

BAUDL Welcome Statement

Thank you for agreeing to coach (or return as a coach) with the Bay Area Urban Debate League!

The time and energy of teacher-coaches is the lynchpin of debate in BAUDL and we hope you have a great time getting to know your students in a new context. If the past experience of coaches is any guidance, you're almost certain to be blown away by what the young debaters are capable of doing. Admittedly, coaching can be challenging at times, especially in light of all the other responsibilities teachers face. Still, almost any returning coach will tell you that the student transformations make the sacrifice worth it. Young people who fear speaking up in class suddenly become engaged, vocal learners. Students struggling with discipline issues begin to modify their behavior, having learned alternate outlets for expressing their thoughts or decided that they have something to lose. Without your dedication, these opportunities would not be possible.

The mission of the Bay Area Urban Debate League is to *expand opportunities for students to join in rigorous academic competition and become articulate, informed leaders in their schools and communities.*

The BAUDL sees debate not as an activity for a small group of students but rather as a strategy for affecting academic culture school-wide. At the most basic level, this means that debate is accessible and appropriately challenging to students of all skill levels. It also implies that debate can be a defining part of the school's identity, with the beneficial effects spilling over to students who aren't even on the squad. So, by recruiting, retaining, and training students, coaches are part of a broader effort to boost academic expectations around the school.

This handbook is intended to provide you with accessible curriculum tools and help you navigate some of the expectations of being a coach. While your own experience as an educator and knowledge of your students will serve you incredibly well, the ideas included here are great starting points for running your team and planning your practices. These lessons should help you build large debate teams and transform your school's culture. They represent years of collective wisdom of debate coaches here in the Bay Area and around the country. That said, feel free to make modifications to the ideas as you see fit and please let other coaches know when you have new ideas that have worked. The more strategies are tested and shared, the stronger the league will be as a whole. We will add to the handbook over the course of the season and look forward to your feedback to improve our resources for you.

Thanks again for taking on your school's debate squad. The BAUDL staff is here to help you be the best coach you can be, so please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or suggestions. We look forward to a great season!

Sincerely,

Shauntrice Martin
Executive Director, Bay Area Urban Debate League
510-451-4020
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2018-19 HIGH SCHOOL TOURNAMENT **SCHEDULE**

locations are still pending and may be updated

Contact: Program Director Mya Whitaker mwhitaker@baudl.org

Workshop #1: 9/8 (Fremont)
Workshop #2: 9/15 (KIPP San Francisco)
Tournament #1: 9/29 (Oakland)
Tournament #2: 10/27 (Fremont)
Tournament #3: 12/7-8 Fall Champs (San Francisco State University)
Workshop #3: 1/19 (Emery)
Tournament #4: 2/2 Aaron Thomas Memorial Tournament* (Mission)
Tournament #5: 3/16 March Madness (McClymonds)
Tournament #6: 4/5-6 Spring Citi Champs (Oakland Tech)

Annual League Dinner: May 2019

***Aaron Thomas Memorial Tournament on February 2nd is a push up tournament**

This means that if you have competed in a division more than three times, you **MUST** move up to the next division (with coach discretion)

TRAVEL TEAM SCHEDULE

Contact Program Coordinator: Wyllene Turner wturner@baudl.org

Jack Howe (Long Beach): September 22-23, 2018
SCU1 (Dempsey): mid-November 2018
Gonzaga: January 5-6 2019
Stanford: February 2019
Cal: February 16-18, 2019
JV/Novice Nats: March 2019
NAUDL: April 2019
TOC (Kentucky): May 2019

IMPACTS OF THE PROGRAM

Debate is one of the most effective ways to equip young people with the confidence, commitment, and high-level skills to become leaders. Nationally:

- Urban debaters are 70% more likely to graduate from high school;
- Three times less likely to drop out;
- 74% more likely to reach the ACT benchmark for Reading than non-debaters.

Thanks to the efforts of its dedicated teachers, supporters, and volunteers, the Bay Area Urban Debate League involves 300+ students with

- 100% graduation rate and an
- 100% college acceptance

We recruit the students most in need and help them become articulate, informed leaders in their schools and communities. You are a vitally important part of this movement, and you have our deepest appreciation.

Like debate itself, this handbook is ever-evolving. Over time we will add even more resources, hopefully including strategies and methods developed by you!

JV 2-Person Policy Debate

Round 1A

Start time: 4:45 PM

Date: Sep. 27, 2013



Caldwell, C

Room 102

HUDL T1

Directions:

1. Rank the debaters in this round from 1-4, with 1 being the best debater. There can be no ties.
2. After considering the division skill level, assign speaker points on a 25-30 point scale; you can use tenths of a point (Example: Juan Carlos 28.8). There can be no ties. Points must correspond with ranks, meaning the speaker ranked 1 must receive the highest speaker points.
3. Evaluate debaters with points considering their reasoning, use of evidence, organization, refutation and delivery.
4. Determine a winner in this round.
5. Ensure that you have written each student's name on the proper line with their rank and points.

AFF Team <u>A11</u>	POINTS	RANK	Neg Team <u>AA7</u>	POINTS	RANK
1st AFF _____	_____	_____	1st Neg _____	_____	_____
2nd AFF _____	_____	_____	2nd Neg _____	_____	_____
Team Total Points _____			Team Total Points _____		

The _____ side, team # _____ won this debate. Low point win? _____

Judge signature _____ School _____

REASON FOR DECISION:

Speaker Points

30 Points = 100% in debate class
 29 Points = A- in debate class
 28 Points = B in debate class
 27 Points = C in debate class
 26 Points = D in debate class
 25 Points = F in debate class
 (Do you really want to give an F? It's demoralizing.)

You can give tenths of a point to help with the B+ grade = 28.8.

ALL SPEAKERS SHOULD HAVE DIFFERENT POINTS -- NO TIES!



Instructions for filling out a ballot

Before the Debate

1. At the start of the round, make sure that each school has written their name at the top of the ballot next to Aff Team and Neg Team
2. Make sure that each student has written her first and last name in the appropriate spot (1st Aff, 2nd Neg) on the front. Make sure to copy it to the back.

During the Debate/ During prep time

3. Devote 100% of your time to students. Do not read, check email, listen to music, text, etc.
4. On the back of the ballot, you should be writing comments to each individual debater:
 - *Write one positive comment for each debater for each speech/ something they did well.*
 - *Constructive comments should focus on urging them to clash (# their arguments, refer to opponents arguments by numbers), flow, and debate the big picture.*
 - *You **MUST** have more positive comments than constructive criticisms.*

After the Debate

5. Pick a winner. The end of the round question- “Is the plan a good idea?” Which side did a better job proving their answer to that question? Vote for the team that won the argument as it was argued between the two teams, not the side you personally agree with.
6. On the bottom of the front of the ballot, write the name of the team that won (ex. BFA AT) and circle whether they were Affirmative or Negative.
7. Explain your Reason for Decision. Why did you vote for the team you voted for? Be as specific as possible- if students understand why they lost/ won, that will allow them to improve more quickly.

Giving Speaker Points/ Ranks

8. Give each student speaker points between 25 and 30. You should give very few 25s and 30s. Only give below 25 if someone was exceptionally rude- this should be extremely rare (it happened two times all of last year) and if it happens please indicate why it on the ballot.
9. When giving speaker points: how persuasive were they, did they clash? Is the plan a good idea?
10. Circle whether or not it was a Low Point Win. A Low Point Win is defined as a win for the team that had the lower total of speaker points and ranks. (This is rare)
11. Rank the students in the round with 1 being the top debater and 4 being the bottom debater. Please note: Speakers cannot receive the same rank or speaker points.
12. Sign the ballot and write your school affiliation.
13. Talk to the students for a few minutes about the debate round. Tell each student what you thought they did well. **IN ROOKIE AND NOVICE, DO NOT SAY WHO WON OR LOST!**

Letters from Fellow Coaches

From: Neil Berch
West Virginia University

Dear BAUDL Coaches,

This is intended for new coaches, who, like me, start with no debate experience, but hopefully others can get something out of it as well. Ten observations about debate:

