

# Debates

**OBJECTIVE:** Students in this AP section are required to deliver a formal debate to their class.

**GRADING THE DEBATE:** SEE ATTACHED

**STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE FORMAL DEBATE:** Students will be divided into two teams; an affirmative team, that will debate/defend the resolution and a negative team that will oppose the resolution. Each side will research their position gathering facts, data, and other information to their position. Students will be encouraged to use a variety of sources including information from the library, public institutions (public libraries, local universities), and the internet. The structure of the debate is as follows:

4 minutes Affirmative Original Construction of the argument:

During this time period the affirmative side will present the major arguments supporting the resolution based upon the research.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3 Minutes Cross examination:

During this period the Negative may ask the Affirmative questions of clarification.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Minutes Negative Original Construction of the argument:

During this period the Negative side will present the major arguments against the resolution based upon the research.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3 Minutes Cross Examination:

During this time the Affirmative may ask the Negative questions of clarification.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3 Minutes Affirmative Rebuttal:

During this time the Affirmative may challenge the validity of the Negative's original argument. This can be done by introducing information to counter the points made by the Negative side.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Minutes Negative Rebuttal:

During this period the Negative may offer information to counter any points brought up during Affirmative's original argument, defend points brought up during Negative's original argument, defend points raised by Affirmative rebuttal, and restate their original argument.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Minute Affirmative Rebuttal:

During this time period the Affirmative may rebuttal any of the Negative's major arguments and sum up their position.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Original Construction of Argument Speeches:** Speeches will allow the Affirmative and Negative speakers to offer evidence in support of their position in addition to disprove the arguments offered by the opponent. In the original construction speech the student will research the resolution and create arguments in support of their position.

HINTS:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) 2-3 main points                                     | 2) Have a road map                          |
| 3) Anticipate the other side                           | 4) Quotes for support (but don't overdo it) |
| 5) Talking is better than reading: personal experience |   |
| 6) Strong opening and closing sentences                | 7) USE note cards, do not read an ESSAY     |

**Rebuttal Speeches:** Serve as an opportunity to clarify the issues presented in the debate and to question the evidence presented by the other side. This is best done by gathering information that rivals or contradicts the other side. The focus of a rebuttal speech should be only to address the information presented by the other side. **No new topics should be introduced.**

**Time Limits and Visual Aids:** All time limits have an extended grace period of up to 15 seconds for each speech. This applies to speeches that go over the limit, not those that are too brief. There will be a 3-5 minute question and answer period following each debate to allow the class members or instructor to participate by questioning the speaker and/or discuss the information presented. Visual aids are optional but a good idea. The debates will be presented in front of the classroom, with the speakers standing when presenting and addressing the audience as well as the opponent. **FORMAL ATTIRE IS REQUIRED!**

# Debates

**DEBATE TOPICS: To be completed over the course of the semester on Wednesdays generally. Groups of no more than 3 students!**

## **Constitutional Underpinnings-**

1. The Federal government has been devolving more power to the states. This trend is positive because it allows states to better meet the individual needs of their citizens.

## **Political Beliefs and Behavior-**

2. Low voter turnout among people threatens democracy in America.
3. Because of political apathy among young people, their issues are not adequately addressed.

## **Political Parties and Interest Groups-**

4. Interest groups, PACs, and 527s have too much clout in shaping public policy.
5. Multi-party political systems more effectively represent citizen interests than does the American two-party system.

## **Institutions/Three Branches of Government-**

6. The Supreme Court is too heavily influenced by politics.
7. The United States should reduce the number of regulatory agencies, because they generate red tape, raise prices, and reduce competitiveness in the world market.
8. Judicial review is undemocratic. It permits non-elected judges to decide whether or not a law is constitutional. It can frustrate the intentions of democratic governments by overruling the actions of elected officials.
9. The president has become so powerful that there is no longer an effective balance of powers.

## **Public Policy**

10. The Congressional committee system gives too much power to the majority party in setting the political agenda. As a result, the views of the minority party are ignored.

## **Civil Liberties and Civil Rights—**

11. Affirmative Action programs are necessary to safeguard equal opportunity in both education and employment for minorities.
12. In the interest of public safety, the Fourth Amendment rights of those under the age of 18 should be severely limited.

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## Student Critique Form

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DEBATE TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM BEING CRITIQUED: \_\_\_\_\_

Positive aspects of opening statement:

How opening could have been improved:

Were the questions clear and focused? Did they challenge the opponent's position?

Did the debaters directly and persuasively respond to questions?

Positive aspects of closing statement:

How closing could have been improved:

How effective was the use of statistics?

How effective was the use of quotations?

What would have improved this debate?

What did these debaters do best?

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## Debate Grade Sheet

DEBATE TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION/STANCE: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM BEING GRADED: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_/15 OPENING STATEMENT      TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_/10 DIRECT QUESTIONING      TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_/15 CLOSING STATEMENT      TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_/10 RESPONSE TO QUESTIONING

\_\_\_/10 USE OF STATISTICS/QUOTATIONS

\_\_\_/5 ENUNCIATION, VOLUME, ETC.

\_\_\_/5 DRESS AND APPEARANCE

\_\_\_/70 Total