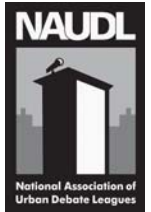


# Teaching Argumentation & Debate: An Educator's Activities Manual



Written for the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues  
by Kelly Phipps, Eric Tucker, and Will Tucker



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# The National Association of Urban Debate Leagues

## Modeling and Making Urban Educational Improvement

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Debate is a powerful tool to educate our nation's youth. Unfortunately, as those of us know whose work it is to teach young people advocacy and debate skills, this tool is not a gift of nature: it requires tremendous effort. For years, debate has improved the educational and life prospects of students in American private and suburban public schools – an opportunity that talented students attending America's urban public schools have enjoyed far too rarely.

American academic debate has always been the province of the more privileged; but in the last twenty-five years, it has further narrowed and concentrated within the nation's most affluent schools. Wealthier school systems and individual families have invested more and more resources on an increasingly advanced, university-driven activity. Coaches in these schools are supported by relatively generous stipends, reduced or debate-related course loads, and assistant coaches. Students are taught by these coaches, first, and second are extended opportunities to travel and compete regionally or nationally, to be trained at universities.

This evolution left more heavily burdened urban school systems a long way away from the substantial academic benefits of co-curricular debate. Seven years ago, the Urban Debate Network was begun by the Open Society Institute, part of the Soros Foundation network, to bring urban public schools back in the game: students and teachers in cities had for too long been denied the rigor and engagement of academic debate, whether in local circuits and in their regular curriculum, or on the National Circuit, if they were inclined to make the personal commitment and if they could attract additional funding support.

Urban Debate Leagues (UDLs) have sought to build a competitive League around a community of coaches, with a robust professional development and tournament season calendar. Now, the Urban Debate Network encompasses 300 city high schools and more than 40 middle schools in fourteen major cities: Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, the District of Columbia, Kansas City, Los Angeles, (urban) Orange County, Providence, Newark, New York City, St. Louis, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Seattle. More than 12,000 urban youth have participated in UDLs, and more than 750 urban educators have been trained as debate coaches and teachers.





The National Association of Urban Debate Leagues (NAUDL) was formed in January, 2002, to lead, assist, and expand the Urban Debate Network. The NAUDL, according to its broader mission statement, exists to improve urban public education by empowering youth to become engaged learners, critical thinkers, and active citizens who are effective advocates for themselves and their communities. The NAUDL is a national organization that helps heighten the qualitative impact of UDLs by coordinating and disseminating best practices and providing consultative services; helps improve local sustainability of UDLs by developing and supporting strategies locally and promoting UDLs nationally; and helps develop the Urban Debate Network by propagating urban debate in ways that advance social justice and by expanding the depth and scope of the project. The NAUDL is committed to working with urban school districts and other local partners (e.g., universities) to strengthen and extend the use of academic debate as a powerful mechanism to improve urban public education – wherever there is reform-minded interest in doing so.

The NAUDL categorizes its project into three areas of work. First, the NAUDL provides direct services and products to its Member Sites. It offers professional development training for teachers and administrators, argumentation and debate curricula, operational and administrative documents and materials, telephonic and in-person technical assistance and consultative services, and debate institute scholarships. Beginning urban debate schools and Leagues can choose from more intensive versions of the above; veterans from lighter ones.

Second, the NAUDL develops the Network. The NAUDL runs a national education conference (the “IdeaFest,” now in its seventh year) for UDL teaching and administrative leadership; it supports and oversees the administration of three Regional UDL Events each year, it is planning to hold its first national Institute for Professional Development this summer, and it facilitates other means of building and strengthening the communication and connection between urban debate educators, students, and their supporters. The NAUDL is also immersed in expanding the reach of the Network, in creating new progressive learning opportunities and thereby in mitigating or lessening social and educational injustice.

Third, the NAUDL raises the visibility and markets on behalf of the Network and of urban debate intrinsically. The NAUDL publishes a quarterly magazine called the *Urban Debate Chronicle*, maintains a website at [www.urbandebate.org](http://www.urbandebate.org), coordinates national publicity work, promotes urban debate with local partners (e.g., school districts, individual schools, universities, and other non-profit organizations), and does other promotional work. Most recently, the NAUDL has concluded holding its third year of three Regional UDL Events – the 2002-2003 season’s were held in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.

The NAUDL heightens UDL quality, supports local sustainability, and propagates urban debate within the framework of its four Organizing Principles: to use debate as a mechanism for urban education improvement, to promote equal access and opportunity to participate in debate, to institutionalize competitive academic debate programs, and to support and professionalize urban high school teachers.

### **Using Debate as a Mechanism for Education Reform**

Academic debate trains and develops students in the core academic skills of the language arts: reading comprehension, critical thinking, and communications skills. All good language arts assessment instruments measure these primary skills, which is why UDLs have as much to do with raising test scores, and building a climate of academic achievement, as they do with offering enrichment opportunities. Research indicates that debate students in urban high schools receive higher grades and are less likely to drop out than



comparable non-debaters. Furthermore, the academic benefits are not only for already high-achievers: exciting debate competition often inspires interest in academics among under-achievers. Debate also broadens college opportunities for your students, and in part through the work of UDL university partners, debate functions as a college bridge program. Debaters graduate from high school as motivated and intellectually curious young adults, and are much better prepared to pursue and persist with higher education.

