. Keeping hands out of pockets looks best.
- Use of a lectern - use only when you have to rely on notes. Avoid its use when possible by moving it away or stepping in front of it.

#### Appearance

- Dress neatly and attractively.
- Appearance and dress can influence your audience no matter who is in attendance.

#### Look at the Audience

- Do not look at only one or two people or only at one side of your audience. Your eyes should constantly rove over the entire group.
- Watch the audience carefully for reaction - you should be able to easily detect boredom, lack of understanding, interest or annoyance.
- Do not keep your eyes glued to notes or read notes at length - this is a certain way to lose the attention of your audience.

#### Volume

- Speak loudly enough for all to clearly hear. Do not be afraid to use extra volume to emphasize, but lowering your voice to barely a whisper can be effective as a technique for emphasis providing you have the full attention of your audience to start with.
- In general, vary the volume and pace of speaking according to what you want to stress.

#### Pace of Speaking

- Do not speak too quickly. The biggest danger will arise when you are reading since the rate of speech always increases when material is being read.
- Speak slowly when you want to emphasize something, or have complex information to present such as statistics.
- As stated about volume, the important rule is variety.

#### Pause

- The finest speakers use pauses to emphasize something. The pause can be in the middle or at the end of a sentence.
- Practice the effective use of pauses and listen to the way good speakers use them.

### Use of Questions

- Use of rhetorical questions involves your audience in your speech.

*"Ladies and Gentlemen. What is the greatest problem facing native groups today? Is it lack of education? Is it lack of opportunity? Is it a dying culture? Is it a lazy and disinterested and apathetic government? It is none of these. It is rather the..."*

### Facial Expressions

- You can do a great deal with your eyes and smile; a smile early in your speech can do wonders.
- Set the mood of your talk or parts of it with the way you look at the audience.

### Gestures

- Emphasis and expression with the hands is another technique found with all good speakers.
- Gestures should be relevant and varied. They should never be distracting or annoying.

### Nervousness

Ways to reduce nervousness include:

- Knowing what you are going to say. Thorough preparation usually eliminates all nervousness except the momentary feeling at the start of the talk.
- Taking a few deep breaths before standing to speak.
- Relaxing in the knowledge that every speaker (even the greatest) is nervous.
- Most nervousness does not show as much as you think it does. Just keep talking as though it was not there.

### Notes

- Do not use cumbersome, distracting sheets of paper, small cards are recommended.
- Do not hold cards low or rest them on the table.
- Do not worry about people knowing that you need to rely on notes - it is better for your head to be up so that your voice can carry.
- Do not write your speech out word for word or else you will be tempted to read it. A few general headings on cards which you can glance down at occasionally will free your eyes for good audience contact.

### Spontaneity

- Do not feel you have to keep to a carefully prepared script. If new and relevant thoughts occur, you can make use of them.

### Humor

- Entertaining speeches require careful preparation. One can be humorous and entertaining and still have a serious and worthwhile message. Keep your humor relevant and suited to the audience. You can entertain just as well with witty choice of words and style of presentation (effective use pauses), as with a joke. Avoid sarcasm.

### Microphone

- Raise it to just below the level of your mouth. Know how to adjust the level of the microphone and its height before you stand to speak. Keep 15 - 30 centimeters away from the microphone.
- Always look beyond the microphone to your audience when you speak. Do not step away from the microphone or sway while you speak

## Strategy in Values & Policy Debates

### Value Versus Policy Debates

**Values Debate** (known as Lincoln-Douglas in the USA) is one of the oldest forms of debate. It is a form of debate where the arguments revolve around a central debatable idea rather than a specific course of action. This central idea, or resolution, tends to be structured as one of three types:

### **Proposition of Value**

A resolution that discusses a statement based on the values of one group of people. "Software piracy is wrong" is a classic proposition of value. The resolution is structured so that the Affirmative has a clear position, but the negative has more flexibility.

### **Proposition in Opposition**

A resolution that states two opposing viewpoints and rates one a superior to the other. For example "Multiculturalism is more important than unity" forces the Affirmative to argue that the value of multiculturalism and the Negative to uphold the value of assimilation. The crux of this style debate revolves around the word "more" and comparative value.

### **General Proposition**

General proposition resolutions are used exclusively for values debate that is not prepared in advance (impromptu). Resolutions are typically general, and often quotations. A resolution like "Might makes right" is typical of this style of debate. This is the most difficult of the three styles because both sides have more challenging jobs. The affirmative must create a definition that links to the resolution then shift the debate to a topic that is debatable. The negative does not know what this will be in advance, and so must be prepared to debate anything. Please see the section on definition for further information.

### **Cases**

In policy debate, the affirmative presents a concrete case, often involving needs for change, and always involving a plan. In values debate, plans are not used. Rather both sides debate the merit of the resolution from a philosophical perspective. As a result, the burden of proof is different. Since the affirmative is no longer required to suggest a significant change and formulate a plan, the affirmative team no longer has a more difficult job. The Negative cannot just base a case on refutation; it must also have a constructive case of its own. The negative and affirmative must each make their own side into the most attractive position.

#### *Key Affirmative Questions:*

- Policy Debate: What is the problem and what specific steps will we use to solve it?
- Values Debate: What viewpoint is the best?

#### *Key Negative Questions:*

- Policy Debate: What is wrong with the affirmative case and why?
- Values Debate: What viewpoint is the best?

### **Proof**

The way argumentation is constructed in policy and values debate is different. In policy debate, the debater makes an argument, then gives a quotation or statistic to defend it. In values debate, the case often hinges on foundational arguments, ones that must be true for the case to be true, for example, a philosophical argument saying that all people are created equal to one another. Proof more often takes the form of rhetoric or philosophical quotations.