1. Coaching debate is just another form of teaching. The only difference is that you get to work with highly motivated students, the kind who will choose to spend a Saturday talking about public policy or philosophy. If you are a teacher, there's no need to make major changes to your teaching style. If you're not, just adapt your personality to the task at hand.
2. Debate is addicting. Once a student debates, they will want to debate again. Thus, it is important to get students debating as soon as possible. It may seem like students are never quite ready for their first tournament, but more practice is not the solution. The best "practice" is doing. By far, the biggest attrition is before the first tournament. After that, the addiction takes over.
3. Debate is complicated. It's got its own very specialized lingo. This can be confusing for both new debaters and new coaches. The good news is that there are online resources and, even more so, that existing coaches are almost always helpful and willing to answer questions (debate coaches like to talk!), suggest coaching techniques, and maybe even do scrimmages with your team before tournaments begin. They also will help coach your debaters with the post-round critiques that they offer when they judge them.
4. Debate is intense. People get very passionate. In the course of a long day or season, tempers can flare. It is important that you stay calm even when your students, other debaters, judges, other coaches, or anyone else is upset. Your calmness transmits itself to your students, and this enables them to learn better and debate more successfully.
5. Debate is an intellectual activity. The more you focus on the arguments that students are making, the better the intellectual experience will be for them. It also means that an important part of the activity is giving students space to develop their own arguments rather than just handing arguments to them.
6. Debate is competitive. Make no mistake: virtually everyone in the activity likes to win. As one of our colleagues once said, "If we weren't about competition, we would just get together at our own schools on Saturday mornings and read about the topic." Sometimes there are tradeoffs between education and competition (I urge you to make the obvious choice when that occurs); sometimes more education occurs because of the competitive nature of the activity



(students work harder, read more, etc.). I offer two cautions. First, it is sometimes tempting to keep debaters in the lowest division for which they are eligible (Novice in many places). They may garner more awards in the short term, but it stunts their intellectual development and reduces their chances for success in the long run. At WVU, we often put our Novice debaters in higher divisions early in the season. They don't win much there, but they learn a lot, and they're more

successful at end-of-season Novice championships.

The other thing I would add is that we tell our students that we expect four things from them every round: we expect them to treat everyone in the round with respect, try their best, learn something, and have fun. If they do those four things, we tell them the wins and losses will take care of themselves (I like to win, too!).

7. Debate can be frustrating. Some debaters think they won every debate. They get upset, with partners, opponents, and, most of all, judges. Sometimes, they may be right in placing that blame, but it doesn't matter. It's important to encourage students to take responsibility for the outcomes of their debates. Further, while sometimes judges make "bad" decisions, most often students didn't do a good enough job of persuading the judge. It's important for the student to learn what s/he could have done to win the debate, but that shouldn't devolve into arguing with the judge. And, again, your calmness is important.
8. Debate has many traditions. Some of these are important, but, as someone without debate experience, I have sometimes discovered that the debate community does things a particular way simply because "we've always done it that way". Don't be afraid to innovate.
9. Debate is exhausting. Students and judges go all day at a breakneck pace, and we've already talked about the intensity. It is important that you and your students eat as well as possible and get enough sleep.
10. Debate is fun. I hope you enjoy debate coaching as much as I have!

If you have questions for me, feel free to email at berchnorto@msn.com

-- Neil Berch

Dear Coaches,

First of all, I would like to welcome each and every one of you to the debate community. You are now entering a unique educational space where you have the potential to transform lives, yours and those of your students. I want to give you an honest perspective of the task that you have committed to by sharing with you some of my experiences when I first started in debate, as well as, give some advice that could help you along this new journey.

I was first introduced to debate as a senior in undergrad. I knew nothing of debate prior to this. The thought of committing to this activity was very intimidating at first. This proved to be beneficial. As someone who considers herself to be very intelligent, the fear created a necessary humility in me as I began my path to learn and eventually teach debate. In order to succeed, you need to be humble and hungry.

You need to be hungry to always want to learn more and do more. As a coach, you will want to constantly study your craft. Just like in athletics, you will need to watch film, study strategy, and be flexible in your tactics and techniques. Each and every one of your students will be unique and offer something valuable to your team. It is your job as the coach to figure out what that uniqueness is and foster growth in that student.

As you grow as a coach you want to remain humble at all times. You need to remind yourself that there is always learning to be done. You should seek advice and knowledge from other coaches. Information sharing is important. However, you should not limit yourself to just those with authority. You can learn just as much, if not more, from the students you coach. They should be your starting point for constructing arguments and strategies. If they can find a connection to the things you are trying to teach them, then they can find enjoyment in debate. It's up to you to facilitate that connection and the only way that can be done is by making a personal connection with your students. Always remember that they have valuable things to offer you.

Lastly, have patience. Have patience with your students. Have patience with the process. Most of all have patience with yourself. These were the important lessons I learned along the way and they eventually led me to becoming the National Female Collegiate Coach of the Year. The journey will be difficult, yet rewarding. It is my hope that these words are helpful and encouraging and I wish you all the best on your journey to change lives!

If you ever need help or words of encouragement, my inbox welcomes you!

Tiffany Dillard-Knox
Director of Debate, University of Louisville
tydknox@gmail.com



Recruitment Drive

Sample Information Sheet

Name: _____

1. Address: _____

2. Parents/Guardian Name(s): _____

3. Phone Number: _____

4. Email Contact: _____

5. Social Media Contact (Facebook, Twitter, etc.): _____

6. How many clubs, teams, or organizations are you already a member of? List each and include when each club, team, or organization has meetings.

7. Why would you like to be a member of the debate team?



BAY AREA URBAN DEBATE LEAGUE

Letter of Student Nomination

Dear [Teacher Name],

The Bay Area Debate League needs your help to expand the number of members on the debate team in order to teach your students advocacy, critical thinking, and public speaking skills. The experience and knowledge your students will gain in debate rounds will help them to become better, more engaged students in the classroom, so please help us help you.

We are having a debate team tryouts on [date] at [time] in room [#] and we ask that you please help us get as many students out to the event as possible. Please use the attached letter to nominate students you think would be a good addition to the debate team or that you think can benefit from the activity. We know that you probably have certain students who speak up in class, maybe more often than you would like, and we think that the debate team will provide them with a space to positively vent these voices.

Please do encourage as many students as possible to join this activity. It may also greatly aid our recruitment if you could offer **extra credit** to your students in exchange for them attending the tryouts or competing at tournaments. Keep in mind that this is not exclusive for those nominated, anyone can try out for the debate team! Thanks so much for your help.

Sincerely,

[Insert coach, mentor, or regional coordinator's name]

Running a Squad Meeting

THE FIRST PRACTICE

Make sure the entire team knows when and where the practice will be and get pizza for this one, with help from the league.

- **Welcome, Introductions, What is Debate, Why Debate:** Ideally, recruit some older students to participate – if there are none available, get an alumni intern from the league. (5-7)
- **Icebreaker:** With groups under 10, Two Truths and a Lie is great and quick; with larger groups, Chain Toss is better. (10)
- **Topic brainstorm for mini debate:** Solicit ideas for issues at school or in the world that should be changed; write them on the board, and have students vote for which one will be the focus of the mini debate. (5)
- **Mini debate setup:** Write on the board (could be pre-written) the speeches for the mini debate; usually will include 2-3 speeches for each side, with a cross-examination after all but the last speech. Emphasize why each speech is crucial. (5)
- **Group brainstorm:** Divide the class into two groups. Send one (or more) adults to coordinate a brainstorm of points for each group. Make sure that everyone is writing down all the ideas; then divide up students
- **Mini debate:** Before the debate begins, guide students toward making powerful speeches. Speeches are generally 1-2 minutes each, with 1-2 minute CX. (30)
- **Closing:** Congratulate the students, hype them up for next practice. (5)

REGULAR PRACTICE STRUCTURE

Always have a plan for practice. Concentrate each practice on improving 1-2 debate skills at a time. *Weave together content and skills.* Don't let content be the enemy of engagement, and don't let fun activities get in the way of deep content. The joy of debate is that students simultaneously have fun and build deep content knowledge and skills. This practice structure is meant as a starter; bend it to fit your specific needs:

- 1. 5-10 Minutes: Opening Routine and Setting Goals.** Make sure that practice starts on time with a high-interest routine that all the debaters can learn to expect and love – and can be disappointed if they show up late and miss it! Then work with debaters to go over goals for the practice.
- 2. 5-10 Minutes: Engaging with Content.** Seed the topics that you will explore in skill building. Often good to use speaking drills to expose students to texts related to the content you want to cover, or to brainstorm arguments pro and con; this primes them for deeper discussions than they could manage cold.
- 3. 20-40 Minutes: Skill building.** Dig into a debate game, a spar debate, or a drill, perhaps using the content discussed in the step before to focus the exercise.
- 4. 5-20 Minutes: Team Time.** Strategizing and Team Building. Get together to build community or to hatch plans for tournament victory, for instance talking about how the skills and content from earlier in the practice can help the team win at the next tournament. Also, this is a good time for students to work independently or in groups (e.g., with partners), or to get students involved in recruitment, fundraising, etc. Team time will become more important after the 1st tournament when the members of the team have strategizing against arguments to work on.
- 5. 1-5 Minutes: Closing.** Crucial to keep a few minutes at the end to circle up, reflect, set directions forward, and maybe share a team cheer.

LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE

Practice Title:

Skills: *What are the skills this practice will build? What do we want them to learn to do?*

Content: *What topics will they engage? What do we want them to know?*

Team: *Beyond individual students, what should the team (and the coaches) gain? What roles can mentors and student leaders play?*

Activities:

1.

Materials and prep needed:

-

Differentiation strategies:

-

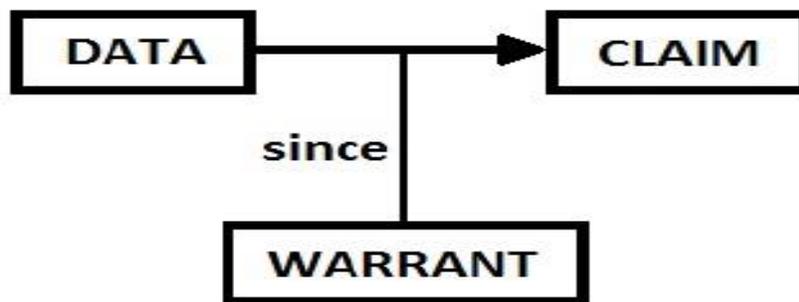
What is an Argument?

In order to make a strong argument, we need at least three parts: the claim, the data, and the warrant.

Claim- a statement of fact without explanatory reasoning (example: Blue is the best color.)

Warrant- a statement or piece of evidence that includes reasons or justification for its conclusion (example: Pets are loyal to owners because the owners feed them.)

Data – the facts or evidence that support the warrant (example: Dogs do not run away when they are well fed.)



Claims

There is a difference between a “claim” and an “argument.” A claim merely states that something is so, but does not explain why. Thus, a team could just keep making claims (“we win,” “our arguments are better,” “our case is true”) without making progress in the debate.

Warrant/Reasoning

REASONING: Here is where you explain the logical basis of your argument. There is a difference between a “claim” and an “argument.” A claim merely states that something is so, but does not explain why. Thus, a team could just keep making claims (“we win,” “our arguments are better,” “our case is true”) without making progress in the debate.

An “argument” expresses a REASON why something is true. It uses some logical principle to compel belief on the part of the listeners. Quite often debaters will leave this step out as they imply use prepared briefs in an assertion-evidence pattern. They do so at their peril, as will be explained later.

Argument Activities

Reasons **	5-15 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose a controversial statement linked to the lesson of the day. 2. Using a Timer for drama (1 minute starting NOW!), have each debater write down as many reasons for the statement as they can inside of one minute . 3. Have debaters shout out their reasons, and write each good one on the board – don't be too picky, but help them build the skill of thinking up <i>good</i> reasons. 4. Switch to the negative side – against the resolution – and repeat. 5. Start a discussion: which side was easier to write for? Which side looks stronger? How can you tell? 6. Use the reasons on the board as a springboard for other activities. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timer • Aff/Neg columns on the board <hr/> <p>Pro tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing can be stretched to two minutes, and might want to circulate around the first time this is done • Can be modified to include finding warrants or evidence for each reason.

Which Warrant Is Best?	25-35 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather debaters into groups of 2-3, and have one in each group label themselves as A, B, and C. Write a claim and three warrants on the board. For instance, if the claim is “We should have school uniforms”, the warrants could be: A) school uniforms prevent clothing-based bullying; B) school uniforms save families money; and C) school uniforms build a sense of school community. 2. Set a timer for 2 minutes of “prep time” to ensure that every debater has time to prepare a specified number of reasons in support of their position. 3. Set a timer for 1 minute. Ask all of the first speakers to rise and remind them to number their reasons during their 1-minute speech – make sure that their partners are flowing. 4. Set a timer for 1 minute. Ask all of the Second Speakers to rise and remind them to number their 2 reasons during their 1 minute speech. 5. If there are 3 or more positions then continue with the same procedure as in 4 and 5 as many times as necessary. 6. Ask the debaters to decide based on the speech which warrant is the strongest. Have a 7. discussion as a group and make a collective decision! 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim and 3 Warrants • Timer • Flow sheets (will only need first 3 columns) <hr/> <p>Pro tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variant: Instead of claims, use evidence, short paragraphs that each support a given claim. • As debaters become more advanced, the claims and warrants can become increasingly specific.

Refutation: Answering or criticizing ideas and issues presented by the other team.

Four Step Refutation

Skilled debaters not only have a command of language and content, but are able to present their arguments in an organized fashion that facilitates the audience following along in the debate. Refutation is designed to introduce arguments, undermine opponents' arguments, rebuild arguments, and clarify own arguments. One way to do this is through a process called “four step refutation.”

Step One: Signal

Identify the claim you are answering. In a single debate, there will be multiple arguments, pieces of evidence, and sometimes tangents that a debater must address. Clearly identifying which of your opponent's arguments you are responding to will keep the flow of the debate progressing in a coherent manner.

Step Two: State

Make your (counter) claim. After articulating your opponent's position, you should make your response in a concise, articulate manner.

Step Three: Support

Reference evidence or explain the justification. Many arguments will be supported by evidence that provides some justification for the claim being advanced. Reading or referring to evidence already read in the debate will buttress claims advanced by the debater. Oftentimes, evidence is not needed, and the debater's own brilliant analysis can provide the justification for the claim.

Step Four: Summarize

Explain the importance of your argument.

For an audience to reach a judgment on an issue, they must recognize the comparative importance of different arguments. Detailing the way in which your argument implicates your opponent's position is a crucial way to leave an impression on audience members.

1. **They say...** You need to communicate that you understand what they have told you. This is your chance to boil it down and put it in your own words.
2. **But...** So, you disagree with the other team? Don't just disagree; make your own claim! You can do one of several things here:
 - a. *Just say no.* If the other team is spreading a statement that is wrong, catch them on it. Like this: "*They say* HIV does not cause AIDS, *But* that's just not true. I say this *Because...*"
 - b. *Make it better.* This is a simple version of a counterplan. "*They say* the death penalty will deter crime, *But* there are much better ways to lower the crime rate, like community policing. This is better *Because...*"
 - c. *Attach an impact.* "*They say* we should give incentives to clean up brownfields, *But* this will lead to gentrification, *Because...*"
3. **Because...** This is the warrant for your claim. Winning in debate is not just about having opinions; use evidence and reasoning to show *why* you think like you do.
4. **Therefore...** Sum it up, so the judge knows what to *do* with your argument. Example: "Therefore, the death penalty should be rejected in favor of other strategies to deter crime" or "Therefore, we should reject the plan to clean up brownfields."

Team Refutation Battle	45-60 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draw a flow chart on the board with 3 columns: a negative attack, an affirmative answer, and a negative answer. Explain to the group that clash is one of the most important skills to learn in debate, partly because it brings out the fun and excitement of debate! 2. Mix up the matched pairs of negative cards and their affirmative answer cards. Give at least one to each debater. Make sure that every negative attack has at least one answer! 3. As necessary, brainstorm and/or review the case and relevant arguments with the debaters. . Ask them to identify if they are holding a Neg or Aff piece of evidence. 4. With great fanfare, have the debaters sort themselves into Affirmative and Negative teams, reminding them that the Affirmative Team answers Negative Arguments and the Negative Team answers Affirmative Arguments. Allow them five minutes to review their evidence and construct a response using Four Step Refutation. 5. Pick a member of the Affirmative Team to be the First Up, reading their negative card aloud as you flow it on the board. Ask the Negative Team who has a card they think answers that card; they will be Next Up. 6. Have the First Up perform a Four-Step Refutation against their card: sum up (briefly!) their refutation on the board in the Aff column. 7. Have the Next Up from the Negative Team read their card – discuss how well it answers the card read by the First Up, and then let them perform their 4-step refutation as you flow it on the board. 8. Repeat steps 5-7 until finished. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paired Affirmative and Negative evidence cards • Three-column flow on board • Handout on Four Step Refutation

Answering Arguments with DR. MO

Answering arguments is hard, but you're in luck, because DR. MO will help you win MORE arguments.