Betty Maddox, a former debate coach and now a consultant with the Atlanta Public Schools, underlines the idea that debate has a surprisingly wide academic reach. “Students who are disengaged in a traditional classroom setting gravitate to debate. The excitement of debate tournaments ignites their intellectual curiosity. Once their mind catches fire, the curiosity spreads to other areas of their life. They begin to ask critically-informed questions about their history textbooks, their neighborhoods, and the nightly news. I’ve seen the Reading Scores of students who join debate jump two and three grade levels in a single semester.” Kansas City journalist Joe Miller straight-edged the point in an article published by *New Times* in May: “Debate might be the greatest trick in public education. It can inspire kids who can’t stand reading to dive into the world’s ocean of information – simply to avoid losing an hour-long battle of the minds with someone their own age.” Strategies to raise scores and lower the race-class achievement gap in this country must be innovative and student-centered (the alternatives have failed); UDLs are demonstrating that academic debate uniquely succeeds in reaching and motivating many urban youth.

Democratic education and tradition are also reinforced through debate. At its best, policy debate is a rigorous and passionate discussion about change in the public polity and how it is achieved. Through the debate process, students research important social issues — this year, U.S. support for U.N. peacekeeping efforts — which make them well versed in current events and governmental policy-making. Debate provides experiences that prove to students that they should not be intimidated by “elite” discourse that surrounds sites of public policy authority and decision-making in our society. They become more connected to public life and the responsibilities of citizenship. UDLs are thus designed to teach advocacy skills so that students are empowered to be in greater control of their futures, and to negotiate future conflicts with verbal advocacy rather than physical aggression. Participation in UDLs instills the confidence and awareness that young people need — *especially* from urban areas with a history of economic deprivation and racial isolation and discrimination — in order to embrace and execute their roles as members of a democratic and open society.

### **Promoting Equal Access and Opportunity in Debate**

Mastery of the skills taught in academic debate is one central route to success in our society. Debate experience develops critical thinking and communication abilities sought by selective universities, and valued throughout the middle- to upper-echelons of the American workforce. The number of former debaters among elected officials, the academy, the media, and in the executive suites of business and the partnership offices at law firms, attests to the impact that academic debate has in shaping future leaders. The National Forensic League itself draws this connection between an academic debate background and later professional location near the seats of power (particularly in the law and government).

The skill set that academic debate builds, in addition to the critical habits and orientation that it develops in youth, are ideal preparation for success in today’s information market economies. In the words of veteran urban education administrator Paul Vallas, Chief Executive Officer of the Philadelphia Public Schools, “Effective communication is the key to success in today’s world. The skills that students learn in programs administered by the Urban Debate League, including issue research, critical thinking, and public speaking, are essential to a well-rounded education.”



Urban Debate Leagues build this powerful education mechanism into an institution with the potential to serve as the primary engine of social and racial equality in our society: the urban public school system. This institution more than any other in 21<sup>st</sup> Century American democracy is charged with leveling the playing field for the lesser privileged and people of color. We cannot knowingly withhold affordable educational methods that work and have any claim to providing equal opportunity to all — nor can we secure economic prosperity if we neglect the training of a substantial portion of our workforce. Robert Reich, former Secretary of Labor and a Professor of Social and Economic Policy at Brandeis University, has embraced our understanding of the integral bond between educational justice, economic strength, and urban debate:

The economy of the United States depends to an ever greater extent on the productivity and preparedness of all of our workforce, and on the value our workforce can add to an increasingly global economy. The only way to guarantee that our children maintain a high standard of living is if we attract global capital through our productivity and innovation. To protect and secure our way of life, we must provide all of our youth with a world-class education. Urban Debate Leagues take us a solid step closer to that goal. UDLs work with teachers to build creative and innovative classrooms. These debate leagues can help reduce the educational-opportunity gap that separates rich and poor communities and thus they can help our childrens' chances and our nations' future.

### **Institutionalizing Competitive Debate Leagues**

UDLs aim to make debate accessible to those students who are most in need of the skills and benefits that it provides. The continued realization of this goal depends on the establishment of school-based, institutionalized leagues capable of supporting urban debate in all participating high schools. UDLs organize and support summer institutes, coaches' seminars, training workshops, competitive tournaments, extra-curricular meeting sessions, and regular curricular Argumentation and Debate courses, and Debate Across the Curriculum models, with concomitant professional development for the educators responsible for implementing these effective methodologies. These components and others are directed toward institutionalizing co-curricular debate instruction and practice in urban school districts, so that the recent growth in opportunity witnessed in this area will be carried forward for the long-term.

Henry Giroux, renowned scholar and author and the Waterbury Chair Professor in Secondary Education at Penn State University has argued that institutionalizing UDLs is a way to build a rigorous systems of education that work to train interested and active citizens.

Urban Debate Leagues represent one crucial and exciting way to improve an urban school system's curriculum and its academic ethos and norms. I am enormously impressed with the way that UDLs support teachers who seek to build classrooms and schools that respect student voice, foster rigorous and critical investigations into pressing issues of social concern, and prepare students to be active and engaged citizens. This is a program that believes that critical and responsible citizenship matters and that education is one of the most important vehicles to insure that students learn not only how to govern but ensure that the conditions for an inclusive democracy are worth addressing and struggling over. The next generation of advocates for urban social justice and a substantive democracy will be more effective, more potent, if they have been trained in the Urban Debate Leagues.