### **Definitions**

The most difficult element of values debate to master is the creation of good definitions. In values debate, since the issue of "best" is often central, exactly what you are discussing is key. However, definitions are difficult to master, as the types of values debate require different types of definitions:

*Propositions of Value and Propositions in Opposition* require clear, tight definitions. A word like better might be defined as "superior to" in policy debate. In values debate, how it is superior must be built into the definitions. Better might be defined as "more likely to result in profit" or "less likely to result in loss of life". *However, debaters cannot force their oppositions to deal with unfair definitions. Since the rules for these are the same in values and policy debates, debaters should carefully read the Rules section of this guide before proceeding with values debate.*

*General Proposition* resolutions are ones where a link is made between the statement in the resolution and the statement to be debated. For example, a resolution might be "It's not easy being green". The affirmative starts by thinking of logical interpretations of the word green, like jealous, rich, or environmentally conscious. Then they reword the resolution to make it into either a proposition of value or a proposition in opposition. The new wording might be something like "It is fiscally difficult (it's not easy) for Canadian Companies to be environmentally responsible (be green)". This rewording is acceptable because there is a clear link to the original resolution, it is tightly defined, and there is a good opposing side.

### **Steps in General Proposition Definitions**

1. Brainstorm links to resolution
2. Select a link
3. Tighten your definitions
4. Check to be sure there is an opposing side
5. Build your case

Often debaters have 10 minutes from when they hear a resolution in Impromptu values debate to when they must start debating. A good Affirmative team should spend at least half of that time preparing definitions.

Sample Prime Minister's Speech for "It is not easy being green":

*"Madame Speaker. Throughout the world, there is growing pressure on us all to consider the environmental impact of our actions. When we on side Government hear that it is not easy being green, we agree. Green, of course, is being environmentally responsible, and that is the direction this debate will take. We define "it's not easy" to mean it is fiscally difficult, and "green" to be environmentally responsible. Is specific, we would like to look at Canadian companies. We contend that it is very difficult for Canadian companies to be green given the current climate, and that this responsibility must rest with individual consumers."*

In this example, the Prime Minister has changed a general proposition into a proposition in opposition and can now start building the case.

As the Negative or Opposition, a team must record the exact wording of the definitions then check it against the rules to be sure it is fair. While debates about definition hurt everyone, the Negative must contest the definitions in the first negative speech if they will be contested at all.

Once the Negative hears the opening of the Affirmative case, they need to quickly decide what their case will be. Sometimes the resolution forces a position on the negative, in other resolutions the negative gets to choose a direction. Negative teams should use common arguments as the basis for their case when they are struggling.

### **Squirreling**

Squirreling is the act of taking a general proposition and fitting it to a case that was prepared in advance. While some regions of Canada permit squirreling, it is not permitted in Alberta.

Although both policy and values debates discuss the motion that something is true or false, right or wrong, good or bad, etc., the policy related topics generally require that the Affirmative, in addition to proving that something is true, right, or good, etc., must present a plan so that we can all enjoy the benefits of the Affirmative's beliefs.

Before proceeding, it is important to realize that, regardless of the strategy used, the Affirmative carries the obligation to make major changes for significant reasons. Regardless of the strategy we must be convinced by the Affirmative that there is a valid reason to change, be it a need for change, or an advantage derived from that change.

In addition to making a change, the Affirmative must ensure that the change is major or significant. A major change is one in which one system is exchanged for another. Changes within the system are minor and should not be introduced by the Affirmative unless they are part of the package which includes major changes. Failure to present a major change is a win to the Negative.

## **Discussion & Cross-Examination**

### **Introduction**

#### Discussion: What is It?

The discussion period is a single period that occurs at the end of the final constructive speech and before the five minute break.

In this period, debaters may ask and answer questions, refute or provide further evidence supporting contentions made in the constructive speeches. No new constructive arguments or contentions can be introduced. The Chairperson shall control the discussion, alternating where possible from side to side, commencing with the first debater who catches his eye. Each contribution to the discussion may not exceed one minute.

#### Cross-Examination: What is It?

Cross-examination is a three minute period at the end of each constructive speech during which the individual who has just spoken is cross-examined by a member of the opposing team. The speaking order for cross-examination style debate is listed in "Formats of Debate in Alberta."

#### Why?

*Many debaters and coaches believe cross-examination and discussion are much more exciting formats because it allows for direct confrontation between the debaters. Many feel that it is an opportunity to clarify issues and question evidence directly rather than asking for such information during actual speeches.*

Fryar & Thomas, Basic Debate, 1980

*No substitution has ever been found for cross-examination or discussion as a means of separating truth from falsehood and of reducing exaggerated statements to their true dimension.*

Terry, Modern Debate Case Techniques, 1978

#### Cross-Examination and Discussion can be used:

- to collect further information;
- to determine whether there is adequate evidence
- to support the points (contentions) made;
- to show lack of information and preparation;
- to challenge the feasibility and desirability of the plan;
- to challenge the benefits of the plan;
- to demonstrate contradictions;
- to demonstrate lack of logic;
- to point out new harms of plan.

This all sounds great... but how do you do it? Let's work through a few steps...

### **The Purpose of Cross-Examination**

Each debater should think of themselves as an advertising agency. Your objective is to sell your product as effectively as possible in the time which you are given.

Think of each speech as air time in which you can promote your product. The cross-examination period should be thought of as a period during which rival companies are competing for the same air time, with whoever dominating that time successfully selling their product.

Following this line of reasoning your object in cross-examination is to sell your product and to discredit the product of your opponent. (If this sounds just like debate in general you're right!)

Many people see cross-examination as a period they have to "survive." In fact, the ideas and arguments in your speeches are the material on which the discussion and cross-examination is based. In other words, in cross-examination you try to reinforce, expand and develop your constructive speeches.

### **Objective**

As the questioner, your objective in discussion or cross-examination is to attack the case of the opposition and to prepare the audience for the next speech given by your team.

As the witness, your objective is to rebuff the attacks of the cross-examiner and to convince the audience that your case is the best case.

## How To Do It

The first step is to be familiar with the subject. If the issue regards left-handed jack hammers, then you should be reasonably familiar with left-handed jack hammers.

Develop general lines of questions in response to the major issues that you perceive will arise. Just as the Negative speeches attack the needs and the plan, the Negative cross-examinations must attack the needs, the plan and, if necessary, the resolution. By the same token, just as the Affirmative constructive speeches attack the present system and the Negative's minor repairs (or the counterplan) ... so the Affirmative's cross-examination must attack the present system and the Negative's minor repairs (or counterplan).

