

Coaches

Start-up Guide



Alberta Debate and Speech Association

Revised March 2012

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I) Introduction

All coaches need to know both ADSA's general policies and specific rules of debate, how to run a club and most importantly, how to have fun debating. As a novice coach in Alberta, there are a number of good resources available to you. They include the office staff of the Alberta Debate and Speech Association (ADSA), ADSA's website, other coaches as mentors, workshops, written guides, and videos.

How to Get Started

Here are some suggestions:

- 1) Read this guide
- 2) Download some of the other guides on the ADSA Website – www.albertadebate.com

GENERAL:

Bylaws Manual
Coaches Guide
Guide to Introducing Speech and Debate
List of Resources
Policy and Rules Manual

DEBATE:

Advanced British Parliamentary Seminar
Advanced Debate Strategies Guide
British Parliamentary Handbook
Chairperson's/Moderator's Scripts
Code of Ethics
Crash Course For Judges
Cross Examination Strategy
Debate Scoring Rubrics
Debate Stats Program
Debate Tournament Organization Guide
Debating by Simon Quinn
Developing a Debate Program in Your School
Etiquette Guide
Essential Techniques of Delivery / Manner / Style
General Rules for Debate
Guide to Briefing Judges
Guide to Judging Debate
Guide to Judging Jr. High Discussion Debate
Guide to Judging National Style Debate
Guide to Parliamentary Style Debate
Helpful Hints for Debaters
How to be a Good Parliamentary Chairperson
How to Start a Debate Club
Judges Ballots
Judges Flowsheet
Judging Debate - Powerpoint Presentation
Plan de leçon pour application en salle de classe
Points of Information
Statistician's Guide
Statistics Sheet
Stats program recommended by ADSA
Stats program guideline

STYLES OF DEBATE:

Academic
British Parliamentary
Canadian National
Cross Examination
Discussion
Parliamentary
World

SPEECH:

A Short Guide to Effective Public Speaking
Avoid Common Presentation Errors
Be Brief!
Chairperson's/Moderator's Scripts
Changing Academic Public Speaking
Connecting With An Audience
Conquering Stage Fright
Coping With The Unexpected
Classroom Activities
Design Your Speech Not Write It
DIY Voice Care
Fear of Public Speaking
Feedback A Critical Step In Learning
Guide to Judging Speech (Long Version)
Guide to Judging Speech (Short Version)
Guide to Organizing a Speech Tournament
Hand Gestures
Hayward's Guide to Organizing a Speech Tournament
How To Organize The Body Of A Speech
Judges Ballots
Making Your First Keynote Speech
Master Your Inner Fears
Need a Speaker?
Overcome Your Fear of Presenting
Public Speaking a Confidence Builder
Quick Tips For Using Your Voice Effectively
Scared Speechless?
Speech Coaches Work Wonders
Stating Your Objectives
Statistical Sheets
Step-by-Step Guide to Speech
Ten Causes of Public Speaking Stress
Ten Techniques To Enhance Training
The Importance of Introductions
When To Hire A Speech Coach

3) Order some of the video tapes and research booklets available from ADSA:

Video	Length	Comments
Back a Contender	8 min	TV ad soliciting support
Battling Over Buckling Up	50 min	Demo tape of Sr. High Cross Examination style
Churchill Debate Provincials 2001	70 min	Billington Cup Final. Ross Sheppard defeats Queen Elizabeth
Cross-Examination Excellence	14 min	Examines High School Cross Examination style of debate
Debate Bowl – Advanced Affirmative Strategy	54 min	Sophisticated look at the 4 Aff. cases in Sr. High debate
Debate Detective – Advanced Negative Strategy	30 min	Sophisticated look at Neg. strategies to counter 4 Aff. cases
Debate Excellence	17 min	A good beginning video for both Jr. & Sr. debaters
Discussion Excellence	13 min	Explanation of Jr. High debate, Discussion style
Edmonton Mock Trials 2002	70 min	Gold/silver medal match. Harry Ainlay defeats Archbishop MacDonald
Edmonton Mock Trials 2005	70 min	Gold/silver medal match. Old Scona defeats Archbishop MacDonald
Judging Junior High Debate	30 min	Instructions on what judges should look for and, in the process, explains Jr. High Discussion style
Judging Senior High Debate	30 min	Instructions on what judges should look for and, in the process, explains Sr. High Cross Examination style
NATO be disbanded	60 min	U of A Canadian Parliamentary demo tape
Parliamentary Excellence	14 min	Examines High School Parliamentary style of debate
South Africa force Corporate Reparations	60 min	U of A Cross Examination style demo tape
Talk Advantage	8 min	TV ad encouraging debate. Features Danny Hooper, Dr. Guy Lamoreux & Melissa Makonenko
Under Sentence of Death	50 min	Demo tape of Jr. High Discussion style

Research Booklets:

Advertising to Children (2005)	Constitutional Amendment of 1987 (1991)
Affirmative Action (1984)	Corporal Punishment (1983)
Agricultural Marketing Boards (1986)	Cuba Embargo (1999)
Agricultural Lands (protection of) (1984)	Death Penalty (1986)
Alberta's Natural Resource Profits (2006)	Deficit (1990)
Alberta's Health Care System (1995)	Dignity of Human Life (1988)
Alcohol Advertising (1986)	Drug Patent Laws (1992)
American Unilateralism (2005)	Drug Rehabilitation (2005)
Animal Rights (1990)	Drugs in Sports (1989)
Animal Rights Activists (1994)	Education (Alberta vs. Japan) (1992)
Athletes' Salaries (1996)	Election Polls (1990)
Biotechnical Engineering (1999)	Environnement (1990)
Brazil (developing rainforest) (1991)	Euthanasia (1989 / 1993)
Business Immigrant Program (1990)	Extradition (1989)
Canada Health Act (Privatization) (2001)	Forests (1996)
Canadian Tolerance (1998 / 2005)	Free Trade (1988)
Capital Punishment (1980)	Freedom of Speech (2003)
Care of the Elderly (1987)	Foreign Aid tied to Human Rights (1986)
CBC Privatization (1996)	Future Now (1988)
Censorship of Fairy Tales (?)	Gambling (1985 / 2005)
Children's Rights (1980)	Genetic Engineering (1994)
Conditional Release (1984)	Genetic Engineering in Agriculture (1994)

Globalization (2001)
Goods and Services Tax (1990)
Graduated Licenses (1999)
Guaranteed Annual Income (1988)
Gun Control (1991)
Hate Crimes (1996)
Hate Law (1991 / 1996)
Impaired Driving Legislation (1991)
Indian Land Claims (1981)
Internet (1995)
Internet Censorship in China (2006)
Immigration (1992)
Imposing Democracy (2006)
Kyoto Protocol (2003)
Labour Laws (1987 / 1988)
Legal Drinking Age in Alberta (1990)
Louis Riel (1991)
Mandatory Retirement (1986)
Marijuana (2004)
Media Influence (1999)
Meech Lake (1991)
Mental Health (1980)
Military Spending (2000)
National Achievement Testing (1992)
National Parks Policy
National Security vs. Civil Liberties (2003)
Native Self-Government (1994)
NATO (1999)
North American Security Alliance (2005)
Nuclear Disarmament (1983)
Official Languages Act (1989)

Online Piracy (2003)
Organ Donation (1987)
Parole (1988)
Pay Equity (1986)
Prison Reform (2001)
Privacy (1988)
Privatization (1988)
Proportional Representation (2000)
Recycling (mandatory blue-box program) (1990)
Removing Health Benefits (2006)
Right to Strike (1990)
Role of Minority Groups (1987)
Salmon Treaty (1998)
Seat Belts (1987)
Senate Reform (1987)
Smoking in the Workplace (1986)
Social Programs vs. Debt Reduction (2001)
Third World Debt (2001)
Transnational Companies (2006)
T.V. Violence (2002)
UN Peacekeeping (1995)
UN: Success or Failure? (2004)
Universal Childcare (1986)
Universal Daycare (1987)
University Tuition (1990)
Victims of Violence (1986)
Vigilantes (1987)
VLTs (1997)
Water Rights (1995)
Young Offenders (1989 / 1992)

- 4) Attend a debate workshop or tournament
- 5) Have a staff person, board member, member, or alumni visit to just talk, or to do a workshop

“Perhaps more than any other extra-curricular activity, Debating bridges the gap between academics and careers.”
- The Chronicle of Higher Education

II) Administration

The Office

ADSA's office is located in Calgary, Alberta. Our mailing address is Box 74144 – 148 – 555 Strathcona Blvd. SW – Calgary, Alberta T3H 3B6. The phone number is 403 – 921 - 8531, and the email address adebate@interbaun.com. The office is generally open from 7:00 am to 12:00 noon, Monday to Thursday. The office is generally closed mid-July to mid-August. ADSA has a Provincial Coordinator who works on behalf of the members and board.

The Board

ADSA has a sixteen-member board, all of whom are elected by the Members. The current Board consists of:

President – Sylvia Hayward (Forest Lawn High School)
Vice President Debate – Jon Hoyt-Hallett (Calgary Science School)
Vice President Speech – Lennard Fink (Strathcona Tweedsmuir School)
Vice President Bilingual Debate – Marlene Wilson (Calgary French & International School)
Treasurer – David Ball (Langevin Science School)
Calgary Sr. Debate Rep. – Rick Patterson (Western Canada High School)
Calgary Sr. Speech Rep. – Bonita Ting (Webber Academy)
Calgary Jr. Debate Rep. – Colleen Burkhart (John Ware Junior High)
Calgary Jr. Speech Rep. – Kate Franks (Bob Edwards School)
Edmonton Sr. Debate Rep. – Harold Semenuk (Lillian Osborne High School)
Edmonton Sr. Speech Rep. – Brent Ransom (Old Scona Academic)
Edmonton Jr. Debate Rep. – VACANT
Edmonton Jr. Speech Rep. – VACANT
Special Projects Chair – Angela Fraser (William Aberhart High School)
Northern Alumni Rep. – Emma James (U of A)
South Alumni Rep. – Pardeep Dhaliwa (U of C)

Membership

Institutional Membership

Schools join the association for **one year for a fee of \$150.00**. In return, they can participate and vote in general meetings, elect the board, and receive educational materials throughout the year. While most members are actively involved in the competitive tournament program, many schools join solely for access to materials which they integrate into their classroom curriculum.

This form is available on our website. The form must be printed and mailed to the ADSA office, along with a cheque for \$150.00, no later than October 31st, for the year applying.

Individual Membership

In addition to the Institutional membership, students must also purchase Association memberships in order to participate in workshops, tournaments, and the regional and provincial championships. The **fee is \$20.00 for each student**. No student without a membership will be allowed to attend any ADSA sponsored or sanctioned event, and memberships can only be purchased in advance.