## **Supporting and Professionalizing Teachers**

Experts in urban education reform have come to a consensus that no strategy to improve academic achievement and build more successful school systems can ever surpass the quality of the teaching staff that must implement it. Reform all comes down to this: what is happening in the classroom after the teacher shuts the door. Debate programs are no exception. A committed, well trained teacher-coach is the crux and prerequisite. Debate instruction must be delivered by professionals in order to have full academic value.

The NAUDL is committed to working with urban school districts and their debate leagues to help support and professionalize their debate teacher-coaches. Our strategy in doing so has several core elements. One is to share models, along with their justification, for putting in place support structures for teacher-coaches, including a coaches' stipend, professional development programs, accreditation benefits, and others. Leagues are encouraged to locate governance authority within the coaches' community (under the broader parameters of school district policy). They are also encouraged to establish standards and expectations for their coaches that are realistic but challenging.

These efforts pay off. When school systems invest in supporting debate coaches, coaches respond by building debate teams that serve students well. Anthony Grobe has coached debate in the St. Louis Public Schools for six years:

Coaching energizes me after a long school day. My team involves students who are alienated by traditional classrooms in a stimulating intellectual exercise. They become connected to the Debate Team and reconnected to the school community. The passion and commitment of my debaters validates my work as a teacher. The after school practices are invigorating, the students are excited about ideas. They work with each other to research and write about issues concerning their lives.

The NAUDL reinforces the benefits school districts receive by supporting teachers through our efforts to establish network connections between urban debate professionals across leagues, within which norms and practices can be shared and discussed.

UDLs work within urban school systems to improve the conditions and outcomes of education with a focus on those students most vulnerable to failure. Leagues train educators to serve as leaders in their schools and young people to engage actively as participants in the education process. Working with local leagues and school districts around the country, the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues seeks to inspire high expectations for teaching and learning and build the capacity of schools to provide quality instruction through the application of co-curricular academic debate. The NAUDL coordinates and organizes a Network of fifteen Leagues in as many cities: we hope and expect that as additional cities and schools become aware of the UDL project, the Network will continue to flourish and grow.

Les Lynn, Executive Director

Eric Tucker, Director of Publications

National Association of Urban Debate Leagues

Further information on the programs of the NAUDL can be obtained on the web ([urbandebate.org](http://urbandebate.org)), via email ([info@urbandebate.org](mailto:info@urbandebate.org)) or by phone (312-427-8101).





# Foreword: To Debate Coaches

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Many of the materials in the book have their origin in the hard work of educators, like you, throughout the national Urban Debate Network. At the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues, we had sensed a strong interest in practical, “how-to-do-it” materials for urban educators new to policy debate. This book is a way of getting ideas about how to teach Argumentation and Debate into the hands of a number of educators throughout the UDL network and beyond.

The existence of this *Activities Manual* is a testament to the complexity of your job: teaching debate in an urban school. Teaching, and even teaching debate, was once a matter of simply delivering some lectures and grading some tests. In other words, it was a matter of following a pre-scripted course outline or textbook in an obvious, if dull, sequence. Debate courses, as counter-intuitive as it may seem, consisted largely of lectures and whole group discussions where the teacher either talked about or quizzed students on a discrete body of debate-related knowledge.

Urban Debate Leagues have challenged some of this traditional pedagogy. In the last 10 years, we have brought together over 750 teachers without debate background into the activity. UDL coaches, like you, from urban school districts around the country have come to activity with a fresh set of eyes. One of the things we have had to confront is the fact that we are not very good at *teaching* debate. We are even worse, it must be presumed, at teaching professional educators how to teach debate. Traditional methods of teaching debate through lecture and quiz lag years behind exciting, wide-spread developments in many schools around the country.

Unlike the lecture-centered approach of the past, teachers in most urban schools talk less, and their students talk more. The straight rows of seats have given way to fluid seating in order to accommodate small group and individualized class activities. Students talk to each other more than they talk to the teacher. Course plans that follow a strict, prescriptive chronology have given way to individualized reading and writing programs. Attention is given to making learning relevant to student’s lives; original writing that flows from students’ experiences has become perhaps more common than assignments drawn from the activities box of a composition book. Teachers talk about providing supportive environments in which students can learn. Professional development days emphasize the importance of developing a range of teaching approaches given each student learns in her own way. Good teachers used to preach. Now they must listen, as well. Students’ concerns, ideas, and insights are cultivated so that young people learn to approach knowledge with thoughtfulness and critical analysis. The critical, moral and intellectual dimensions of student learning are seen as student development. Together, teachers and students build knowledge. They construct the building blocks of understanding.

These new directions in teaching and learning are unquestionably exciting. Teachers are taking fresh



approaches to course planning. Courses themselves have been infused with new possibilities – new literature, new media, new histories, new subject areas, alternative composition assignments, student-centered knowledge creation, community involvement, etc. The nature of curriculum and instruction is in flux, in many ways. It is an exciting time to teach.

Teaching in this new world is also increasingly demanding. The number of options on the table can drain teachers' energy, originality, and creativity. Teachers can no longer teach from old lesson plans, nor can they teach the same books over and over again. Courses must be designed that provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to become responsible for their own ideas, to learn to take intellectual risks, to become respectful of the ideas of others, to negotiate differences of perspective and to think critically. It is a challenge to provide students with environments within which they can produce quality work and engage in rigorous intellectual exercises that center on real world challenges.