For example, say the debate concerns whether or not legalized gambling should be eliminated. Say that you are the Negative and the Affirmative will argue to abolish legalized gambling. After doing your research you establish the following possible needs for change:

- Too many people addicted to gambling
- Unfairly taxing poor people
- Makes people dream

The Negative in their cross-examination must attack the needs; therefore questions such as the following would be asked:

- How many people are addicted?
- Who says that too many are addicted?
- If gambling is a voluntary tax, how can it be unfair?
- How are these taxes spent? Are they spent beneficially?
- What is wrong with people dreaming?

Although prior preparation is encouraged, this should not preclude spontaneous response to issues that arise. Debaters may also wish to ask simple questions regarding a quote, a statistic, or a point they require clarification on.

### Some Points to Keep in Mind

- a) All questions should be related to central issues. Questions should be prepared with regard to the type of admissions or information you wish to obtain.
- b) Preparation must be thorough enough to enable one to deal with unexpected answers.
- c) Questions should be specific, and the intent should be clear. Questions should not be open-ended, permitting long answers by witnesses.
- d) Plan a series of questions to deal with anticipated weak areas.
- e) Type or write questions on file cards or in a small notebook.
- f) Address the audience and judges as well as the examiner.
- g) All questions fairly asked should be answered in the same fashion. Stalling, irrelevancy, flippancy or answering questions with another question are quite unacceptable. Judges will penalize debaters for such actions.
- h) The witness is not obliged to provide a yes or no answer. If it is necessary, she can qualify her answer.
- i) If a question contains more than one question, ask the questioner which of the several questions she wants answered.
- j) Judges are instructed to invoke heavy penalties for sarcasm, browbeating, discourtesy or other attempts to discredit an opponent.
- k) Never ask a question for which you have no notion of the answer.
- l) Learn how to shift from one question to another. Do not spend too much time on a question once it is apparent that you cannot obtain the answer you want.

## Rules of Discussion Style Debate

1. In this style of debate, each debater is expected to deliver a constructive speech and to rebut the arguments of the opposing team. After the first four speeches, a 10 minute discussion period is held in which a debater may, after being called upon by the moderator, make a comment or pose a question to an opposing debater.
2. The debate will be presided over by the moderator. The affirmative team shall sit on the right side of the moderator and the negative team shall sit on the left. Debaters will speak only when called upon by the moderator.

3. Debaters should always preface their remarks by addressing the moderator. They may also acknowledge the presence of the judges, though this is not mandatory. All references to other debaters should be made in the third person.
4. Discussion period:
  - During the discussion period, the moderator will call on the debaters to ask questions or make comments.
  - She will attempt to ensure that each debater is offered an equal amount of time in which to ask or answer questions. Questions should alternate from side to side.
  - Debaters should raise their hand, and upon being recognized by the moderator, proceed to ask, and respond to questions by their opponents.
  - Each contribution should not exceed one minute.
  - When questioning, the questioner should ask questions rather than make speeches. He/she may not insist on a yes or no answer.
  - The debater being questioned must answer any questions asked. Answers should not be longer than a sentence or two.
  - No new constructive arguments may be introduced during the discussion period, although new evidence may be used.
  - Judges should penalize debaters for a lack of participation.
5. Following the discussion period, the first debater for each team makes a team rebuttal and summary speech. During the rebuttal speech, debaters may not bring up any new arguments or new evidence except in direct refutation of material which has already been presented.
6. No points of order, privilege or heckles are permitted.
7. At the conclusion of the debate, the moderator will ask the debaters if there were any serious rules violations made by their opponents. Each team will be allowed to speak only once. The judges will determine if the infraction is legitimate, and whether any action is appropriate.

### **Rules of Cross-Examination Style Debate**

1. Cross-Examination style debate requires all debaters to ask and answer questions as well as to perform the usual functions of a debater. "Cross-examination" means simply the questioning of an opponent: the questioner is referred to as the "examiner" while the "witness" replies to the questions asked.
2. The debate will be presided over by Madam Moderator. The affirmative team sits on the right hand side of the moderator; the negative team sits on the left.
3. The resolution for a cross-examination debate may take the form of a question; in this case, the affirmative team supports an affirmative answer to that question.
4. Debaters shall refer to the moderator by title, "Madam Moderator," but may refer to one another by their given names.
5. Debaters shall treat one another with dignity and judges should penalize debaters guilty of flippancy, discourtesy, browbeating or any attempt to belittle another debater. The moderator shall also attempt to protect debaters from such abuse.
6. Debaters will speak only when called upon by the moderator.
7. The affirmative must define the resolution. Their definition must be accepted unless it is undebatable or unreasonable. In cross-examination style debates, there is no opportunity for the negative team to formally object to the definition of the resolution. If there is a problem with the definition, the first negative speaker should state this in her/his speech. He/she should explain why the definition is wrong or unreasonable. They must, however, debate on those terms. The judges will take the conflicting definitions under consideration when scoring the debate.
8. If the debate is a policy debate (i.e. one in which the affirmative comes up with a plan or method of implementing the resolution), the negative may choose to propose a counter-plan. A counter-plan is a significantly different way of carrying out the resolution. If the negative does this, the debate becomes an argument about which is the better plan.

9. The examiner shall control a cross-examination. During questioning, the questioner should ask questions rather than make speeches. He/she may not insist on a yes or no answer and must allow the debater being questioned sufficient time to explain his/her answer. He/she may not ask any questions of a personal nature. The examiner should ask fair questions on relevant subjects.
10. The only question that a witness may ask during cross-examination is for a confusing question to be clarified. He or she may not answer a question by asking a question.
11. The examiner should ask fair questions on relevant subjects, but questions need not relate to the speech just delivered by the witness. Unless the examiner or his or her colleagues relate them to the resolution during the debate, of course, the question may carry no weight with the judges.
12. The debater being questioned must answer any questions, regardless of apparent relevance as long as they are not of a personal nature. He/she may request that the question be clarified but should not use this as a delaying tactic. Stalling will be penalized. Answers should not be longer than a sentence or two.
13. Witnesses must try to answer all questions directly and honestly: they should be penalized for evading questions or giving untruthful answers. Witnesses may not object to answering questions on the grounds that they are irrelevant or unfair.
14. The moderator shall not intervene when irrelevant remarks are made but if they are in response to a pertinent question, on the request of the examiner, he or she shall order the witness to answer the question directly.
15. During a cross-examination, examiners may only ask questions; accordingly, they should be penalized for making speeches or rebutting at this time. Judges shall evaluate examiners solely on their ability to elicit admissions from witnesses and must disregard any argument or evidence introduced by an examiner during a cross-examination period.
16. No heckling, Points of Order or Privilege, or other interjections are permitted. At the conclusion of each debate the moderator will give each debater an opportunity to point out any infractions of the rules or misrepresentation of his or her position by his or her opponents. When alleging such an infraction, a debater must identify the specific debate rule that has been broken or his or her remark that has been misconstrued and the debater accused of the violation or misrepresentation should be given an opportunity to defend himself or herself. The Moderator shall not rule on any such objections.
17. The functions of rebuttal, defence and summarization may be divided by the members of each team and, if so, judges will score debaters on how well they discharge their respective responsibilities.
18. During the rebuttal speeches, debaters may not bring up any new arguments or new evidence except in direct refutation of material which has already been presented.