D	Deny	Argue that the argument is simply untrue
R.	Reverse	Argue that the opposite of what they said is actually true (example: "They say that colonizing Mars will bring world peace, when in fact it will simply be another fighting ground for resource greedy nations")
M	Minimize	Acknowledge that their argument may have some truth to it, but say that it really doesn't matter as much as they say it does
O	Outweigh	Acknowledge that their argument may be true but something else matters much more than this tiny argument

Try DR. MO's techniques by answering the sample arguments.

Sample Arguments	Which DR. MO Technique?	Answer
Downloading music for free is wrong.		
America has a drug problem so schools should drug test students.		
The US should invade Canada		
Owning nuclear weapons makes the US safe.		
Women should be allowed to play on men's teams for all sports.		

The Speech Order & Responsibilities

The constructive speeches are used to build the arguments that the affirmative and negative teams hope to win. The rebuttals are used to solidify the position taken by each team and to convey to the judge why he/she should vote for one team over the other. Speech times are set by the tournament director making it important to read the rules in the tournament invitation so that no confusion occurs.

The Speech Order Cheat Sheet (all speech times in minutes):

<u>Speech</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Speech Time Limits</u>
1AC	Read the case and plan	8 minutes
Cross-Ex	2NC asks the questions	3 minutes
1NC	Present the disadvantage shells first if time permits, case arguments	8 minutes
Cross-Ex	1AC asks the questions	3 minutes
2AC	Answer ALL negative arguments. Rebuild and strengthen the case. Point out arguments that the negative has not attacked.	8 minutes
Cross-Ex	1NC asks the questions	3 minutes
2NC	Picks 1-2 core off case arguments of the negative strategy and answers all of the 2AC responses. Rebuilds and strengthens their 1-2 core off case arguments. Points out arguments the affirmative has not attacked. * Remember to take only part of the negative arguments – leave some for the 1NR speech. Specifically, leaves case debate for the 1NR.	8 minutes
Cross-Ex	2AC asks the questions	3 minutes
1NR	Rebuilds and strengthens all other arguments not in the 2NC. Crushes the affirmative case.	5 minutes
1AR	Answer ALL of the negative arguments from both the 2NC and 1NR. Any unanswered argument could mean a negative victory.	5 minutes
2NR	Pick a few arguments that you think the negative side is winning and concentrate on those. Tell the judge exactly why to vote for you. Tell the judge why the negative arguments outweigh the arguments of the affirmative.	5 minutes
2AR	Start by restating your aff case and its advantages. Respond to negative arguments. Point out any arguments that have been unanswered by the negative team. Tell the judge why you win. Tell the judge why the affirmative arguments outweigh the negative arguments	5 minutes

The Speeches in More Detail: Constructives

1st Affirmative Constructive (1AC) (8 minute Speech)

The first speaker is from the affirmative side. The 1AC's responsibility is to present a case and plan which falls under the current resolution and is the basis for the debate which is to follow. This speech is the only one that is prewritten.

Cross-examination (3 minutes): The 2NC asks questions about the 1AC case.

1st Negative Constructive (1NC) – (8 minute Speech)

The second speaker is from the negative team. The 1NC strategy will vary according to the case which is presented in the previous speech (1AC) by the affirmative. The 1NC usually consists of disadvantages, topicality arguments, and other negative arguments such as case attacks.

Cross-examination (3 minutes): The 1AC asks questions about the 1NC arguments.

2nd Affirmative Constructive (2AC) – (8 minute Speech)

The obligation of this speaker is to answer the arguments put out by the 1NC. This provides the first opportunity for a team to take control of the round and sway the judge's ballot to the affirmative. The 2AC sets the stage for the rest of the round.

Cross-examination (3 minutes): The 1NC asks questions about the 2AC answers.

2nd Negative Constructive (2NC) – (8 minute Speech)

This speech may be used to enter new arguments into the round, but is usually used to point out errors in the affirmative arguments. If the affirmative team does not answer all of the issues brought into the round by the negative team, the negative team can capitalize on this error and win the round. This speech is also used to extend the arguments generated by the 1NC and to respond to the 2AC

Cross-examination (3 minutes): The 2AC asks questions about the 2NC answers.

The Speeches in More Detail: Rebuttals

1st Negative Rebuttal (1NR) – (5 minute Speech)

The first in a series of rebuttal speeches, this speech covers what the 2NC did not answer as well as what the negative team wants extended through the block extension of the 2NC.

1st Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR) – (5 minute Speech)

This is the first affirmative rebuttal speech. This speech is also used to bring out important affirmative arguments as well as errors in the negative arguments. This speaker is responsible for covering the negative block. This person must have the ability to speak well in order to cover all the affirmative arguments, making the 1AR one of the most difficult speeches in the debate round.

2nd Negative Rebuttal (2NR) – (5 minute Speech)

This speech is used to explain to the judge why he/she should vote for the negative rather than the affirmative team. All arguments in the round should be clear by this point. The 2NR should use this time to answer the arguments extended in the negative block.

2st Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR) – (5 minute Speech)

This speech, the last of the rebuttal speeches, presents the last opportunity for the affirmative to make an impression on the judge. At this point in the round, the affirmative team should have explained to the judge why the affirmative has won the round, and why the case outweighs the harms of the disadvantages.

Cross-Examination

Cross-examination, also referred to as "CX" or "cross-ex," is a three minute period of time between the constructive speeches which allows each speaker to ask the other questions in order to clarify arguments.

Cross-Examination Order

1A Cross-Examined by 2N

1N Cross-Examined by 1A

2A Cross-Examined by 1N

2N Cross-Examined by 2A

Cross-examination Style

First, stand-up and face the judge. This is an important part of being credible. Second, be forceful and clear. You want the judge to be able to hear every question and answer. Third, maintain eye contact with your judge. They are your target audience. Finally, do not be rude or evasive in cross-examinations. Question and answer sessions reveal more about you as a person (and as an advocate). Judges will be evaluating your personality as much as the content of your questions or answers

Using Cross-Ex for Clarification

Both the affirmative and the negative can use cross-examination for clarification. Ask clarification questions first if your partner is relying on that information to help them prepare their upcoming speech. Clarifying questions are important because they allow you to be sure what your opponent is arguing.

Strategy Tips for Cross-Ex

Cross-examination can be used effectively as a strategic tool to set-up arguments that you will make later in the debate.

1. Do not expect your opponents to concede anything important in the cross-ex period.

Law & Order is a fictional TV show. Very few debate teams break down and admit that their plan is not topical in the cross-ex. Do not expect concessions.

2. Do not dwell on the same point for the entire cross-examination period.

Very rarely does it help to spend more than one of the three minutes pursuing a particular line of questioning. Ask your question once or twice and if you are not getting satisfaction from the answers you hear, go ahead and move on. Count on the judge being frustrated with you.

3. Answer questions fully, but do not be obnoxious about consuming lots of time.

Try to make the CX period an extension of your earlier speech, with explanation. If you try to be evasive or run on and on your judge will recognize it and reach a negative conclusion.

Finally, answer and ask questions only for yourself, not your partner.

Don't interrupt your partner's answer just because you think you have a slightly better answer.