Also attached is a media release form, which must be signed and returned along with the membership form. This form is available on our website. The form must be printed and mailed to the ADSA office, along with a cheque for your whole team's participation at \$20.00 each, no later than October 31st, for the year applying

Home Schooling Membership

Eligibility:

Students who are currently home schooled 100% of the time and registered with an Alberta School District as home schooled students for the current school year.

Requirements for Coaching Home Schooled Students:

- a) Must be an adult over the age of 22.
- b) Must agree to abide by the ATA code of conduct.
- c) Must have read and be familiar with the ADSA By-Laws, Policy and Rules and Code of Ethics documents.
- d) Be present at all tournaments students are entered in.
- e) Be prepared to organize one Speech or Debate Tournament per year or assist a coach who is.

Costs:

Membership is \$20.00 per student and \$75.00 for the designated coach (in place of institutional membership). Please use the same forms as above, which are available on the ADSA website.

Changes to the Rules

You can change the By-Laws and the Policy and Rules Manual. Here's how.

1) Amendments to the By-Laws

Amendments to the By-Laws of the Association shall require approval by three-quarters (3/4) of the Institutional members present at a duly called general meeting for which fourteen (14) days written notice specifying the proposed amendment(s) has been given.

2) Policy and Rules Manual

The Policy and Rules Manual may be passed, rescinded, or altered by a resolution passed by two thirds (2/3) of the Institutional members at a duly called general meeting for which fourteen (14) days' written notice specifying the proposed extra-ordinary resolution(s) has been given.

In other words, proposed changes to the Bylaws or the Policy Manual must be circulated to all members fourteen days prior to the Annual General Meeting. The Board has the power to change the Policy Manual, subject to A.G.M. ratification.

Regions

For purposes of competition and selection for out-of-province events, the province is divided into five regions:

Northern, Edmonton, Central, Calgary, and South

Affiliations

ADSA is associated with the Canadian Student Debating Federation (CSDF).

News

ADSA's sends out a weekly newsletter to all member schools for the current school year. If you would like information to go out to our member schools kindly forward it to our office.

III) Activities

Workshops and Tournaments

ADSA sponsors, assists and contributes to most of our activities.

Debate Workshops

Held every fall, these are intended to initiate the novice debater and coach. Debate workshops can also be arranged for your school, your class, or your debate club.

Debate Tournaments

There are 10 to 20 debate tournaments per year. In a given region, you could have up to 6 debate tournaments and two speech tournaments. These debate tournaments are one-day affairs, consisting of three rounds. These oblige the debater to prepare and debate both sides of a topic. The topics or resolutions are announced for all tournaments in the fall. The office supplies rudimentary research on each resolution to each club. This research is most beneficial to novice debaters and debaters in the more remote areas of the province.

Speech Tournaments

The Speech tournaments are also one day affairs in which the students have the opportunity to compete in one of the following six categories:

- Impromptu
- Original Oratory
- Oral Interpretation of Prose
- Oral Interpretation of Poetry
- Solo Acting
- Duet Acting

Provincial Speech Tournament

Held once a year in February, there are two categories: Junior High and Senior High. Speakers proceed to the Provincial Speech Tournament on the basis of performance at the Regional Speech Tournaments. To attend the Provincial Speech Championship you must attend one speech event prior to the Regional Speech tournament.

Two competitors from grade 11 are selected to proceed to the National Speech Tournament.

Provincial Debate Tournament

Held every March, this event determines the provincial championship in each category. This event is also the final step in selection for the Junior High National Tournament and the Senior High National Debate Seminar. Participants are selected to attend the Provincial Debate Tournament on the basis of performance at Regional Debate Championships. To attend the Provincial Debate Championship you must attend two debate events prior to the Regional Debate Tournament.

ADSA also annually hosts a Model Legislature in November at Edmonton.

National Events

ADSA annually sends participants to the Western Canada Debate Seminar, the National Sr. High School Debate Championships, Junior High National Debate Tournament, CanWest National Speech Tournament, CSDF National Debate Seminar, Pan American Debate Championships, North American Debate Championships, Western States Novice Debate Championships, and the Concours d'art Oratoire.

Categories of Competition

ADSA provides the following categories of competition in debate:

Grades 6, 7 and 8's in 1 st year of Junior High Debate & Grade 7's in their 2 nd year of debate	Jr. High Beginner	Canadian National Style
Grade 9 (Grades 6, 7 & 8 may also debate in this category but cannot go back into Beginner if they have debated in Open.)	Jr. High Open	Canadian National Style
1 st year of Sr. High Debate (Grades 9, & 10 only)	Sr. High Beginner	Canadian National Style British Parliamentary World's Style
2 nd year of Sr. High Debate	Sr. High Open	Canadian National Style British Parliamentary World's Style

Types of Debate

Junior High Students

The following shall be the formats for English Junior High debate which shall normally encompass participants from grades 6 – 9.