## Parliamentary Debate

### Format

#### The Government

**Purpose:** In Parliamentary debate the Government presents, defends and attempts to pass the bill before the House (convince the judges that the bill "must stand"). Since the onus is on the Government to prove its case – making it more vulnerable to attack -the Government team should bear in mind the importance of *connection* and *expansion*. Arguments presented in Government speeches should be connected. Each speech should make and expand one or two key points. Strong, well-documented points are needed to withstand the rebuttal of a skilled Opposition.

#### The Prime Minister

The Prime Minister is responsible for introducing and defining the bill. A bill that is not carefully defined becomes wide open to attack from the Opposition, while a well-defined bill is an asset to the Government. In

her speech, the Prime Minister should keep in mind that one or two solid points - emphatically made and documented - are usually more effective than five or six brief, imprecise points.

It is very important that the Prime Minister make effective use of her three-minute rebuttal. She should identify the one or two basic arguments or themes of the Opposition and shatter them.

#### Second Government Member

The second member should first re-enforce his partner's points and connect his speech to hers and to the bill. He should then clash with key arguments introduced by the first Opposition speaker and refute Opposition arguments that threaten those of the Prime Minister or of his own. He should conclude by reiterating the main points made by the Government, crystallizing these in the minds of the judges.

#### The Opposition

**Purpose:** The chief objective of the Opposition is to prevent the Government's bill from being accepted by the House (the judges). To accomplish this, the Opposition should refute the key Government arguments in support of the bill and introduce and document counter-arguments that convince the judges that the Government's resolution "must fall". Note that the Opposition, like the Government, is a two-person team. The contentions and counter-arguments in both speeches should be coherent and complementary. Two unrelated speeches by teammates are not very effective.

#### First Opposition Member

The first Opposition speaker has several key duties. First, he must disagree with the bill and state his reasons for doing so. It also helps to pave the way for his partner's arguments by outlining the line of reasoning she will take.

He should then examine and attack the Prime Minister's speech. He may disagree with the Prime Minister's definition and may present his own terms of reference, if necessary.

The tone of the Opposition's arguments should be established early. By the time that the first Opposition speaker has finished, he should have crushed the Prime Minister's key arguments, built a convincing list of his own points and paved the way for his partner's speech.

#### Leader of the Opposition

Rebuttal is the key here, but she should attack all of the Government arguments presented during the debate. She should identify core themes among the Government arguments and attack them. It is most advantageous if she can convince the judges that the entire Government case stands or falls on one or two key points and then undermine their validity.

The Leader of the Opposition speaker should review the main points of her partner's speech and then flesh out the Opposition's overall case - providing coherence and unity.

She should bear in mind that she represents the Opposition's last opportunity to score the telling blow against the Government.

#### **Rules for Parliamentary Debate**

1. The moderator of a Parliamentary debate is called the "Speaker" and all debaters must address themselves to "Mr. [or Madam] Speaker" at the outset of their speeches. The affirmative side is called the "Government" while the "Opposition" represents the negative. Participants in the debate and members of the audience are referred to collectively as the "House" while the resolution is simply termed the "Bill". Debaters must always refer to one another in the third person (for example, "the Prime Minister", "Leader of the Opposition", "Minister of Communications", "Honourable Member from Ecum Secum", "second speaker for Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition"), preferably by position. They must not call other debaters by their real names.
2. The House shall be assumed to be the House of Commons of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada at the present time unless otherwise specified by the Director, though debaters are not assumed to be the particular politicians or parties currently in power or opposition.

3. The Government team shall sit on the right side of the Speaker. The Opposition team shall sit on the left side.
4. Members will speak only when called upon by the Speaker, except for points of order or privilege.
5. When reprimanded by the Speaker, a debater should immediately apologize to the House. If a member becomes unruly or refuses to obey him or her, the Speaker may have the Sergeant-at-Arms remove the offender from the House by "naming" him or her (that is, referring to him or her by his or her real name). A debater who has been expelled from a contest in this manner may not return to the House for the duration of the debate, except with the permission of the Director.
6. Debaters shall not use any unparliamentary language (that is, foul, profane or offensive language or words abusing the House, any member thereof, the King or Queen, or a government official).
7. Only one debater at a time may hold the floor of the House. As soon as another member rises and addresses himself to the Speaker, an interrupted debater shall surrender the floor by sitting. The timer should stop the clock when a debater is interrupted, and start it again when he/she resumes.
8. A member may raise only two types of points: Points of Order and Points of Privilege. There may be only one point on the floor at a time; points are not debatable and the Speaker will rule on each independently. The time taken to raise, consider and rule on any point shall not be included in the interrupted debater's speaking time. Continual use of trivial points should be penalized.
  - (a) A Point of Order may be raised to draw the Speaker's attention to a breach of any of the rules of debating except repetition or irrelevance, and may involve misconduct by a person other than the debater interrupted. While a debater must raise such a point immediately after a rule has been contravened, the Speaker may also call a member to order on his or her own initiative.
  - (b) Points of Privilege include misquoting or misrepresenting an opponent (but not misinterpreting his or her remarks), referring to a member incorrectly, and slandering a member. No member may raise such a point on behalf of another member.