Cross-Ex Exercises

CX Attack **	15-30 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With the whole group, come up with a list of CX questions on a particular issue (later on, debaters can come up with it themselves) and discuss – or demonstrate – some strategies for keeping cool / stylishly dodging questions on CX. Use Cross-X Tips handouts if desired. 2. Divide debaters into groups of 2-3 – three is best. Explain the roles of Answerer (person being cross-Xed), Lead Questioner, and Backup Questioner. The job of the two questioners is to tangle up the answerer, and the job of the answerer is to make themselves look good to the judge. Use the CX Attack Role Sheet in the Supplements & Handouts if desired. 3. Ask debaters to choose who will be in which roles first (or assign if desired). With great enthusiasm, start the timer on the first round – between 1-3 minutes depending on your preference. Circulate and encourage debaters to balance between being aggressive and polite. 4. Call time on the first round! Pause and open up space to share fun and/or interesting moments from the first round. Repeat at least twice so that each debater gets to play each role. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles listed on board • CX Attack Role Sheet • Cross-X Tips handouts if desired • Timer <p>Hot tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-X should be fun! Make sure they keep up the energy and the pace, and demonstrate with a lead debater or two if necessary. • Also fun are CX skits by lead debaters showing what <i>not</i> to do and how it could be done better.

CX Hot Seat	10-20 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose 3 topics on which your debaters should know a lot (as a default, topics as simple as Your Life, Your School, and The Music You Like will work) and write them on the board. 2. For each one, call up a debater to the “Hot Seat” at the front of the room, and brainstorm with the class a few questions that apply to it. 3. Have the class ask questions – and the Hot Seat debater answer them! – as quickly as possible for exactly 1 minute, and keep a tally of how many questions are answered well. Repeat until as many debaters as desired have been on the Hot Seat. 4. The debater that “wins” is the one that answers the most questions during their round. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timer • Topics written on the board <p>Hot tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give prizes if desired, and keep the pace fast for more fun.

Flowing

Flowing is debates way of note taking. Flowing in particular is a type of short hand writing that teaches debater to be organized and track all of the arguments in the debate. Debaters should flow all of their opponents speeches and their partners speeches in order to know all of the arguments in a debate.

Flowing Tips

1. Don't ever give up and stop. When flowing a fast debater do not stop and listen. If you miss a response, go on to the next response. You can always ask the debater in cross-examination for your missed responses. Remember, the more you practice, the easier flowing gets.
2. Don't be disorganized. When flowing the disorganized speaker, do not follow his or her example. Write all of his or her arguments in one column on a separate legal pad. Then in you speech, answer all of his or her arguments. Then go back to the structure and point out what you are winning and what your opponent failed to answer in his or her speech.
3. Use structure. Structure and label all the arguments on your flow the same way that the speaker you are flowing is structuring and labeling his or her arguments. Be sure to write down all the numbers and letters you hear on your flow so that you can refer to specific subpoints of your partner or the other team later in the debate.
4. Use pre-flows. Flow all of your arguments clearly before you speak. Before the debate, it will sometimes be possible to pre-flow generic arguments on post-it notes.
5. Use your partner. If you cannot flow all of your arguments before you speak, hand your flow to your partner during cross-examination and have him or her fill in your flow for you. Use the other team's prep time to talk to your partner about arguments you might have missed.
6. Label your arguments. On your briefs and pre-flows, label your arguments with short, accurate, precise, and specific labels, which are no more than four words long. As you are labeling, put the crucial words first. If you label arguments correctly, you will be able to give a better speech because your judge, partners and opponents will find you easier to flow.

The Need for Lots of Flowpads and Many Sheets of Paper

You should use many sheets of paper for each argument and you many wish to use different flowpads for different arguments. In any debate you will have:

- a flow related to the 1AC structure.
- a flow listing arguments of the 1NC which are not related to the case (disads, T, counterplans, etc.)
- a flow listing any 2AC arguments
- a flow listing extensions of the 1NC or new arguments made by the 2NC

Exercises

Flowing Music Guide - Flowing can seem boring when it's first introduced; these songs can add energy, stimulate discussion, and above all encourage debaters to take detailed notes.

Recommended Songs

#	Track	Dirty?	Challenge	Notes
1	Blackalicious – Alphabet Aerobics	No	High	Fast-paced verbal warmup – very challenging to flow.
2	Fresh Prince – Nightmare on My Street	No	Low	Funny romp (horror story, but playful) good for any audience.
3	Weird Al Yankovic – White & Nerdy	No	High	Parody song with rapid-fire funny lyrics.
4	Common & Will.i.am – A Dream	No	Medium	Super-positive, clean, politically aspirational/utopian.
5	Bob Marley – War	No	Medium	Drawn from a speech by Haile Selassie; a political reggae song.
6	Common – A Song for Assata	No	Low	Pretty harrowing story; good for raising discussions.
7	Ruby Ibarra – Brown Out	Minor	Medium	Fun to flow because of its changes in pace; tight narrative (some cursing).
8	Flobots – Handlebars	Minor	Medium	Compelling essay on the corruptions of power; emotionally intense.
9	Lauryn Hill – Mystery of Iniquity	Minor	High	Wise words on the state of the world, rapidly spoken by a top MC.
10	Dead Prez – Animal in Man	Minor	Medium	A retelling of George Orwell's Animal Farm.
11	Tupac – Changes	Minor	Mid-High	Political, visionary, positive.
12	Kanye West – Never Let me Down	Minor	Medium	More solid words from Kanye – best in the last verse.
13	Black Star – Children's Story	Medium	Medium	A harrowing tale from Mos Def.

Affirmative Case

The affirmative team is the advocate in the debate. The aff calls for change and in order to compel the audience (judge) to agree the affirmative will need to prove the world with the advocates plan in it is substantially better than the world without it. The affirmative must demonstrate there is a need for change because there is a serious problem (need) which the present system cannot solve (inherency) but which is none the less, solvable (solvency). The stock issues are the categories created to help advocates create a successful advocacy.

Stock Issues and the Resolution

The stock issues are the affirmative burdens that have traditionally been used to show that the affirmative case is a good example of the resolution. These stock issues are called "prima facie" (Latin, on first look), that is, the affirmative must meet these burdens to win the round because the burden of proof lies with the affirmative.

Topicality

Topicality is the stock issue that insures that the affirmative team stays within the framework of the resolution. Any violation, or failure to meet a particular word, of the resolution proves that the affirmative team is outside of the resolution's topic area. Violations can apply to any word in the resolution. If the affirmative's case is outside of the resolution, the negative team will not be able to negate or argue against it. It is hard to get negative evidence on a topic if one does not know the topic. For this reason, the affirmative must be topical to win the debate.

Significance and Harms

Significance and harms deal with the importance of the problem. Harms can be defined as the results which would occur if the problem were not solved. Significance evaluates the importance of the harms. This area measure how much is needed to solve the problem. Since it is difficult to decide to what extent a problem needs to be solved, significance and harms, as opposed to solvency or topicality, do not carry as much weight in the round.

Solvency

Solvency is the measure of whether or not, or to what degree, the affirmative's case solves for the problem it identifies. If the affirmative's plan does not solve the resolution, there would be no need to put it into effect. Topicality and solvency are the stock issues which one would want to place the most emphasis in the round. [However, one must remember that judges weigh the harms against the disadvantage's impact to make a decision.]

Inherency

Inherency refers to the necessity of resolitional action. For instance, if the affirmative team proposes that building landfills in the U.S. would clean up pollution, the affirmative would be non-inherent because there are already landfills in the U.S. Inherency is important because if the plan is already in action, there would be no need to enact it again.

Affirmative Case Exercises

Argument Anticipation Drill

Below are several assertions. For each assertion, anticipate what the other team might say in response. What will be your answer to that argument? How could you re-phrase your original argument to answer their argument in advance?

1. You say that the government should buy \$100 million dollars in Venezuelan oil. They're going to say that the US buying Venezuelan oil in will anger Country Y. What will you say? How could you modify the 1AC to answer this argument in advance? HINT: How do you think a war in Country X might affect Country Y?
2. You say that the government should provide reconstruction assistance to Country Z. They're going to say that this would be really expensive, raising the deficit, which would be really bad. What will you say? How could you modify your plan to answer this argument in advance? HINT: There are many ways to pay for policies – what are some other ways the government raises money?
3. You say that the U.S. Navy should deploy a big rapid response force to Cuba. They're going to say that it would be impossible to immediately deploy this U.S. force. What will you say? How could you modify your proposal to answer this argument in advance?
4. You're going to argue that the U.S. should share its intelligence, including CIA information and satellite data, with the Mexico. What will they say? How might you answer these arguments?

Disadvantages

DEFINITION: A disadvantage is an argument stating that if we adopted the policy of the other team (plan/counterplan) something bad would be the result.