Canadian National Style Debate – Junior High Beginner

1 st Proposition Constructive	5 min
1 st Opposition Constructive	5 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive	5 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive	5 min
Break to prepare Reply Speech as per ADSA	3 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition	3 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition	3 min

Canadian National Style Debate – Junior High Open

1 st Proposition Constructive	6 min
1 st Opposition Constructive	6 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive	6 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive	6 min
Break to prepare Reply Speech as per ADSA	3 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition	3 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition	3 min

Junior High Discussion (2 person teams)

	Beginner
1 st Proposition Constructive	5 min
1 st Opposition Constructive	5 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive	5 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive	5 min
Discussion Period	10 min
Break	5 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition	4 min

Bilingual Junior High Discussion (2 person teams)

	Beginner
1 st Proposition Constructive in French	5 min
1 st Opposition Constructive in French	5 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive in French	5 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive in French	5 min
Discussion Period (Debaters must show an ability and willingness to use both French and English)	10 min
Break	5 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition in English	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition in English	4 min

Junior High Cross-Examination (2 person teams)

	Beginner	Open
1 st Proposition Constructive	5 min	6 min
1 st Proposition cross-examined by 2 nd Opposition	2 min	3 min
1 st Opposition Constructive	5 min	6 min
1 st Opposition cross-examined by 1 st Proposition	2 min	3 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive	5 min	6 min
2 nd Proposition cross-examined by 1 st Opposition	2 min	3 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive	5 min	6 min
2 nd Opposition cross-examined by 2 nd Proposition	2 min	3 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition	4 min	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition	4 min	4 min

Bilingual Junior High Cross-Examination

	(Both Categories)
1 st Proposition Construction in French (Definitions in both languages)	6 min
1 st Proposition cross-examined by 2 nd Opposition in French	3 min
1 st Opposition Constructive in French	6 min
1 st Opposition cross-examined by 1 st Proposition in French	3 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive in French	6 min
2 nd Proposition cross-examined by 1 st Opposition in French	3 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive in French	6 min
2 nd Opposition cross-examined by 2 nd Proposition in French	3 min
Break	5 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition in English	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition in English	4 min

SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS

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

Canadian National Style Debate – Senior High Beginner

1 st Proposition Constructive	6 min
1 st Opposition Constructive	6 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive	6 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive	6 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition	4 min

Canadian National Style Debate – Senior High Open

1 st Proposition Constructive	8 min
1 st Opposition Constructive	8 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive	8 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive	8 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition	4 min

Senior High Cross-Examination (2 person teams)

	Beginner	Open
1 st Proposition Constructive	6 min	7 min
1 st Proposition cross-examined by 2 nd Opposition	3 min	3 min
1 st Opposition Constructive	6 min	7 min
1 st Opposition cross-examined by 1 st Proposition	3 min	3 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive	6 min	7 min
2 nd Proposition cross-examined by 1 st Opposition	3 min	3 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive	6 min	7 min
2 nd Opposition cross-examined by 2 nd Proposition	3 min	3 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition	4 min	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition	4 min	4 min

Bilingual Senior High Cross-Examination (2 person teams)

	Beginner	Open
1 st Proposition Constructive in French (Definitions in both languages)	6 min	7 min
1 st Proposition cross-examined by Second Opposition in French	3 min	3 min
1 st Opposition Constructive in French	6 min	7 min
1 st Opposition cross-examined by 1 st Proposition in French	3 min	3 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive in French	6 min	7 min
2 nd Proposition cross-examined by 1 st Opposition in French	3 min	3 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive in French	6 min	7 min
2 nd Opposition cross-examined by 2 nd Proposition in French	3 min	3 min
Break	5 min	5 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition in English	4 min	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition in English	4 min	4 min

Senior High - Parliamentary Style (2 person teams)

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

Bilingual Parliamentary Debate (2-speaker team style)

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

Canadian National Style Debate – Bilingual

1 st Proposition Constructive in French	8 min
1 st Opposition Constructive in French	8 min
2 nd Proposition Constructive in French	8 min
2 nd Opposition Constructive in French	8 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition in English	4 min
Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition in English	4 min

British Parliamentary Style Debate

	Preliminary Rounds	Final Round
1 st Government Team Prime Minister	5 min	7 min
1 st Opposition Team Leader of the Opposition	5 min	7 min
1 st Government Team Deputy Prime Minister	5 min	7 min
1 st Opposition Team Deputy Leader of the Opposition	5 min	7 min
2 nd Government Team Member for the Government	5 min	7 min
2 nd Opposition Team Member for the Opposition	5 min	7 min
2 nd Government Team Government Whip	5 min	7 min
2 nd Opposition Team Opposition Whip	5 min	7 min

Hosting a Tournament

A debate program is the sum of its tournaments. If you expect to go to tournaments, then at some point you may wish to consider hosting a tournament. ADSA has a Debate Tournament Organization Guide and as well the office staff will be pleased to assist and advise you. Hosts of tournaments can download all ballots, scripts, score sheets, and judges' briefing guides from the website.

Go ahead... Hold a Debate or Speech Tournament.

IV) Starting a Club

Excerpted from ADSA's *Organizing a Debate Program*, by John Baty

Philosophies of Educational Debate vary greatly. At one end of the spectrum are those who believe the sole intent of participation is winning. At the other are those who view competitiveness as detrimental to learning.

Sponsors in Alberta have methodically developed activities which, though recognizing competition as an important teaching tool, have emphasized other educational aspects to a greater extent.

Some of these aspects include:

Developing Critical Thinking Skills

Alberta debate events are organized in such a way that students must argue both sides of an issue during the course of the event. This can broaden students' approaches to all issues. Their evaluative and discriminative skills are developed as well.

Development of critical thinking skills has an application outside of debate or school, often providing the experienced student debater with a perspective and problem solving edge over their peers.

Honing Research Skills

Though it is sometimes assumed that students can adequately learn research skills through normal curricular instruction, class size, time, and other limitations make this prospect extremely unlikely.