To raise a Point of Order, a debater shall stand and say, "Mr. [or Madam] Speaker, I rise on a Point of Order." A debater who is interrupted by such an objection shall immediately surrender the floor by sitting down. The Speaker will then recognize the complainant and request, "Please explain your point." After the complainant has explained his or her objection, the Speaker shall rule whether the point was "Well taken" (valid) or "Not well taken". Finally, the Speaker will call upon the interrupted debater to continue delivering his or her speech. Similar procedures are to be followed for Points of Privilege.
9. Points should neither be too frequent nor trivial.
10. The Government must define the resolution. Their definition is expected to be reasonable and must be accepted unless it is undebatable. If the Opposition wishes to challenge the definition, they must do so by rising on a Point of Order immediately after the definition has been completed by the Prime Minister. In such cases, the Speaker will decide if the definition is reasonable. Debaters should remember that all Speakers will be students, not experts in debate definitions. It is in the best interests of all debate teams to avoid turning a debate into a battle over definitions.
11. If the debate is a policy debate, in which the Government comes up with a plan for implementing the resolution, the Opposition may choose to propose a counter-plan. A counter-plan is a significantly different way of carrying out the resolution. If the Opposition does this, the debate becomes an argument about which is the better plan.
12. During the final rebuttal speeches presented by the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister, debaters may not bring up any new arguments or new evidence except in direct refutation of material which has already been presented.

## Advanced Debate Styles

### Canadian Student Debating Federation Styles

The CSDF National Seminar uses cross-examination, parliamentary and academic styles. The first two styles are similar to what is practiced in Alberta. Generally the speaking times and rules are the same, but there are a few exceptions. Sometimes heckling and questions are not allowed in Parliamentary style and there may be protected time during certain speeches. In cross-examination style, debaters may be required to give a Cambridge format rebuttal. However, the rules do change from year to year, so debaters should always check with the CSDF for the latest guidelines. The third style, Academic, is sometimes referred to as "Classical" or "Platform" style debating. In this style, each debater is expected to deliver a constructive speech and to rebut. General debate rules of conduct apply.

#### **Rule Infractions**

Since there are no Points of Order or Privilege, at the conclusion of each debate the moderator will give each debater an opportunity to point out any infraction of the rules or misrepresentation of his or her position by his or her opponents. When alleging such an infraction, a debater must identify the specific debate rule that has been broken or his or her remark that has been misconstrued and the debater accused of the violation or misrepresentation should be given an opportunity to defend himself or herself. The Moderator shall not rule on any such objections.

#### **Heckling**

Heckling may or may not be allowed. Sometimes, if World Points of Information are being used heckling is not allowed. When allowed, heckling should be pertinent, humorous, brief and infrequent, and it should not be used to just to disrupt the delivery of an opponent. Judges will severely penalize debaters who lower the level of debate through excessive or thoughtless interruptions.

#### **Points of Information**

Where permitted, Points of Information as used at the World Schools Debating Championships shall be entertained. Such a Point of Information may be in the form of either a question to the debater making a speech, or a remark addressed through the moderator.

All debaters are required to raise at least one such point with each opponent during each contest and while the debater who is interrupted is required to accept at least one point raised by each opponent, he or she has sole discretion whether and when to accept them and how long to let them go on.

Points of Information must be brief and may not be raised during the first or final minute of a constructive speech or during rebuttal-defence-summary speech.

To raise on a Point of Information, a debater shall stand and say "Point of Information"; the interrupted debater may decline to take the point and cut off or ask the interrupter to sit down, accept the point immediately, or defer it to a later point in his speech. If several debaters raise such points simultaneously, the speaker with the floor may refuse to accept any of them or may entertain one. A debater whose point is not accepted shall immediately sit down. Excessive raising of such points shall be penalized.

The time taken to rise and reply to such Points shall be included in the speaking time of the debater with the floor. If the debater speaks less than five minutes, opponents may each ask one unraised Point of Information at the conclusion of the speech, within the allotted five minutes.

#### **Plans**

If a plan is to be introduced, it must be done so completely in the first affirmative speech. In the rebuttal portion, speakers may rebut, defend and/or summarize, with these functions divided between the members of a team. The first Affirmative can not introduce any new evidence in the final rebuttal speech.

#### **Speaking times**

##### *Constructive Speeches*

First Affirmative	6 minutes
First Negative	6 minutes
Second Affirmative	6 minutes
Second Negative	6 minutes

(Points of information are allowed during the constructive speech except during the first and last minutes)

#### *Rebuttal Speeches*

First Negative	3 minutes
Second Affirmative	3 minutes
Second Negative	3 minutes
First Affirmative	3 minutes

- *Cambridge* format of rebuttal:  
Each debater delivers a constructive address and later an official rebuttal
- *Oxford* format of rebuttal:  
The first affirmative and first negative debate deliver an official rebuttal

### **Canadian National Debating Format**

The Canadian National Debating Format is used at the Senior High National Debating Championships. This is a new style of debate to be used at the National Debating Championships. Individual provinces are strongly encouraged, but not required, to implement this style at their qualifying events. It is in some ways a cross between Parliamentary Debating and World's Style Debating.

The following is a summary of the rules as written by Chris George of the Ontario Student Debate Union.

#### **Teams**

Each team consists of two people, and the teams are called the "Proposition" and "Opposition". Individual speakers are referred to as its First and Second Speakers.

#### **Topics**

Topics are to be on substantive issues. All motions will start with "This House...". No squirrelling is permitted.

#### **Speaking order**

##### *Constructive Speeches*

First Proposition Speaker	8 minutes
First Opposition Speaker	8 minutes
Second Proposition Speaker	8 minutes
Second Opposition Speaker	8 minutes

##### *Summary/Rebuttal speeches*

First Opposition Speaker	4 minutes
First Proposition Speaker	4 minutes

#### **Description of Constructive Speeches**

- The first proposition speaker has to define the terms, establish the caseline and give the case division (who covers what points). This speaker will normally have two or three constructive arguments. The first speaker must make the team's approach crystal clear.
- The first opposition speaker must clash with the points just made by the first proposition and advance the caseline, case division and normally the first two arguments of the opposition side. In World's Style, this division is usually 2 minutes and 6 minutes, although for our purposes these are just guidelines. The debater should be evaluated on the overall effectiveness of the speech. Constructive argumentation or refutation may be done first, and once again, the judges will consider the effectiveness of the strategy chosen.
- The second proposition speaker has to clash with the case presented by the first opposition speaker, and should advance one or two more constructive arguments for the proposition. The speaker should also take time to rebuild the proposition case.
- The second opposition speaker should also introduce one or two constructive arguments. This speaker should also take time to clash with the new constructive matter presented by the second proposition,

and summarize the opposition case presented. He/she should NOT engage in an overall summary / rebuttal of the debate.