Disadvantages (also called "disads" or "DAs") are most often negative arguments which prove the effects of the plan would be bad. Thus, the disadvantages are compared to the advantages to decide whether the effects of the plan are more advantageous than disadvantageous. There are many different parts to a disad and most disads have some or all of these parts.

COMPONENTS:

Name: what you want to call it in the debate.

Uniqueness: proof the problem (impact) is not occurring right now. Uniqueness is an argument establishing the affirmative is the only policy which would cause the impacts to occur and therefore the affirmative policy is distinctively responsible for the bad thing.

Link: reason(s) why adopting their policy would cause this to occur, talk about why THEY are responsible for this. The link states why the affirmative plan causes this problem to happen.

The negative usually reads a piece of evidence saying why the affirmative plan causes the way things are now to change.

Internal Link: Other lines of argument needed to reach the impact. Sometimes when the plan changes something, it does not cause a problem right away. This is when an internal link is needed. The internal link states that when the plan causes something to change, which is the link, then that causes the problem, which is the impact.

Impact: what it is that is bad and will happen, and how bad it is. The impact describes the problem that will happen and why it is bad. This impact is usually something very large and harmful. The negative uses this impact to say that the affirmative plan should not be done because although the plan might cause something good to happen, the problems the plan causes are worse.

An Overview: The Cliff Example

This is the most basic explanation of a disad. The DA concept might seem complex but it really isn't when you use a common experience to illustrate it. Like so much in debate it sounds difficult, but it really isn't. If you can understand this then you are well on your way to becoming able to make very sophisticated arguments and decisions in debates and in life.

Falling off a cliff is a bad thing. Let's use that as an example of a disadvantage. You are standing near the edge of the cliff, and if you fall off that would be bad (a **DISADVANTAGE**). If someone pushes you (**LINK**), then you would fall off the cliff. If you fall off you will hit the rocks below and get all busted up (**IMPACT**). If you are standing right on the edge (**BRINK**) (**LOW THRESHOLD**) of the cliff, just a little push (**LINK**) will push you over. If you are standing way back from the edge of the cliff (**HIGH THRESHOLD**) a little push (**LINK**) won't send you over the edge, but a big push (**LINK**) might. If you would not fall off unless someone pushes you, then without a push you will remain safe (**UNIQUE**). If you are already running towards the edge of the cliff then an extra push won't make any difference (**NOT UNIQUE**), you are going to fall off no matter what. If the fall is a large one and the rocks below are sharp then this is a very bad thing (**BIG IMPACT**). If the fall is a short one and you land on soft feather pillows then it is not a bad thing (**NO IMPACT**).

Parts of a Disadvantage

Uniqueness: Whether something is an “essential” cause of a situation or scenario. If a disadvantage will take place whether the affirmative plan is adopted or not, then it is “not unique.” That component of a disadvantage which illustrates that the disadvantage impact which the negative claims results only from the adoption of the affirmative plan. That is, the disadvantage impact would not occur absent the affirmative plan.

LINK: The first aspect of a kritik is the link to the affirmative case. Here the negative team identifies the underlying problematic assumptions or language used to justify the affirmative case. Like most off-case arguments, this evidence will probably be fairly generic, but good

kritik debaters should become comfortable identifying specific examples of the argument of the kritik in the affirmative team’s evidence.

IMPACT: Next, the negative team explains why this assumption is such a bad thing. This portion of the argument is sometimes called the “implication” of the kritik. In addition to pointing out the broad-scale negative repercussions that will arise if the affirmative’s assumptions or language continue without being questioned, many negative teams also contend that the problematic portions of the affirmative’s logic will doom the policy to failure in the long run. This type of impact argument is called a case turn.

DA Exercises

Mine is Bigger!	10-20 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Split the group into two evenly-matched teams. Talk about the main criteria for judging impacts: Timeframe (how quickly it happens), Probability (how likely it is to happen), and Magnitude (how nasty it is). Talk about how a seemingly small impact like dehumanization could compete with a seemingly large impact like nuclear war. 2. Two at a time (one from each team), debaters pick impacts out of a “hat” and attempt to convince the audience that their impact is more important than the other. Determine the winner as you like, count up the score at the end (keep it close to heighten the drama!), and reward one or both sides as you see fit. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “hat” full of impacts (e.g., nuclear war, global warming, economic recession, dehumanization) • Timer <p>Not tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally, have debaters create the Hat O’Impacts using the Jar O’Resolutions activity discussed above.

Find the Link	10-30 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the board, write a plan and a negative argument. After a quick discussion of what makes a good “link” – the connection between a negative argument and its target affirmative plan – give the squad 30 seconds to brainstorm a strong link between the negative argument and the plan. Discuss. 2. Erase the board. Soliciting from the team as needed, write a list of 3-4 negative arguments and make sure that the squad understands them. 3. Pass out a sheet listing 2-4 affirmative plans. Each debater races to link as many arguments as possible from the board to these plans. 4. (optional) Break the squad into pairs. Tell each debater to pick the plan they think they linked to best. Give a first debater in each pair 1 minute to argue for the links to the plan they picked while their partner flows. Give their partner 1 minute to refute, and then give 1 minute for discussion. Rotate, then discuss as a group. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of 2-4 affirmative plans • List of negative arguments on the board) • <p>Not tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity can be tuned to be extremely difficult or extremely easy based on the negative arguments and the plans that you choose.

Disadvantages: The Missing Link	20-30 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Split one or more disadvantages into their component parts – Brink (the system is okay now, but fragile); Link (the affirmative plan makes things worse); Internal Links (a chain of events leading to the impact); and Impact (the terrible things that will occur because of the Affirmative plan. For example, cut the Missing Link Strips handout into its component strips. 2. Give one strip – or one evidence card – to each debater. Give them 1 minute to read it and ask questions. 3. Give the debaters a limited time (5 minutes tops) to circulate and re-unite with the other debaters who have the remainder of their disadvantage story. 4. Have each newly united group tell the story of their disadvantage. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantage shells (cards) split into link, brink/uniqueness, and impact – see Missing Link Strips handout. <p>Not tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The handout uses simple analytic arguments – advanced debaters can handle full cards (for extra difficulty, remove the tags!)

Disadvantages: The Tale of Captain BLI	30-45 min
<p>Captain BLI stands for Brink (Uniqueness), Link, and Impact.- a chain of consequences that result from adopting a plan. This is a basic disadvantage.</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lesson begins with the telling of the BLI story, which can be as short as this: <i>Captain BLI stands at the edge of a cliff, scanning the ocean for ships. Behind him comes the evil Doctor Plan, who gives him a gentle push. Set off balance, Captain BLI falls into the ocean and certain doom.</i> 2. Feel free to tell the story with entertaining bells and whistles. Then use the white board to graphically show the captain on the brink of falling off a cliff. Ask the debaters to retell the parts of the story that represent the three main components of Brink (the cliff), Link (the push), and impact (certain doom!). 3. In groups or working alone, have debaters create their own disadvantage story. It can be silly or serious. Give them at least five minutes to develop their stories. 4. Ask each debater to present their written disadvantage telling the story of impending tragedy in front of the class. After each presentation, ask questions along with the debaters to clarify any part of the three components that is unclear. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board and markers <p>Not tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This exercise has a tendency to get boisterous with some of the outrageous stories. Depending on the number of debaters participating, the exercise can take a surprisingly long time.

Topicality

What Is Topicality? Sometimes known as T, topicality is a debate over the meaning of the words in the resolution. Debate is about making good policy, and you can't have a good policy unless you know what the key words of the policy mean. Some words are very difficult to define, and there are huge debates about them. How do you define "good" or "bad," for example? It's easy to understand this concept by thinking about a conversation you might have with your parents. Let's say your parents tell you to be home "at a reasonable hour." When you show up at 2:00 a.m., you get in big trouble. "But I was home at a reasonable hour," you complain. "All my friends stay out until 4:00." Your parents are not impressed by this argument. "Reasonable means midnight," they say. How were you supposed to know what reasonable" meant? Topicality deals with arguments about what words mean.

Every year there is a different resolution for high school policy debate. It is the affirmative's job to come up with specific policies (or "plans") that support the general idea of the resolution. What if the affirmative policy is a good idea, but it doesn't support the resolution? For example, the affirmative might argue that every hungry child in America should be fed. This may seem like a good idea, but what if the resolution says we ought to make schools better? The plan is fine, but it doesn't support the resolution. The negative would argue that the affirmative plan is "NOT TOPICAL." This kind of argument can be even more powerful than a disadvantage.