The debate club or debate option approach allows more flexibility for the one on one or small group interaction necessary.

Debate sponsors have indeed found that direct curricular benefit occurs for most participants.

Speaking Skills

Mistakenly, people think of the terms "debate" and "public speaking" as synonymous. The term "public speaking" often assumes style is of greatest importance. In proper debate content-research and logic-are of equal, if not greater importance than the style of public speaking.

The public speaking aspect is, however, a contributory factor to the quality of a debater's skill, and therefore, when taken in its proper perspective, serves an important educational purpose in debate.

Stimulating Interest In and Understanding of Issues

Debate involves the in-depth study of contemporary social, economic, and political issues.

Bringing the School Recognition

Through a secondary role and not recommended as a sole objective, debate as a viable extra curricular activity casts a positive light on the opportunities offered by a particular school.

When all these objectives are emphasized in their proper balance, it is found that the developments of an unusually high level of maturity, leadership and camaraderie among participants tends to occur.

Organizing a Debate Program

If the school, teacher and students are so fortunate, a true option program can be established within the curriculum. Students in the option as well as the teacher are able to involve themselves outside of class, having had greater time and emphasis within the class.

As this is not always the case, however, we should look at the practicalities involved in developing an extra-curricular club. In most cases, though there are notable exceptions, the debate club rarely gains the degree of notoriety held by a winning sports team within a school. This does not mean, however, that debate

cannot become a well respected and valuable addition to a list of extra-curricular choices that normally over-emphasizes non academic pursuits.

Remember, this activity is extremely valuable for directly developing skills that complement that curriculum and the personal development of participants.

Developing Debate as a Viable Extra-Curricular Activity

The debate sponsor will realize that potential debaters may wish to belong to sports teams or other “cultural” clubs. All these activities will have practice or meeting times that are often inflexible (a missed practice, for example, could mean a person would be dropped from the team).

When faced with these established activities what is a sponsor to do?

- A) He/She must convince the administration and students that his/her program is high quality, and has something special to offer the individual. He/She must, with true commitment and zeal, spread the word.
- B) He/She must have a plan of meetings, mini-debates and inter-school activities.

Creating Student Interest

As most educators are aware, creating student interest can be difficult at the best of times. There are ways of accomplishing this, however:

- a) Handpicking Likely Candidates

Often the direct approach is the most successful. Most teachers know of student candidates who would find debate suitable to them.

- b) Utilizing Club Days

In most schools, club days are held early in the fall. It is important that if tables or even presentation times are available the sponsor should use these opportunities to the maximum of his/her ability.

The sponsor should make clear his/her own enthusiasm for the new club, as the sponsors' personal magnitude will help draw students. Noting the objectives of the club, the ongoing nature of such an activity, the opportunities for social interaction and travel as well as the prospect of high grades should encourage a number of students to join.

Make sure you have familiarized yourself with A.D.S.A. activities – workshops, seminars, debates and the tournament program – so you can answer questions. In addition, it is important that they are aware of a definite meeting time.

- c) Announcements and Posters

Though the direct or club day approaches may yield greater results, the P.A. system and posters may do the trick.

Whoever makes the announcements should be in support of and keen about the debate program. The announcements should be succinct and mention some of the more high profile activities – provincial championships, law seminars, debate camps and workshops.

Whoever makes the posters should use “catch phrases”, or other clever devices to attract attention. Posters should be used in conjunction with announcements.

Debate can change your mind...

Classroom Integration

Particularly English and Social teachers can integrate debate into their classroom instruction. According to the curricula in each area, the skill areas previously outlined are intended to fall under the objectives of these two subjects. Debate is not mutually exclusive to their domains, however, it is applicable anywhere critical thinking and communication have a place.

In that it is compulsory, more students will be directly exposed to debate, allowing greater understanding and the probability of greater interest. If this approach is utilized, inter-class debates might evolve.

Meeting the Club

On calling the first meeting, the sponsor shouldn't be discouraged if only a few interested should turn up. If he/she has two committed people, he/she has a team. If he/she has four debaters he/she has two teams. A small number, in a way, is a blessing in disguise, at first, as the new sponsor has less to worry about and can concentrate on learning the ropes. Others will join as time goes on. A typical scenario for a committed sponsor might see only four debaters in the first year, eight in the second, over twenty in the third and over thirty in the fourth. This type of growth is indicative of growth factors that have been seen in presently operating programs.

Planning

The sponsor must assess the following considerations in planning for club involvement:

- a) Provision of materials, lists of texts and handbooks related to debate skills and subject matter. (Information available through ADSA)
- b) Explanation of one fundamental at a time using an evolutionary approach to teach debate.
- c) Evaluation with positive reinforcement and constructive criticism.
- d) Provision of a positive yet challenging atmosphere.
- e) Organization and recognition of, and emphasis on, a code of ethics among debaters. (Also applicable to other life situations).
- f) Provision of as many varying opportunities for debate-type activities as is possible. (Model Parliament, Model U.N., etc. – Information available through the ADSA)

Instruction

In addition to the previously mentioned planning there are specific methods of instruction that might be attempted:

- a) Working from the known to the unknown – find out what members know and develop the program from there.

- b) Explaining and/or reviewing the basic structure and responsibilities involved in debate.
- c) Discussion the value of debate.
- d) Viewing videocassettes of the debate and speech series.
- e) Viewing a demonstration debate by experienced debaters from a neighboring school or university.
- f) Mentioning and attending scheduled workshops where students can have an intensive learning experience in debate.
- g) Organizing club debates with constructive evaluation from self and other student members.