### **Summary / Rebuttal Speeches**

The first speaker on each side, starting with the Opposition, will deliver a four minute summary / rebuttal speech. It was decided that there would be no set format for this speech, given the variety of valid strategies and techniques used. In general, speakers should attempt to summarize the key themes or ideas that have taken place in the debate. This speech tries to put the debate in context and explain the 'crux', or the internal logic of both cases and explains why, on this basis, his/her team has to win. It can examine and summarize the arguments presented, but should focus on the major areas of contention that evolved during the round. This is the final opportunity for a team to convince the judge why his/her team has won the round. Of course, no new information is to be presented in this speech.

### **Points of Information**

Points of Information, also known as POIs for short, are used in Worlds Style, plus a variety of other debating forums. Essentially, a POI is a question or statement that one makes while someone is giving a speech as a means of gaining a tactical advantage. It is expected that every speaker offer and accept POIs during the round. POIs are only allowed during the constructive speeches, but not during the first and last minutes of these speeches (called "protected time" ). During the round, the moderator will bang the desk after one minute has elapsed to signal that POIs are now allowed, and again with one minute remaining in a speech, to signal that time is once again protected. Points of information should be short and to the point. To offer a Point of Information, a debater may stand silently, possibly extending an arm. A debater may also simply say "on a point of information", or "on that point". The speaker has control over whether to accept the point. One may not continue with their point of information unless the floor is yielded by the speaker.

The speaker may do one of several things:

- a) reject the point briefly, perhaps by saying something like "no thank you" or "not at this time". The debater who stood on the point will sit down. It is also acceptable for a debater to politely wave down the speaker without verbally rejecting it and disrupting his/her speech.
- b) accept the point, allow the point of information to be asked, and then proceed to address the point. A speaker may address the point briefly and move on, choose to merge an answer into what they were going to say, or state that they will deal with this later on ( in which case be sure you do! )
- c) say something like "just a second", or "when I finish this point", and then yield the floor when they have finished their sentence or thought.

It is expected that each debater will accept at least two POI's during his/her remarks. Each debater on the opposing team should offer, at least, two POI's to the debater delivering the speech. Adjudicators are instructed to penalize teams if the lower limits are not attained! How well a debater handles themselves in the rough and tumble of offering and accepting POI's is key in this style of debate.

### **Evaluation**

The ballot for this style of debate contains the following criteria: Content & Evidence, Argument & Reasoning, Organization, Presentation & Delivery, Refutation & Rebuttal. While points of information do not get marks on their own, they are weighted, perhaps significantly, in a judge's decision. Judges are encouraged to score holistically and award a final score that makes sense in both absolute and relative terms. The win-loss is critical, and judges must weigh this very carefully in their adjudication.

### **Standings**

The standings are based primarily on win-loss. More details are available in the Senior Nationals Constitution.

### **Other Points**

Points of order, points of personal privilege and heckling are all prohibited.

See the Ontario Student Debate Union web site at [www.osdu.oise.utoronto.ca](http://www.osdu.oise.utoronto.ca) for scripts, scoring guidelines and ballots.

## Worlds Style Debating

	Final Round
1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition Speaker	8 min
1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition Speaker	8 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Proposition Speaker	8 min
2 <sup>nd</sup> Opposition Speaker	8 min
3 <sup>rd</sup> Proposition Speaker	8 min
3 <sup>rd</sup> Opposition Speaker	8 min
Opposition Reply Speech (given by 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	4 min
Proposition Reply Speech (given by 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	4 min

1. This style of debate incorporates questioning, a feature of cross-examination style, into the flow of a parliamentary debate. The teams are called "Proposition" and "Opposition" and the debate is presided over by a moderator. Each debater is expected to deliver a constructive speech and to rebut the opposing arguments. Points of information are used throughout the debate; each debater is expected to raise two points and to answer two points during the debate ("give two and take two" is a standard rule in this type of debate).
2. The Proposition team sits to the right of the moderator and the Opposition team sits to the left. The moderator grants the right to speak by introducing the debater. Debaters should preface their remarks by addressing Madam Moderator. They may acknowledge the presence of the judges, though this is not mandatory. All references to other debaters should be made in the third person.
3. Points of order, points of personal privilege and heckling are all prohibited.
4. The Constructive Speeches:
  - **The first government** defines the motion, outlines the government case, announces the case division, and presents her or his part of the case.
  - **The first opposition** deals with the definition if it is a problem, explains the important differences between the two team cases, and either outlines the opposition case, announces the case division, and presents her or his part of the case, or outlines the opposition's rebuttal case (i.e. the broad themes the opposition will use throughout the debate to rebut the government case) and expands on it.  
The difference between these two approaches depends on whether the opposition is content just to present a rebuttal case, or takes the stronger route and presents its own alternative case as well.
  - **The second government** defends the government definition (if required) and case from the opposition attacks, rebuts the opposition case, and proceeds with her or his part of the government case. Somewhere around 2 to 3 minutes into the speech the speaker will turn from attacking the opposition to presenting the new part of the argument.
  - **The second opposition** does much the same as the second government. If the opposition is presenting its own alternative case as well, this speaker will turn from attacking the government to presenting the new part of the argument somewhere around 3 to 4 minutes into the speech.
  - **The third government** is going to spend a large part of her or his time attacking the other side. However, she or he can have a small part of the government case to present – perhaps 1 or 2 minutes at the most. This is not obligatory, although many teams do it.
  - **The third opposition** is going to spend most of her or his time attacking the other side, rather than presenting significant new arguments, she or he can have an even smaller part of the opposition case to present, but again this is not obligatory. Note that the opposition reply follows straight on from this speech, so it is better for the third opposition to deal with the detail of the government case and leave the broad overview to the reply speech. The reply speeches are not going to delve into fine detail, but will take a broad approach to the issues of the debate. They should also summarise their own case either as part the analysis of the issues or towards the end of the speech as a separate section. For obvious reasons the reply speeches cannot introduce new arguments. Not only is this unfair but it is also a complete misunderstanding of the role of reply speeches. The reply speech is a summing up of the whole debate, not a chance to introduce new ideas.