Schools are not necessarily designed to support teachers to meet these challenges head on. The American high school, as an institution, is entrenched in cumbersome, even obsolete, structures and traditions that too often make being a teacher difficult. This is particularly the case in urban high schools. Carnegie units, 45-minute periods, letter grades unconnected to meaningful standards of achievement, large class sizes, poor disciplinary systems, and inadequate technology too often combine to inhibit teachers from reaching their potential. The bureaucracies that administer urban school districts too often further complicate the prospects for school improvement.

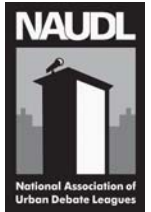
One consequence is that in urban schools it is easy for teachers to burn out. Yet many teachers not only survive, they thrive despite the difficult setting in which they find themselves. The teachers who opt to serve as a UDL coach demonstrate a tremendous commitment to the work of providing a quality public education to all students. In this sense, UDL coaches are emblematic of the best teachers of our day, of the best urban school districts have to offer. Without them, debate programs would disappear from the urban schools where they have become institutionalized in recent years.

This Activities Manual has been prepared for you. Whether you are a first year coach who is also struggling through her first teaching assignment or you are a veteran teacher who has only recently assumed the role of debate coach, this book is designed for you. Teaching a debate course and coaching a team requires tremendous ingenuity. This book offers you ideas and resources to supplement your own. Its principal function is to serve as an idea book, to offer suggestions to add to your lessons as you plan your course.

The work of the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues rests on the belief that teachers are at the heart of solving the problems urban schools face. Put another way, debate programs cannot survive without teachers. Urban schools will never succeed unless we learn how to support teachers sufficiently. We hope that this Activities Manual provides teachers with an opportunity to explore and experiment with new ideas and techniques and possibilities for being a coach. This book is designed to aid and enrich your efforts to run a debate program animated by the pedagogical assumptions that drew you to the UDL movement in the first place.

One final note: this manual is part of an ongoing attempt by the NAUDL to promote collegial sharing of educator-developed debate resources and suggestions for approaching various units in Argumentation and Debate. This manual is a finished product but is not intended to be definitive. Rather it is envisioned merely





as one significant step in process of building a community of urban teachers committed to professional sharing and exchange. Teachers in the UDL network are urged to use this document as a platform from which to continue to share ideas, lesson plans, and successful approaches. As individual teachers submit materials to the NAUDL, the materials will be distributed to all educators in our growing network.

Kelly Phipps, Eric Tucker, and Will Tucker  
Providence, RI

*Comments on this book should be directed to Eric Tucker, Director of Publications, National Association of Urban Debate Leagues. He can be reached at [erictucker@urbandebate.org](mailto:erictucker@urbandebate.org). Any criticism and or suggestions to improve future editions of this book would be greatly appreciated.*







# Introduction

## How to Use the Educator's Activities Manual

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### Responding to the Expressed Needs of New Coaches

This project responds to the expressed needs of educators in the Urban Debate Network. In particular, this book responds to the need for curriculum and instructional materials that are designed for educators from urban schools who have limited background and/or experience with debate. Before beginning this project, we solicited feedback from educators around the country with regard to the materials currently in use. We conducted extensive interviews, asking program coordinators and educators questions. We asked: "what materials do educators in your city use?", "what are the shortcomings of these materials?", "how could they be improved?", "what do you need most that you don't currently have?" This book initially emerged as a result of these conversations.

A large body of textbooks, how-to-debate guides, and curriculums currently exist – tools used and developed by educators with extensive debate experience. However, urban teachers without a background in debate from around the country have looked at these materials and asked the same question: What does all of this material mean for my classroom, for my students?

Many coaches in the Urban Debate Network struggle with finding the appropriate balance between emphasizing policy debate concepts and instilling critical analytical skills. On the one hand, teachers understand the importance of having their students master the highly technical and jargon-laden aspects of policy debate. On the other hand, they naturally question the pedagogical value of certain intricate aspects of policy debate as it is currently practiced - they place a high premium on creating learning environments that help students gain the critical thinking and literacy skills that debate advocates promise. The activities in this manual are designed to develop academic skills as well as introduce debate concepts.

### Tested by Urban Educators, Approved by Urban Debaters

The activities in this book have been used and honed over time by experienced educators. Teachers shared ideas for activities with the authors of this book because they had created and/or implemented the ideas in their own classrooms with their own students.



## Who Should Use the Educator's Activities Manual

*How to Teach Argumentation & Debate: An Educator's Activities Manual* was designed to be a resource for a variety of educators in a variety of situations. The activities in this book are intended for:

- Classroom teachers who teach a debate course or coach debate after-school. The manual is specifically designed for teachers from urban schools.
- Any teacher interested in using Debate Across the Curriculum in their class.
- College students and community volunteers who serve as assistant debate coaches and help out at practices.
- Anyone interested in teaching policy debate to high school students.

The activities in this book are designed to be used in the following settings:

- An argumentation and debate course. This manual is intended to supplement a textbook and a day-by-day curriculum.
- After school practices of a debate team. This manual is helpful for any debater preparing for tournament competition.
- Sections of this manual can be used as a debate unit in other courses.
- This book can be placed in a curriculum resource for Debate Across the Curriculum efforts.