For example, your history teacher asked you to write a paper about the Civil War. You, however, decided to write a paper about the Vietnam War. Your history teacher might very well give you a grade of "F" because that wasn't the assignment. Likewise, the affirmative is assigned to write a case about the topic, and if they don't do that, then they "flunk" or "lose" the debate. But, it isn't usually that simple. You might tell your history teacher that your paper was about why the Vietnam War was like the Civil War and the important lessons one can teach us about the other. Likewise, even affirmative's with cases which don't seem to be about the topic often have a reason why they are topical.

Another way to understand topicality is to think of the topic as a "contract." A professional sports star knows that he or she has to fulfill their contract if they want to get paid. If they violate any part of the contract they may not get paid. The affirmative has to meet every part of the topic, every part of the contract, in order to win. If the negative can show the affirmative did not fulfill some part of the topic, their contract, they could defeat the affirmative.

Some teams treat topicality like a rule and often say the affirmative is breaking the rules if they do not affirm a case within the boundaries of fair definitions of the topic. This begs the question: are there rules in debate? The short answer is there are very few actual rules in debate. Debate is more like a pirate code than a military code. Everything in debate, except the speech times, is debatable. Don't get convinced an affirmative plan is or is not topical. Bottom line: Everything in debate is up for debate which definitely includes the meaning of the words of the resolution

T Exercises

Building T Arguments

If you want to become a good topicality debater, then you have to learn how to build topicality arguments from scratch. Unlike other debate arguments, topicality is based on less evidence.

The primary evidence in a topicality debate is the definition, but all the reasons why a definition is superior to another or even why topicality is valuable are debater creations.

Topicality is a great place to show the judge you know how to think about the game of debate.

Here are 4 questions to ask when building a topicality argument.

1. What arguments that you would normally run are taken away by this affirmative?
2. What word in the resolution does this infraction seemed based on? Define the word you don't think the affirmative text follows.
3. Why is your definition and interpretation of the word better for debate? This is how you win Topicality debates! Topicality is about competing interpretations of the resolution, whichever one is best for debate wins!!! This is what people refer to as standards. Think about the ways we determine which meaning of a word is better – context, expertise, narrowness, broadness, everyday meaning, etc.
4. Why does this mean that the Affirmative Loses? This is one of the more difficult questions to answer. But it really boils down to two things, and they are what debate is about Education and Fairness.

Now that you have the guiding questions, present these plans to the students. Have the students get into groups and write a Topicality violation against the plan. Have each group present their topicality violence.

Plan 1 – The US federal government should fund the military and police forces of Mexico to increase border control.

Plan 2 – The US federal government should end all oil contracts with Venezuela.

Plan 3 – The US federal government should provide asylum for Afro Cubans.

Plan 4 – The US federal government should dissolve the border between the US and Mexico.

Counterplan

Sometimes the status quo really is a bad system, and it is difficult for the negative to defend it. Sometimes the affirmative is right about their harms, but wrong about the action we should take to fix those harms. For example, many people argue our school systems need changes and the Bush administration answer to the call for education improvement was No Child Left Behind. Bush may have been right about the need for change, but is NCLB really the best policy for our schools? This question is the beginning of counterplan thoughts. In a debate, focus on finding the best policy option, the negative may offer their own proposal to solve the affirmatives harms – a counterplan, aka a CP.

Definition: A counterplan is (generally thought to be) a reasonable alternative to the affirmative plan. The counterplan must be based on a cost-benefit analysis to be considered a competitive choice in a debate. In order to win a counterplan, the affirmative plan must foreclose the counterplan as an option. To follow our NCBL example, the passage of the NCBL has foreclosed the idea we should abandon standardized tests as a measure of student aptitude. Therefore, ban standardized testing is a competitive counterplan against NCLB.

The counterplan is almost always presented in the 1NC, and then becomes the policy system defended by the negative. The counterplan has a specific "plan" just like the affirmative, explaining what the negative thinks should be done and how.

There are 3 parts of a counterplan.

- Part 1: The counterplan text. The negative must begin a counterplan debate by clearly stating the policy they wish to endorse. This policy is a challenge to the affirmative policy in the same sense a disadvantage is a challenge to the affirmative policy. Unlike the affirmative, the negative does not have endorse the counterplan like an advocate would endorse a policy. The negative is simply testing the viability of the affirmative in comparison to other policies.
- Part 2: Mutual exclusivity. Mutual exclusivity means 2 things that cannot be accomplished together. As stated above, a counterplan must be a competitive option meaning endorsing the affirmative prevents adopting the counterplan. A simple example of mutual exclusivity in policy making is voting. When you vote for one candidate that trades off with your ability to vote for their opponent = Mutual Exclusivity.
- Part 3: Net Beneficial. The counterplan must be superior to the affirmative plan. The choice must be clearly better. Why take a different route if all we get is the same results? There is no need for a different policy if it isn't a better policy. The negative must prove the counterplan is definitively superior to the affirmative plan. Typically the counterplan will avoid linking to a disad to prove its superiority. Avoiding causes long term damage like a disad is a great way to prove the counterplan is obviously a better choice.

CP Exercises

Dinner Plans. Write questions on 10 pieces of paper that can be answered with a proposal. “What should we do tonight?” “What should we eat?”

- Pick two debaters and have one make one proposal and another combat it with a counterproposal of their own.
- Set up the drill in the same way, and this time make the person combating the counter-proposal argue why they can do both. If the student can prove that they can do both, they show that the plan is not mutually exclusive.

Exercise: Understanding Opportunity Cost

You use counterplans all the time in your everyday life. For example, this morning you had to make the choice to either get out of bed and go to class, or to stay in bed and sleep. Did you actually do both options to see which was better? Did you need to?

You also use counterplans when you are trying to make decisions about how to get around town. When you want to go out with your friends, you have to decide whether you will take the bus, the train, a taxi, a friend’s car, a motor scooter, a bicycle, a skateboard, a pony, or just walk. So you consider potential counterplans all the time when you are making decisions. If you decide to take the bus, you are therefore deciding to forego the other opportunities you might have had. These lost opportunities are called the opportunity cost of your action.

In debate, a counterplan is a statement of an opportunity cost of the plan. That’s how the counterplan is counter to the plan – you’re saying that if doing both the plan and the counterplan would be a bad idea (or perhaps impossible, as in the case of staying in bed and going to class), and the counterplan alone is the best alternative, then the counterplan is a reason to vote against the plan. It’s just like arguing a disadvantage.

Let’s try a few exercises.

Below is a list of different actions. For each action, think of at least three opportunity costs you would give up if you were to take the action. What could you do instead?

Why would that be an instead option?

1. Restrict the transfer of copyrighted music on the Internet.
2. Give all students a free college education.
3. Criminally penalize chemical industries for water pollution.
4. Increase spending for AIDS treatment.

Answering Counterplans

Assume that you are affirmative. In the 1NC, the other team ran this counterplan. You have 5 minutes to work with a partner to come up with answers to the counterplan. After your 5 minutes is up, your team should present 2 minutes of arguments against the counterplan. Be creative. Try to have arguments about why the plan is good and arguments about why the counterplan is bad. You may use your affirmative evidence to help you think of arguments.

CP 1 – Nigeria should do the affirmative plan.

CP 2 – The plan text should be conditioned on improving immigrant violations.

CP 3 – The US should consult indigenous people of (Mexico, Cuba, or Venezuela) before doing the affirmative plan.

CP 4 – The US should dismantle itself and give all its territory back to the indigenous people of North America.

Prepping before the Round

Pre-round preparation is a key ingredient for competitive success. Go to each team prior to the debate and make sure they are strategically ready for the round. Below are some useful questions to ask a team in pre-round prep. Always encourage them to write down their thoughts on pre-round prep. Remind them to write down the reasons for the judge decision at the end so you can effectively prep between rounds and in strategy portions of your team meeting.

Questions when the team is affirmative:

- Do you have the 1AC? Have you warmed up reading it?
- Do you know what this team says when they are negative?
- How will we answer their negative arguments? Brain storm each argument with the debaters
- How will you begin your final rebuttal?
- What is the most important argument our affirmative case makes? Remind them to make this argument in the debate round.