Initially, the sponsor might utilize values issues to allow the debaters to commence debating by expressing and supporting their more personal opinions. (e.g. “Be it resolved, that boys are better than girls.”) Most topics used at events are “propositions of policy” and, though values issues are a good beginning policy issues develop the desirable skill level more completely. (e.g. “Be it resolved that Canada should reinstitute capital punishment.”)

- h) Conducting short one-on-one debates with simple resolutions (times given could be varied):

Proposition Constructive	3 minutes
Opposition Constructive and Refutation	5 minutes
Proposition Reply Speech	2 minutes

- i) Requesting a special workshop for your and neighboring schools where ADSA staff and volunteers could provide you with expertise. (Suggested in the case of substantial numbers, i.e. 60-100, students.)
- j) Attending a debate as observers.

Notes

SPONSORS SHOULD NOT WRITE EVEN A SMALL PART OF A STUDENT SPEECH AS THIS DETRACTS FROM THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND IS SOMEWHAT QUESTIONABLE WHEN STUDENTS ARE INVOLVED IN TOURNAMENTS.

Sponsors should direct, not do the work. Research, evaluation, etc. should be done primarily by the students though some background reading might be done by the coach to effectively evaluate the issues being debated. The sponsor might offer guidance in finding materials.

V) Coaching Part 1

(Excerpted from *A Debate Coach's Guide*, by Colin Castle)

How should I Coach Debaters for a Particular Debate?

You will hear conflicting advice on this point, but you can resolve the conflict by asking another question: Why are the debaters entering the tournament? Because...they want to, of course; and because we, as educators, want them to. Debating is education. It helps students to develop personally, to discover that they can do things that other people cannot. It builds self-esteem, cleans up speech, and forces students to think precisely and quickly. We could go on, but the point is made. In debating, as in mathematics, music, or mechanics, we are educating students. Math teachers never write their students' tests for them-they leave that to the student. So the debate coach keeps his or her distance, too. It is a disservice to the students to “do it for them”. So, I would suggest this procedure:

- a) A tournament resolution and conditions are received. Call a meeting of all those interested in taking part.
- b) Establish the teams; complete the registration form and mail it.
- c) Hold a brainstorming session on the resolution, and on its possible interpretations and definitions; encourage the debaters to dredge up every possible argument, with or without justification, on both sides of the resolution. Assist by recording ideas on the board or the overhead. You can also enter into the brainstorming, but take care not to dominate it. Encourage the debaters to make their own record of as much material as they want.
- d) Discuss profitable lines of research: "What about finding out how many road accidents happen each year in the U.S.A. and Canada?" Indicate possible sources: "Canada Yearbook, Quick Canadian Facts, Information Please Almanac will be useful – all in the school library."
- e) Keep them on their toes before you have arranged to see them next. "How are you getting on with that affirmative case? What definition did you decide to use?", when you meet a debater by chance in the washroom or in the hall.
- f) Before the tournament, if possible: Listen to each team debate another, preferably twice and taking opposing sides of the resolution. You will not need to criticize logical inconsistencies or weakness in either case – each team will discover these when they face their "in-house" opposition. (But you can chip away at style, rules, delivery, structure of speeches, missed opportunities, and so on.) With inexperienced debaters, you might suggest areas for further research. Sometimes you will find, to your amazement, that they all missed the point of the resolution, and are chatting happily about details. Shine a big light on them; show them the way, but don't do it for them, and choke off those parents; there are many a Mom or Dad living vicariously in debating!
- g) Ease off before the tournament. Do not pressure debaters at the last minute. They have either done what they need to do or they have not – it's too late to do much about it. Besides they are probably more interested in what they are going to wear, and what movies are showing in Tootletown.
- h) And when you return to school, after it's all over, hold a postmortem. Help your debaters to benefit from their experiences; discuss the strong and weak points of their recent oppositions, ask them what comments they received from judges. It all adds up to a better performance next time.

What Should Be the Goals of My Coaching?

You should encourage your students in these directions:

- a) With regard to debate subject matter, to achieve an overview; details find their place later.
- b) To be flexible in their response to an opponent's arguments; to ensure that their constructive speeches are replies – a debate should be a logical conversation in four parts.
- c) To despise tactics which involve falsification of facts or a deliberate misquotation of an opponent.
- d) To be modest; success in debating, like nuclear physics, can release huge amounts of potential energy; bombastic debaters are the bane of organizers' lives. Let us have tournaments without mushroom clouds.

What is expected of me by Other Coaches and Organizers?

It boils down to the SEVEN *Musts*:

- Must #1:* Be responsible: If you enter three teams, arrive with three teams; if you are to bring three judges, bring three judges. If you have to cancel a team, do it as soon as you know. Turning up a team short is unforgivable.
- Must #2:* Be on time: For your registration deadline. And for the tournament.
- Must #3:* Pay up: Registration fees have to be collected before lunch can be paid for.
- Must #4:* Volunteer: To judge, to fetch the lunch, to shovel snow, to unlock the washroom – debate organizers have a right to ask for these and more.
- Must #5:* Control your debaters: Most debaters need no “control”, but we can all think of some who do. You are responsible for your debaters’ manners, punctuality, and appearances.
- Must #6:* Supervise your students. You must supervise your debaters at all times or make arrangements for them to be supervised.
- Must #7:* Have a sense of humour!

What about Things to Avoid?

Are there some things which are just not done by debate coaches?