A Resource for Students, too

More experienced debaters can flip through the activities manual and select activities they are interested in doing. If you are lucky enough to have varsity debaters on your squad, allow the more advanced students run activities with novices during practices in small groups. With this manual, you can empower students to serve as "assistant coaches."

## A Student-Centered Approach to Teaching Debate: The Pedagogical Strategy of this Manual

We have been highly selective in choosing the ideas presented here; the activities in this manual consistently demonstrate the principles of student-centered, skill-oriented learning. We don't include, for example, "10 Ways to Give a Great Lecture on the 2AR." Our feeling is that students will learn very few of the skills associated with mastering the 2AR from a lecture, even if it is great. Instead we include hands-on activities in which students practice and develop key rebuttal skills.

Lecturing students about debate concepts cannot adequately prepare them to succeed in debate – a debate demands a complex set of skills that require practice, feedback, and targeted effort for improvement and mastery. Veteran coaches have had the experience of a student comes to you on the Monday after a



tournament and saying, “the judge told me I need to get better at flowing and at clashing, what should I do?” The student wants to know what she can do to improve. This activities manual bridges the gap between what students want to know and the skill set students need to succeed.

We hope this manual provides some of the tools necessary for a student-centered approach to teaching debate. The activities in this manual are “scaffolding” activities designed to help students build the skills they need to get the most out of practice and competitive debates. First, this approach targets a specific debate skill - like asking strategic cross-examination questions, structuring a disadvantage, or effectively finding evidence to support a specific argument. Then, this approach uses guided participatory activities to help students understand, build, and develop mastery of the skill. Using these activities in your debate course or practices will ensure that students have the opportunity to practice, receive feedback, and improve upon the wide array of skills debate requires. We recommend that skill-building activities be interspersed with full-length practice debates so students not only progressively build skills but understand the interrelatedness of these skills during an actual debate.

## How This Book Complements the Materials You Currently Use

The activities in this book can be used along side - to complement and supplement - whatever materials and experience you currently use to plan for your Argumentation and Debate course. These activities are designed, in other words, to be integrated into your Argumentation and Debate course. This book is not intended to stand alone as a curriculum - the activities are organized not as a course plan, but as a quick-reference manual organized to help you find an activity on the topic you want to cover that suits the experience level of your class. A large number of texts and curricula currently exist, including free and low-cost resources, and the activities in this manual are not geared to any specific text but may be used in conjunction with available high school texts. Specifically, the activities in this book can complement and enhance:

### Policy Debate Manuals and Textbooks

Policy debate manuals written for high school students can be excellent sources for succinct and clear explanations of debate concepts. Students often need support translating the ideas they read into skills they can put into practice during a debate; these activities can help bring these texts to life. We suggest that you use and discuss short sections of these manuals in your class, and then select an activity from this

## Making the Case for a Debate Class

If you are reading this manual, it is likely that you already teach an Argumentation and Debate course at your school. However, if your school does not offer a debate course, you may want to advocate that one be added to your school's curriculum. Below are some talking points that can help you persuade your administrators of the need for a debate class:

A debate class helps the team. A debate class:

- Ensures that students with after-school conflicts have the opportunity to debate.
- Increases the number of students who debate because, as an elective course, it's likely to draw students from all academic backgrounds.
- Builds student relationships with their coach, making them more likely to stay on the team.
- Allows coaches to provide grade incentives for participation in tournaments.

A debate class helps the school. A debate class:

- Enriches the academic environment of the school. Competitive debate demands research and literacy skills above and beyond those required by many high school classes.
- Requires rigorous academic work that warrants course credit.
- Helps students meet educational standards. The section on standards in this book can assist you in describing to your principal how debate can help students meet your school's learning goals and objectives in a number of disciplines.



manual to reinforce the skill or concept you just discussed.

### Policy Debate Evidence Handbooks and Institute Evidence Sets

If your team can afford them, evidence sets from debate institute or handbooks can be a great starting point for research on the annual debate topic. Often, however, coaches find it isn't enough simply to hand off large amounts of research to novice debaters – it does not teach them to find their own evidence or write their own briefs, and often debaters use this evidence without understanding its proper context or meaning. You, as the instructor, can use this pre-made evidence in the activities where the "Materials and Preparation" calls for cards, a 1AC, a disadvantage shell, etc., to teach students how to process and use research effectively. Using these resources in conjunction with activities in this manual turns pre-cut evidence into a learning tool, not simply a shortcut.

### Debate Course Curricula

There are several published curricula for Argumentation and Debate courses, or you may have developed your own that you currently use in your class. The activities in this book are organized to be plugged into any debate curriculum to add opportunities for hands-on, student-centered learning.

### Transforming These Activities Into a Course Calendar

Remember that it is not necessary, or even advisable, to follow the lessons in this Manual in their printed order. Figure out a progression between units and a structure within units that makes sense for you and your students. Rearrange the Day by Day plan and select activities that fit your class and time constraints. Certainly, some chronological progression is necessary. Teaching about the Affirmative Case should precede in-depth discussion about Negative Off Case positions. But you need to craft a calendar that complements the teaching and learning of the skills associated with debate.