Questions when the team is negative:

- Do you have our core negative strategy? Have you warmed up reading it?
- What affirmative argument does your opponent make?
- What off case arguments will we use to answer the affirmative?
- What on case arguments will we use to answer the negative?
- What did the last affirmative team say to our strategy? Brain storm argument refuting affirmative answers.
- What do you think is the winning negative argument in this debate? Why? Provide 3 reasons your negative argument is more important than the affirmative case.

During the Round

Judging. Most debate coaches and directors of forensics will be judging rounds. Judges make tournaments function and without a dedicated judge debates cannot advance their skills. If you are judging, then focus on listening to the teams, flowing their arguments, and making a decision based solely on the arguments made by the debaters. The awesome part of judging is the judge is always right! It's their job to persuade you. It's your job to explain to the debaters why they did or did not persuade you. Remember, to offer encouragement with criticism.

Prepping. If you aren't judging then you might wish to work on argument you know the team needs help with. You can help them by working on additional research or just brainstorming some new analytical answers to arguments the team has trouble defeating.

Scouting. Often preparation is easier when you have actually watched and flowed a debate team. Pick a school who is making an argument you are unfamiliar with or a school who you think is very successful and go watch their debate. Flowing the debate will help you prepare answers for the team. Watching a successful debate team might also help you understand what judges think is good debating. Either way, all of this information will be helpful for strategizing in your practices.

Between Rounds

Check in with your Team. In between every round, coaches should check in with their debaters. Ask them how they think they did and how they could improve next round. When you are talking to the students and you are giving them critiques, make sure you use the sandwich method (something good, an area which improvement, and then another good thing they did.). Encourage them to sit down and write down the answers they come up with after the round is over or to make adjustments based on judge advice.

Moderate Judge Feedback. Unfortunately, not all judges are life-long educators. Sometimes a judge is unnecessarily harsh with their critique of the debate or discouraging to students. Some judges are very young, right out of high school or just starting college. Before you confront a judge about their attitude, spend some time rebuilding your student and remind them its only one person's opinion. Also, encourage them to try to take away something useful from the critique. Many young debaters want to blame the judge when they lose a round, but this is a very unproductive way to look at debate. A productive post round discussion should focus on what is in a debater's power to control. They can be better at debate if they think about their arguments and their persuasive abilities. Redirect judge blame back to the most productive elements of the decision. Why did you lose? What can we do better next time? Get them to name at least 1 thing they can take away from the debate.

Between Tournaments – Staying at the Top of your Game

Mixed-experience Practices: General principles

Any class is full of students with a wide range of knowledge and experience; because of its emphasis on student voice and competitive success, debate makes these differences more obvious and pronounced than usual. But if managed right, the skills and knowledge that varsity debaters gain can *always* be a benefit to their peers. The first step is to clearly identify a criterion for *which* debaters are experienced and which are new (e.g., which have already been to a tournament) and communicate it clearly to the team. Then the following principles can come into play:

- *Massive differentiation is not always necessary* – No matter how good they are, star football players run sprints right along with the slowest of their teammates. It is important not to take students at face value when they tell you (as they will) that they are too advanced for a speaking drill, too experienced to flow along with the rest of the class, etc. Remind them that Michael Jordan became the best in large part because he put in the time to get a better hold on the *basics* than anyone else. Also so important: spice up debate practices with activities that tap into school issues, hot-button political topics, and even personal situations. These are topics that everyone can speak out on regardless of their experience in formal debate, and it's a chance for your debaters to apply the skills they learn in debate to the rest of their lives – crucial both for their personal development and for the long-term health of your team.
- *Small twists can make a huge difference* – Generic activities like speaking drills and mini-debates can be modified slightly such that they are challenging for all. If new debaters are doing a speaking drill with 1AC evidence, advanced debaters can do a speaking drill with the newest or most challenging Aff evidence they can find. In mini-debates, have fun with differentiated requirements: for example, in the same amount of time a novice has to prepare an impromptu speech, an experienced debater has to find a piece of evidence to support the points they will make in their own speech. If given the proper encouragement and shown some examples, students will begin to find their own ways to make activities challenging.
- *Make peer mentorship a part of debate team culture* – This is a motto to repeatedly emphasize, but also to *institutionalize*: we lift as we climb. As the group of top debaters on your squad becomes clear, make sure that each of them have a personal responsibility to help out one or a few new debaters on the team. List explicit responsibilities such as helping new recruits learn speech structure, going over key evidence, and following their progress through tournaments. In practice debates and scrimmages, occasionally put experienced and new debaters on the same team with the explicit note that in order to win, the experienced debater has to make sure their partner knows enough to support their cause. Co-captains can coordinate the help, but it has to be the responsibility of the whole team to spread knowledge as soon as it is gained.

Mixed-experience Practices: Activities

As noted above, most activities can be lightly tweaked to accommodate a wide range of skill and experience. With a little preparation and nudging, you can position experienced debaters to be judges, partners, and friendly competitors for novices. Of course, some activities lend themselves particularly well to diverse groups; here are a few:

- *Flow Bingo* – Decide on a debate topic (e.g., a controversial statement, or an advantage/disadvantage) before practice, and fill a bingo sheet (attached) with key words and concepts that you are fairly sure will come up in debate on the topic. Give out the bingo sheet to all debaters, and then select a group of experienced debaters to argue the topic. Make it clear to the advanced debaters that it is their job to incorporate the concepts from all boxes into their debate. Audience members cross off boxes on the bingo sheet when they hear the words and concepts in each box; in order to win, they have to be able to describe the *context* (who said it, how it fit into their argument). For the next round, fill a bingo sheet with *only first letters*, so that students cross off boxes when they hear what they think are key concepts that start with those letters. This activity is particularly good if you have only a few experienced debaters.
- *Hot Seat Cross-X* – As a group, brainstorm effective cross-examination questions on a particular topic. One or two at a time, have experienced debaters go to the front and see who can best endure a withering stream of Cross-X based on (but not limited to) the questions you developed together. It's often best with this activity to have an idea about who will ask questions in which order.
- *Argument Rampage* – In the video game Rampage, Godzilla and King Kong tear down the buildings of a helpless populace; here, the team knocks down arguments posed by a few experienced members. Have a small group of experienced debaters advocate for a plan, and give the rest of the squad two minutes to come up with a “negative block”, where everyone gets roughly 15 seconds to advance *one* point (make time limits fun and exciting – use a stopwatch!) and the goal is to have as little overlap as possible. The challenge for the experienced debaters is to write down *all* arguments and refute them in a 3-minute 1AR. Throw in a cross-examination at the end if there is time. Interesting variation: Play Devil's Advocate, in which a coach takes on a controversial character (e.g., Reginald Higginsbotham III,) and provokes the squad before they give their collective negative block.
- *Evidence Sprints* – pair 1-2 relatively experienced debaters with each new debater, and make sure that each has a full copy of the evidence. ***Play games to 3, with points determined as follows.*** The novice debater grabs a random piece of evidence from their folder (the card has to be more than 4 lines long) and starts reading it out loud. Experienced debaters win a point if they can produce the page the evidence is on *before their partner finishes reading it*. If they are too late, the partner gets a point. If there is enough time, rotate partners and keep track of total records.

Rebuttal Re-do's

Rebuttals are the place where most debates are won or lost. One way to improve your debaters is to have them re-do their speeches from tournaments. This is probably the single most impactful activity you can do with students after the 1st tournament of the year. The debater will need a flow of the debate they lost.

Rebuttal Re-dos **	30-90 min
<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each debater starts the activity with a sample flow – ideally a copy of their actual flows from a debate round. 2. Divide the team into groups, or focus on one flow as a model with the full group (the model step is necessary with novices). The team should discuss why they won or lost the round represented by the flow, and what issues/evidence were crucial to this. 3. Give each debater 10 minutes to prepare an ideal rebuttal. This can be done with any of the four rebuttal speeches, the 1NR, the 1AR, the 2NR, and the 2AR. 4. Have debaters deliver their rebuttals in groups or in front of the full class. Make sure to time them to emphasize concision. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flows from old debate rounds (or fully filled sample flow) • Timer
	<p>Not tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an exercise that can be repeated after every tournament or practice round. • Easy for experienced debaters, but can be used in mixed-experienced groups by partnering experienced debaters with novices.