Yes, there are; we might call them the THEE GREAT NO-NO’S:

- NO-NO #1:* Debate coaches do not scout other teams during tournaments. It goes without saying, of course, that they never “assist” debaters by listening to the arguments presented by teams to be met with later in the day. Don’t exclaim; it’s been done!
- NO-NO #2:* Debate coaches do not complain. Okay so your team went up against a miserable judge with a hangover. It’s the breaks. Next time they will win.
- NO-NO #3:* Debate coaches NEVER intervene in any way during a debate. While watching your debaters in action, your lips are sealed and your display of emotion is colder than the Sphinx. Any intervention on your part risks the disqualification of your debaters. And to dispute matters with a judge, whether during the judge’s comments or outside the room, is almost as reprehensible. However, if no one in the room has any idea about debate procedure and the debate has ground to a halt, some “traffic” directions on your part would probably be appreciated by everyone. By the same token, if the audience is blatantly unruly, a request for order, first directed to the chairperson, and if necessary the audience at a suitable break in the debate, is probably in order.

VI) Coaching Part 2

(Excerpted from *Introduction to Coaching Guide*, by the Saskatchewan Elocution and Debate Association)

Fall recruiting

In most schools, fall activities are promoted in September. Use newsletters, announcements, poster, club days and recruitment activities to draw students. If you have an established club, students can do demonstration debates on a fun topic in a set room over lunch hour, so other students can see what debate is about.

Handpicking likely candidates is often the most successful approach. When starting a club, begin with students who are likely to be successful debaters. While many different types of students can be great debaters, it is good to begin a new club with students who are intelligent, like to argue and have a good work ethic. The key trait is a willingness to research and explore ideas, as these skills lead to a sustained interest in debate. As these students enjoy debate, they will naturally help you recruit others who would enjoy debate. Dialectic activities like essays, speeches, or debates in the classroom are an excellent way to ferret out likely candidates.

Be sure to highlight potential opportunities for students who get involved. Highlight the nature of the workshop and the friends they'll make. Note some of the great destinations of national events and the travel opportunities debate offers. Students involved in Model United Nations or student government may be particularly interested in actually conducting activities in the Legislature.

Debate clubs are typically slow to start. If you have 6 students in the first year of a club, that makes an excellent year. Only two students is enough for a debate team, and many established clubs have 10 members. The moderate pace that debate clubs grow at is really important, because it allows the coach to acclimatize to all the elements of debate gradually. However, if a new club does find itself with more than 10 members, it is very helpful to have two coaches, or for the new coach to have a formal mentor from another school.

Meeting

When setting a meeting time, be aware of potential conflicting activities. Many debaters are active members of the school community, and selecting the meeting time that the most people can attend is helpful. If there is more than one coach or the club is larger, consider multiple times – one for the group as a whole and some specialized times for working on specific skills or styles of debate.

Coaches run meetings in a variety of ways. At minimum, the function of a debate club meeting is to exchange information. Many coaches issue “debate binders” to keep members organized. Tournament registration may be gathered or times and dates exchanged. Memos for parents are distributed. All debate clubs do these activities. As the club progresses, however, it will likely move through a number of other activities. These are the substance of coaching and the main focus of both the meetings and the other activities of the club.

i) Managing Club membership and books

Since being eligible for provincials is team, and not individually determined, **coaches are strongly encouraged to ensure that each debater debates in at least two tournaments with the same partner in the category that the debater will debate in at Provincials.** It is up to the coach to determine the team pairings. Some may be happy starting with a friend. Some teams form to balance out each other's strengths – a logical debater paired with an emotional speaker or to form a powerhouse team. Personality conflicts may arise that a coach will have to deal with.

By tracking each debater, coaches can also track who has paid. Different clubs have different methods of finance. In some clubs, fundraising pays for tournaments, while in others, debaters pay

their own costs. Some clubs may charge a membership fee beyond those set by ADSA to help cover costs. These decisions are all made at the discretion of the coach. Hosting a tournament also generally makes money for the host club. Regardless of the style of money generation, it is best to ensure that debaters have paid before registering them for a tournament. Unless a team is cancelled at least a week in advance, the club is liable for the cost of teams that cancel, and last minute cancellations are a major inconvenience for a tournament host. Since debaters who have paid in advance are less likely to cancel at the last minute, and your club will not be left paying, pre-payment is the best policy.

As soon as the invitation to a tournament is received, a meeting should be called and teams should be given a written breakdown of cost including transportation. The coach will need to complete the registration form and send it to the coach who is hosting the tournament. Additional copies of forms are usually available from ADSA's web site.

ii) Working on a resolution

As soon as the club starts working on a resolution or topic for a debate tournament, teams should check the ADSA website to see if there is an available research package. In addition, you may choose to supplement this package with additional information on the topic. Since packages are prepared well in advance, they often omit the most current information.

Coaches should start working a resolution by skimming the package and highlighting key ideas or terms. Once a coach has determined the basic concepts and terms the debaters need to be aware of, the club should discuss them. When everyone has a good handle on the topic and the key issues of the debate have been discussed, it is time to begin building cases. By this point, debaters need to have read the research package.

Working out definitions is difficult. Definitions need to be open enough to make the resolution debatable, but not so general that the topic is unlimited. Start the process by deciding what the Affirmative will argue in most cases and then what the debaters in the club wish to argue. Then define the important words to frame the resolution around the key ideas. Double-check the definitions to be sure that they are fair and not dependent on themselves to be true. Bad definitions cause debates about definitions, not the issues. These debates are boring and hurt every debater's speaker average. They should be avoided.