### Scheduling By the Numbers

The number of students enrolled in the class is a major factor in any Argumentation and Debate course. A 33-person class will require different preparation than will a 15-person class. For instance, if the class is composed of 30 students, and your school has 50-minute class periods, having each student give a three-minute speech could easily consume a full week. When planning your course, do a preliminary calculation of how long a round of five-minute speeches will take, how long a round of debates will take, etc. When you have a sense of this, block out the time you will need to complete the speeches and practice debates upon which you plan. Once you have a rough idea of how much class time will be consumed by speeches and practice debates, you can begin to get an idea of how many activities, homework assignments, lectures, and evaluations you have time to include.

## How to Use the Educator's Activities Manual

### How this book is organized

When you begin to plan activities for a practice or class period, it is likely that you will begin with an idea of the subject you want to cover, and the experience level of the students in your class. This book is organized to make it easy for you to find the activity you need. This manual is organized by subject for quick reference. Within each chapter, activities are organized according to difficulty level.



To determine the difficulty level of an activity, skim the first paragraph:

- **Introductory** activities begin with the words, "This activity introduces students..." You may want to use these activities as the first hands-on follow-up activity after a brief description of the debate concept they reinforce. Many of these activities are concentrated in the "Introduction to Debate" and "Introduction to the Topic" chapters.
- **Intermediate** activities begin with the words, "This activity develops...skills. The majority of the activities in this book are classified as "intermediate." They are best suited to students who can perhaps define or explain a debate concept, but need to build key skills in order to put this concept to work as they participate in an actual debate.
- **Advanced** activities begin with the words, "This activities builds advanced ... skills." These activities support students to improve upon add sophistication to their performance in one or more skill areas. For example, a debater must first be able to structure and write a basic frontline before she can use it in a practice debate and then make revisions to add strategy to the frontline.

Activities designated as "Introductory" are generally at the beginning of each chapter, followed by "Intermediate" activities, and then "Advanced" activities. In many cases, activities can be adapted to suit the level and experience of your classroom; use these demarcations as a flexible guide rather than a rule.

Because so many activities do not fit neatly into one, two, or even three chapters, we have created a category of "Adaptable Activities." At the beginning of each chapter, those activities from other chapters that might be relevant are clearly demarcated.

### Lesson Format

Each activity in this manual contains the following elements:

- **Introduction:** Designed to help you determine quickly if an activity is of interest, this paragraph offers an overview of each activity – including its difficulty level.
- **Objectives:** The list of objectives includes cognitive knowledge and skills we wish students to gain as well as debate concepts students will explore.
- **Materials and Preparation:** A list of materials and preparation needed for each activity is also included. Some activities require no preparation at all, and others, especially those designed to teach brief-writing skills, require that the instructor prepare materials and worksheets beforehand. Some activities recommend that students complete a homework assignment prior to or after the activity.
- **Method:** A step-by-step guide to using the activity in class.
- **Follow-up:** Some activities include a recommended next step for your class. The follow-up could be a brief assessment activity or homework assignment, or it may lead into another activity.
- **Variations:** Every activity in this book can be adapted to suit your class's needs and interests, or your learning objectives. In some cases, we have suggested alternate ways of conducting an activity at the end.



## **Balancing Verbosity and Vacuity**

Some teachers might prefer more complete descriptions than this book offers. They may want more details about materials and preparation, more elaborate, clearly demarcated steps, lists of resources, etc. Others may feel that the activities are too lengthy. This book is designed to save preparation time and to encourage planned creativity for urban educators without debate background. We hope to walk a middle path between the extremes of verbosity and vacuity. Our path was guided by a few assumptions about teachers. These are:

- Teachers do not always need detailed descriptions of technique and pedagogy.
- Teachers can both expand upon abbreviated ideas and adapt activities to their own students.
- Teachers prefer to innovate and tailor ideas rather than copy best practices or follow curricular "recipes" to the letter.

There are two final things to remember about this text:

First, the activities and ideas in this book are intended to serve as catalysts to your own thinking. They are not surefire gimmicks. They are to be adapted, tailored, revised, and rearranged. Make this book work for you. It will not work to simply pull an idea from page 79 or 156 and expect it to go over without a hitch. All activities will need to be modified for your students and classroom. Don't use the activities as gimmicks, figure out whether the activities make sense given how your students learn and your instructional setting.

Second, this book both should and should not be used as a "cookbook." Good chefs flip through cookbooks regularly, looking for new ideas and waiting for a dish to catch their eye. The idea of combining certain ingredients through a nuanced process intrigues the chef, who then begins to think about how that process might make sense given the people for which the chef plans to cook. This book can be used successfully in this way: as a resource book filled with innovative, promising ideas. We hope you find it useful.



# A Guide to the Standards of the Educator's Activities Manual

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## **Student Achievement, Standards, and Academic Debate**

The Urban Debate Network has grown to maturity in a political climate where “accountability” and “school improvement” are understood as synonymous. Increasingly, state education departments mete out punishments and rewards on the basis of student test scores. At the same time, educational stakeholders are coming to recognize that school success is not just the responsibility of individual students, teachers or schools. Parents, school districts, community leaders, state departments of education, and other key decision-makers bear considerable responsibility as well. Together, those committed to building schools capable of providing all students with a quality public education need to explore the meaningful and progressive connections between school improvement, student achievement, and academic standards. Promises to punish those who are not performing will not necessarily help school-communities fix what is wrong. Many involved with UDLs, however, believe that standard-based improvement can be one umbrella under which members of learning communities come together to identify gaps in student performance and practices that must be improved to close those gaps.