5. Summary/Rebuttal Speeches:

- Starting with Opposition, the speakers should attempt to summarize the key themes or ideas that have been put forth in the debate. The summary/rebuttal speech tries to put the debate in context and explain the “crux” of the issue. The speaker should examine the arguments and internal logic of both cases to convince the judges why his/her team should win. No new information can be presented in this speech.

6. Points of Information:

- Points of Information (or POIs) are questions or statements that one makes while someone on the other side is giving a speech. It is a means of gaining tactical advantage.
- Every speaker is expected to accept at least two POIs during the round, and every debater is expected to offer at least two POIs during the round.
- POIs are only allowed during the constructive speeches, but they are not allowed during the first and last minutes of these speeches (called “protected time”).
- During the round, the moderator will bang the desk after one minute has elapsed to signal that POIs are now allowed, and again with one minute remaining in a speech, to signal that time is once again protected.
- POIs should be short and relevant to what the speaker is saying.
- To offer a POI, a debater should stand silently, possibly extending an arm. A debater may also simply say “on a point of information” or “on that point”.
- The debater speaking has control over whether to accept the point. A debater cannot continue with their POI unless the floor is yielded by the speaker. The speaker may do one of several things :
  - (a) reject the point briefly by saying “no thank you” or “not at this time” or by waving the debater down without interrupting his/her speech
  - (b) allow the POI to be asked and then proceed to address the point. The speaker may choose to address the point briefly and then move on, or the speaker may merge an answer into what they were going to say, or the speaker may state that they will deal with this later (in which case be sure to do so!)
  - (c) say something like “just a second” or “when I finish this point” and then yield the floor at the completion of their sentence or thought
- Judges will be instructed to penalize speakers who do not accept POIs during their constructive speeches. How well debaters incorporate the rough and tumble of offering and accepting POIs in the round is one of the criteria for this style of debate.

**A Modest Précis re: Worlds Style Debating**  
**By: Harold Kyte**

- (1) Worlds style debating differs from Parliamentary debating significantly even though the format appears, at first blush, to be similar. There are two sides (called proposition and opposition) and three debaters per side. The proposition advances definitions and a case with three arguments. The proposition speaks last. Rebuttal takes place.
- (2) The differences are, however, much more striking than the similarities.
  - (a) The burden of proof, while real, is much less significant than in parliamentary debating.
    - (i) In worlds style, both sides present a caseline and (usually) three arguments.
    - (ii) There are two (count ‘em) two cases on the floor – The most compelling case wins. There are no ties and the proposition does not carry a significant burden. In practice, if the proposition makes a clear and prima facie case in the first speech, they have fully discharged the burden of proof.
    - (iii) The debate is concluded by the reply speeches (not rebuttals) – starting with the opposition team. The first or second speaker per side will deliver the reply speech. The reply speech is not a rebuttal - but an attempt to put the arguments in a proper context by outlining the underlying logic of each caseline.

- (3) Each speaker has 8 minutes to accomplish different tasks.
- (a) The first proposition speaker has to define the terms – always straight (no squirreling) – and to establish the caseline and to give the case division (who covers what points) – normally the first speaker deals with arguments 1 and 2 while the second speaker covers the 3rd argument. The point is that the first speaker must make the team's approach crystal clear.
  - (b) The first opposition speaker must allow only two minutes to clash with the points just made by the first proposition and use six minutes to advance the caseline, case division and the first two arguments of the opposition side. This is critical.
  - (c) The second proposition has two to three minutes to clash with the opposition case and to use five or six minutes to finish the proposition arguments. This is critical.
  - (d) The second opposition has to use four minutes to clash and four minutes to finish the opposition case. This is critical.
  - (e) The third proposition will use two minutes to summarize and rebuild the proposition's case and six minutes to give the rebuttal. This is critical.
  - (g) The third opposition will use one minute to rebuild and seven minutes to rebut. This is critical.
  - (h) The opposition (first or second speaker) gives a four-minute reply speech. The reply speech is distinct from the just-completed rebuttal). It demonstrates an alteration in mood and power. The reply speaker tries to put the debate in context. The debater explains the 'crux', or the internal logic of both cases and explains why, on this basis, the opposition has to win.
  - (i) The first or second proposition debater gives the reply speech. This is the concluding speech in the debater.
- (4) Each debater (with the exception of the reply speeches) will be subjected to points of information (POI's) in the middle six minutes of their speeches – the first and last minute being 'protected time.' It is expected that each debater will accept at least two POI's during his/her remarks. Each debater on the opposing team should offer, at least, two POI's to the debater delivering the speech. Adjudicators are instructed to deduct one or two marks if the lower limits are not attained!! How well a debater handles themselves in the rough and tumble of offering and accepting POI's is key in worlds style debate.
- (5) There are three adjudicators per debate.
- (6) Team standings are based on the win/lost record with the number of adjudicator ballots (number of judges voting for the team over the course of the competition) as the first tiebreaker. For example if two teams are tied with a 5 (wins) and 1 (loss) record over a six event tournament and the first team as received a total of 13 adjudicator ballots (out of a possible 15), and the second team has only 11 ballots, the first team is placed above the second. If the two teams are still tied, total points are used to decide their relative standing.
- (7) The marking scheme is: based on 100 per debater with effective (allowed) cores being between 60 and 80.
- (a) The categories are presentation, content and strategy with 40 points for the first two and 20 for the last.
  - (b) Presentation is marked from a purely public speaking perspective: How did the debater actually deliver the speech? Was the tone correct? The rate of speech? The pitch? The pauses? The eye contact? The confidence? Etc. The presentation mark is between 24 and 32 with a score of, 24 being very weak and a mark of 32 being spectacular.
  - (c) Content is also marked out of a possible 40 points. The content mark is scored as if the speech was submitted in essay form. It has everything to do with logic, preparation and

analytic skill and has nothing to do with the presentation. A mark of 24 is indicative of very little success and the score is truly and unusually outstanding

- (d) Strategy is marked on 20 points with the range being between 12 and 16. Strategy refers to the success the debater has in clashing with the arguments of the opposing team. Has he/she thoroughly understood the presented arguments and have they responded effectively, logically and comprehensively in refutation.
- (e) The reply speech is, of course, also marked on presentation, content and strategy with the effective mark range between 12 and 16 for both presentation and content and between 6 and 8 for strategy. The reply speech is therefore marked out of 50 points --- 20 points presentation, 20 for content and 10 for strategy.

