

Debate

In a debate, two teams present opposing arguments on a controversial topic with the goal of convincing the audience of their point of view. The Pro team presents arguments in favor of a topic. The Con team presents arguments in opposition to a topic. Each team has a leader who gives an opening statement and a closing statement. The team members prepare questions and answers on the topic.

Debate Guidelines

- Each team has approximately the same number of members.
- Each team elects a leader.
- All members of the team are prepared to speak at least once and to give a rebuttal (answering argument) to the opposing team's statements.
- No one person dominates the debate; all team members contribute equally to the debate.
- The person who is speaking is not interrupted.

Debate Format

- Pro team introductory statement (5 minutes)
- Con team introductory statement (5 minutes)
- Con team questions and pro team answers (15 minutes)
- Pro team questions and con team answers (15 minutes)
- Con team concluding statement (5 minutes)
- Pro team concluding statement (5 minutes)

Debate Preparation

- Do Internet and library research to locate relevant information on the debate topic.
- List your team's major arguments in order of strength.
- List questions you think the opposing team will ask, and write out your responses.
- Write out questions your team will ask the opposing team.
- Summarize your team's strongest arguments.

Debate Evaluation

Excellent + Satisfactory ✓ Unsatisfactory –

Evaluate the members of the opposite team as excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory, according to the following criteria.

- ____ Participation: All members of the team participated by making statements, asking questions of the other team, or answering the other team's questions.
- ____ Organization: The team began with introductions of its members and ended with a clear closing statement.
- ____ Presentation: The team members communicated their position persuasively by combining delivery, gestures, and eye contact to create an image of competence.
- ____ Analysis: The team presented the strongest possible arguments to support its position.
- ____ Evidence: The team supported its arguments with good examples and substantial evidence.
- ____ Questions: The team's questions were concise and exposed weaknesses in the opposing team's arguments.
- ____ Answers: The team's answers to questions were concise, to the point, and logically supportive of their team's position.
- ____ Approach: The team treated the opposing team with respect, consideration, and fairness.

Overall Evaluation _____

Comments