Even die-hard advocates and developers of standardized tests harbor serious reservations about the manner in which politicians and the public often hope to employ test-scores in the political arena. Yet those who defend academic standards as a tool for enhancing student achievement see holding schools and districts to clear standards as an opportunity to close gaps in student performance by strengthening classroom teaching and learning. Put simply, clear, system-wide learning objectives is seen as an engine capable of driving districts, schools, teachers, and students to better performance. And given the frequency of political, public and professional discussion of standards, it seems likely that they are here to stay, at least for the foreseeable future. The question on the table, then, is how to support professional educators to navigate the matrixes of accountability, standards, and high-stakes testing. Henry Giroux puts it this way: “In a world where high stakes testing is a given, it is crucial to invest in substantive efforts that help schools reach accountability measures by to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Urban Debate Leagues represent one crucial and exciting way to improve an urban school system’s curriculum and its academic ethos and norms.”

At the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues, we believe that teachers in urban school districts are





capable, and indeed engaged in the process, of designing work for students that is of high enough quality to engage them, encourage them to persist in their efforts to learn, and galvanize them in the acquisition of skills and abilities valued by their community and society at large. Our efforts to promote argumentation and debate courses and Debate Across the Curriculum instructional strategies are part of our commitment to helping urban schools set and meet high standards for teaching practices and to providing support, resources, and ongoing professional development to improve curriculum and instruction. After-school practices of the debate team should be similarly aligned with student achievement, providing learning environments for all students that support and extend opportunities for academic rigor and social development. Weaving debate into the fabric of a school empowers teachers to teach in ways that help students develop into critical thinkers, competent problem solvers, and engaged citizens.

Responsibility for implementing, and improving, instructional strategies ultimately rests in the hands of individual teachers. Debate represents one promising instructional strategy for engaging students in their own learning. The debate class should be by definition student-centered, hands-on, and participatory. Instruction strategies for debate courses and Debate Across the Curriculum initiatives are geared towards the direct teaching of thinking skills and analytical processes. Debate instruction promotes the abilities students will need to succeed in our increasingly technological world. Today's students will graduate into a complex, rapidly changing world where the ability to synthesize and apply knowledge to new situations is a critical skill.

This manual promotes teaching debate through the use of a variety of strategies and the creation of a variety of settings that promote student learning while identifying and accommodating individual learning styles. We take the position that the question of the relationship between assessment and accountability and academic standards must be understood as part of a broader conversation about social equity and urban schools that truly work for all students.

### **Activities Aligned with Academic Standards**

The goal of Urban Debate Leagues, and of this activities manual, is to improve student performance and achievement by transforming the experience of learning. To help educators make the case that debate does just that, we have attempted to disaggregate and thus identify the standards upon which this instructional resource rests. The following standards define what students who participate in debate should know and be able to do.

Your district and state most likely possesses a commonly agreed upon set of academic standards. The standards with which activities in this Manual are aligned correspond closely enough with the standards influencing decision-making at your school, we hope, that they will help you make the case that debate deserves support. This Manual's standards are designed to answer the question "How can debate and the skills it teaches help my school meet its educational objectives?" They designate benchmarks against which student performance in debate can be measured. These standards address and describe both the learning outcomes participation in debate teaches (i.e. critical thinking) and the skills that are more specific to debate (i.e. organizing files of evidence).

During preparation for and participation in a varsity-level competitive debate, debaters, likely demonstrate near-mastery of every standard on the list below. The different components of debate, including flowing, brief-writing, planning and delivering argument, etc., each address and build different skills sets. At the beginning of each chapter, we outline the standards with which the activities are aligned. We describe what



the chapter's activities should help students to understand and be able to do. Hopefully, by aligning this book of instructional strategies with standards we will help you to demonstrate how teaching Argumentation and Debate moves your school towards the goals to which it aspires.

### **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Read, comprehend and analyze scholarly journal articles.
- Read, comprehend and analyze news sources.
- Read, comprehend and analyze government and public documents.
- Read, comprehend and analyze nonfiction books.
- Read, comprehend and analyze internet sources.
- Read, comprehend and analyze 2 or more sources on the same subject by different authors.
- Demonstrate ability to recognize and assess author's intent.
- Demonstrate ability to identify logical and factual flaws in written sources.
- Demonstrate ability to recognize and evaluate points of contention between 2 or more written sources.

### **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentation.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze and respond to facts and arguments in an oral presentation.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze television and radio news and commentary.

### **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to use an outline to structure notes.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.
- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.
- Demonstrate ability to record each argument during a speech presented by an opponent during a debate, and use these notes to respond orally to each argument individually and in proper sequence.

### **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.
- Demonstrate ability to adapt oral presentations to various audiences.
- Demonstrate ability to use non-verbal communication (body language, eye contact, etc.) effectively in a public speaking performance.

### **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial subject.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments made by others.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence (statistics, expert opinion, and/or historical precedent) to strengthen an argument.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to critique arguments made by others.



- Demonstrate ability to construct and advocate a complete policy proposal, which includes the following components:
  - identifying a problem area (harm);
  - describing the importance of the problem area (significance);
  - creating a possible solution (plan);
  - assessing the effectiveness of the plan for solving the problem (solvency);
  - identifying additional benefits of the plan (advantages).
- Demonstrate ability to respond to a policy proposal presented by others.