Inexperienced debaters will need help in preparing their actual cases. On the Affirmative they will need help generating needs for change and a plan. On the Negative, they will need help constructing arguments for why the status quo is good. Regardless of experience, most debaters run their cases by their coaches for approval. This is a good practice, and helps to prevent doomed or bizarre cases.

Once these tasks are done, the basics of preparing for a tournament are complete. However, going beyond the minimum creates a much stronger club. Many coaches have practice debates before the tournament. This is a strong practice because it forces debaters to prepare sooner, and gives them practice with the resolution. Taping the practice may be a useful tool. If the debaters will be trying a new style of debate, a practice debate also reduces nervousness and increases comfort with the new rules. In addition to practicing for a specific resolution, coaches can also teach skills, style, specific technique and good speaking habits.

Registering for club membership and events

i) Membership

All clubs should be registered by October 31 to participate in future events. Clubs may be denied attendance if membership fees are not paid. The membership forms request the names, grade, experience level and category of each student.

ADSA also requires one media release per club member be submitted with the registration. This form only needs to be submitted once per year/per student. This release is very important so ADSA may publish photos of debaters on the web site and in other publications.

Clubs are requested to update their membership list as their club membership changes. This helps the office ensure that all debaters are in the correct category and remain eligible for future events like Provincials.

Debaters must compete with the same partner in at least two tournaments and in the same category to be considered for Provincials eligibility.

ii) Events

Generally, ADSA or the hosts will release the invitations about one month prior to the event. Invitations may be sent via mail, fax or email. All invitations are posted on the web site and can be downloaded as needed. Registration forms can be faxed or mailed to the host school unless otherwise indicated. Emailed registrations are also encouraged. Teams are registered on a first-come basis up to the host's team limit. Clubs registering after the deadline will be placed at the bottom of the wait list if the limit has been reached.

Tournament fees are paid directly to the host school, usually upon arriving at the event. Pre-payment is gladly accepted! Cheques are to be made out to the hosts. Provincials and Model Legislature fees are paid directly to ADSA. Clubs will be expected to pay for any cancelled teams.

Transportation to events

Clubs are responsible for arranging all their own transportation and chaperones to events. If various coaches take the initiative, clubs often share transportation costs of rental buses or vans. Parents and other spectators are always welcome. Unlike sporting events, there is usually no concession. Spectators are required to pay a small lunch ticket fee if they wish to have the meal. Arrangements should be made ahead of time with hosts if this is the case.

Coaching during a tournament

Some debaters will want you to watch, others won't. Let them be your guide. You will need to be there to share their triumphs and soothe them in their defeats. Always be constructive with your comments.

Assist debaters if they need to register a conflict of interest concern about a judge and ensure everyone follows the *Code of Conduct*.

Coaches are allowed to assist the debaters right up until the debate starts, but must never write the material. During impromptu and speech events, coaches must not directly prepare an individual's presentation. This is a tough line to draw. Prompting questions and leading a brainstorming session are okay; providing direct information to be used in a speech is not. For example, a coach may ask: what do you know about this topic,

what do you think, etc. The best course of action may be to let the students work amongst themselves. This avoids even the appearance of inappropriate coaching at this time.

Post tournament debriefings

Once a tournament is completed, clubs should spend a meeting discussing how the tournament went. All debaters experience issues with judging or other teams being overly competitive. Discourage your debaters from focusing on these issues, as your club does not have the resources to solve them. Instead, focus on areas where debaters have experienced success and dissect why they did. You can also focus on particular problems related to the style of debate or the styles used by opposing debaters. Use the process to help debaters learn that reflection about debate is one of the most powerful tools they have to help them improve.

Building self-confidence

Coaches can help students develop confidence and self-esteem. Here are some ways you can do it. Remember:

- Greet each person individually when they arrive for each session. Make them feel good about being there.
- Show confidence in their ability to learn.
- Offer activities that suit their level of development.
- Encourage effort without always focusing on results.
- Avoid elimination games and other activities that may add undue pressure. Create situations where there are lots of "successes".
- Be specific when telling them what you like about their effort or performance.
- Use a smile, a nod, or a wink to acknowledge them.
- Praise them for special things they have done. A pat on the back means a lot.
- Give them responsibilities. Involve them in making decisions and give each of them a chance to be a leader. You might want to alternate captains, for example.
- Ask them for their input and invite their questions.

Source: Getting Started in Coaching, 3M Coaching Series.

Developing a philosophy for Advanced Coaching

Most debate coaches become coaches because the exchange of ideas fascinates them. They are often teachers, parents or lawyers. As each coach enters debate, the focus tends to be on the details. What are the rule violations? How does my team qualify for a tournament? While the details are important, they are less important than the reason why we debate. A debate can exist with only two people in any space. All that is needed is a topic that supports diverse views and two or more people willing to discuss the views. As coaches, we need to focus on why debate draws us, and then build activities in our own clubs that nurture our own philosophies.

Once the “why” is chosen, then a coach starts to develop the “how”. Running a debate club needs to consider the why with each how.

For example, when a coach starts the coaching year as a coach focused on values, moral certitude and thoughts, she might start with a difficult moral question and ask the debaters to decide what the right choice is. As the club works through the informal debate, the debaters get an introduction to things the coach values most. A coach who values the second concept, the expression of ideas, might start the first practice by walking at the front of the room in a variety of ways and get the students to make generalities based on the walking style. He is also focusing his students on the things he values.