**Example of the worlds ballot:**

	<u>Presentation</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Totals</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> debater	31	30	15	76
2 <sup>nd</sup> debater	27	28	13	68
3 <sup>rd</sup> debater	30	29	14	73
Reply	15	14	7	36

The team above would have scored 253 out of a possible 280. If this total exceeds the total for the opposing team, they are awarded the win.

For the hypothetical debater referred to above, a 76 (out of a perfect 80) is considered a very good mark. A score of 68 is considered a relatively weak result. A mark of 73 is somewhat above average. The reply mark counts in terms of the team score but is not counted vis-a-vis the individual rankings since only some debaters will give these speeches in the course of a tournament.

# Code of Conduct

Preamble: Coaches need to familiarize themselves with this code as well as the rules in the **POLICY AND RULES MANUAL** and formally inform their debaters, parents, and supporters about these ethics and rules prior to competition each school year.

## **1. PARTICIPANTS:**

### GENERAL

- a. Participants shall be courteous and friendly to other competitors, judges, organizers and guests.
- b. Participants shall use language conducive to proper public speaking decorum. **Profanity is unacceptable.**
- c. In the event of a complaint, all participants must bring the issue to their coaches only, who will then approach the tournament organizer on their behalf. Complaints must be lodged immediately following a round of debate or speech.
- d. Participants shall not argue with the judge or their opponents about the conduct or the result of the speech or debate. Participants shall not dispute the result of a debate or speech round in the presence of the judge(s).
- e. The Association does not approve of the use of any illicit drugs or the consumption of alcohol at Association sponsored events

### DEBATE

- a. Debaters shall not seek to influence the judge by means other than evidence and argumentation during the debate.
- b. Debaters shall not listen to teams debating that they might meet on the same topic at a later time and thereby gain a competitive advantage. Coaches may, however, observe their own teams.
- c. Use of audio or visual equipment for the purpose of recording a debate may be done with the prior consent of both teams, their parents, and the organizer of the event.
- d. A team shall not seek or provide second-hand information regarding the cases of potential opponents.
- e. Debaters shall not breach normal courtesy by interruption, heckling, grimacing or whispering loudly while an opponent is speaking. Heckling, in an appropriate manner, in the case of Parliamentary style debating is acceptable.
- f. Debaters shall not, either by word or action, seek to belittle their opponents. Debates must be a clash of issues and not personalities.
- g. Competing teams must not collude to affect the debate in any way.
- h. Debaters must respect the personal physical space of an opponent. (Do not invade an opponent's space.)
- i. In an Impromptu style debate, debaters must define definitions in the spirit of debate. In other words, they must be defined fairly and allow for debate on both sides of the resolution.
- j. Students may not use computer, palm pads, cell phones, or any communication technology during a round of debate. Debaters must be able to compete on their own merit and the strength of their research done prior to the event.
- k. A debater shall not pass notes/cards to his/her partner when one of them has the floor, either from the constructive speech or the cross-examination. Debaters are judged on individual skills.

**Any conduct not in accordance with these codes will be grounds for disqualification in a tournament, and may include banning participants from future ADSA activities. Matters may be referred back to school based administrators.**

## **2. COACHES:**

- a. According to the School Act, as well as School Liability, a Teacher Representative/Coach must be present at all ADSA events that their students participate in.
- b. In the spirit of cooperation, coaches shall actively encourage the sharing of resource materials available from public libraries and other public resource centers between teams within their own school.
- c. Coaches must demonstrate qualities of courtesy and good sportsmanship. These are evidenced by proper acceptance of officials' judgement, positive encouragement of student performance and polite interaction with tournament organizers in the event of a complaint.
- d. Coaches will support the volunteer efforts of fellow coaches and judges, and will encourage their debaters to do so as well.
- e. The Coach/Teacher, as a representative of the school, is responsible for the conduct of all personnel composing the school's team (participants, spectators from their school, and parents of your students). Coaches/Teachers shall make an attempt to control any negative situation, before it becomes an issue for the tournament organizer.
- f. When organizing tournaments, organizers should make an effort to ensure that students from the same school can avoid debating each other when possible and that all debate teams from a school will have a fairly even split of affirmative and negative debates. Coaches should try to assign a bye to the school with the most teams at a tournament.
- g. Coaches will not scout out teams.

**Any conduct not in accordance with these codes shall be grounds for the ADSA to notify the School's Administration. If behavior does not change, the ADSA will hold the right to ban coaches/teachers from attending future ADSA activities.**

## **3. PARENTS AND SPECTATORS:**

- a. Parents and spectators, both student and adult, will demonstrate courtesy and good sportsmanship by positive encouragement (before and after a debate) for their team/children.
- b. Parents and spectators will demonstrate respect towards opponents, coaches, judges and tournament organizers.
- c. In the event of a complaint, parents and spectators are only permitted to approach their team/child's coach, who will then approach the tournament organizer (in that order). Parents, spectators and coaches will not approach opposing teams, coaches or judges after a debate has been completed.
- d. Parents will encourage their child to follow the rules of debate.
- e. Parents will not scout out teams.
- f. Parents and spectators will act in a supportive manner towards all volunteer personnel, who help in the development of all participant's skills, and encourage the promotion and growth of the ADSA.

**Any conduct that is not in accordance with this code, shall be as grounds for ejection from a tournament, and may include suspension of future participation in ADSA tournaments or interactions with the ADSA volunteers and participants.**