### **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify the cause of problem
- Demonstrate ability to use research and/or logical reasoning to assess various solutions to a problem.
- Demonstrate ability to develop a solution and assess the effectiveness of the solution.

### **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to work in teams.
- Demonstrate ability to divide tasks between team members.
- Demonstrate ability to participate in a group discussion to render a decision or complete a project.

### **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex task.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

### **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to find and utilize information wide variety of print and multimedia sources.
- Demonstrate ability to research with a purpose.
- Demonstrate ability to use electronic databases to collect information effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to use internet search engines to collect information effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to use a card catalogue and/or an electronic index to find books and periodicals in a library.
- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to assess the credibility of sources when conducting research.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.

### **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.
- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to apply understanding of argument and source bias to ideas and text beyond the classroom.





# Chapter 1: Introduction to Debate

**G**etting students interested and engaged in debate is one of the more challenging duties of a coach. Even students who are interested and want to continue in the activity sometimes are turned off by or have trouble understanding the activity at first. That is why it is so important to use easy, but educational activities and games to keep students coming back to practice or class excited about debating.

The activities in this chapter attempt to introduce students to the activity of debate. They range from demonstrations of a policy debate to role playing of a “town-hall” debate to actual practice mini-debates themselves.

These activities can provide a hands-on introduction to how debate works, and help students understand that debate is both fun and challenging. Try using them to stimulate student interaction - they may help to convince students of the importance of paying attention to lectures, discussions, and readings about debate structure and theory.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Introduction to Debate:

- 2.1 Brainstorming
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 4.7 The Card Flow Game
- 6.7 Current Events Challenge
- 7.1 Chain Debates
- 7.7 Introduction to Clash
- 7.8 Real World Debates
- 8.2 Group Cross-Ex
- 9.3 Group Case Construction
- 9.6 Affirmative Plan
- 14.1 SPAR Debates



# Standards for Chapter 1

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentation.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.
- Demonstrate ability to use non-verbal communication effectively in a public speaking performance.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial subject.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.

## **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify causes of problems.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to work in teams.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex task.

## **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.
- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.



# 1.1 Introductory Speeches

---

*This activity introduces basic presentation and speech organization skills. Students interview one another and then give "debate-style" speeches to introduce their partner to the class. This activity works well as an ice-breaker on the first day.*

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- be introduced to delivering speeches in front of the class.
- be introduced to using a clear structure to organize ideas.
- get to know one another.

## **Time Allotment**

30 minutes

## **Method**

Assign each student in the class a partner.

Allow 6-7 minutes to interview one another. Students should ask one another about favorite foods, family members, hobbies, interests, personal history, etc. Each student should take notes on the partner's responses to their questions. After each student has had a chance to both ask and answer questions, bring the class back together.

Allow students 1-2 minutes to prepare a 30-second speech introducing their partner to the class. Encourage them to focus on four key things they would like to communicate about their partner and to clearly separate them in their speech. Each student should say "The first important thing about [student X] are her hobbies. Her hobbies are.....The second important thing about [student X] is...."

## 1.2 Role Playing Debate

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*This activity introduces students to basic public speaking skills and to understanding multiple perspectives in debate. In role-play debates, students take on a particular role and make arguments from this perspective. Role-play debates can be designed to address a range of political issues, from the local to the international. Students can assume the role of a local politician, a member of Congress, a delegate to the United Nations, or a member of a community-based organization with a particular political agenda. This activity can be used as an introduction to debate, or it can be adapted to include research or used in a history or English classroom.*

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- deliver or participate in the preparation of one impromptu speech.
- be introduced to basic argumentation and persuasive speaking skills.

### **Time Allotment**

One class period (or more).

### **Materials and Preparation**

Create a short description of role-playing scenario related to the topic to hand out to each student. For example, a role-playing debate scenario might be a public forum in which community groups discuss the need to end racial profiling in the local police department. The description should clearly state the issue at hand and offer some context about the issue.

Decide on a format for the activity, including speech times and opportunities for floor speeches and questioning.

Create role descriptions to hand out to students in the class. Each student should have an individual role, but some students will have a role of their own (i.e. the mayor) and some students will have the same role as a few other students (i.e. members of community group x). In a town-hall style debate about racial profiling, some roles might include:

1. The mother of a black man who was randomly stopped by police and shot dead when the conflict escalated;
2. A national representative of the Fraternal Order of Policemen;
3. A white policewoman who lives in the suburbs and works in a high-crime city;
4. A community based black and Latino organization with a history of struggling for racial and economic justice through direct action;
5. Representative of a largely white moderate liberal organization named the Center for Community Policing;
6. A mayor interested in "urban renewal" and attracting the white middle class back to the city.





## Method

Pass out a description of the scenario and read it aloud to the class. Then, hand out the role descriptions randomly to the students.

Students with the same role should work together in groups to develop a 2-3 minute speech on the issue at hand, and select a spokesperson to present it to the class. Students who have a unique roles should work independently to develop a speech. Allow 5-10 minutes for students to prepare their speeches. Instruct students to develop speeches that reflect the perspectives and interests of the role students have been assigned.

After the preparation time has elapsed, begin the public debate. The teacher, or a designated student, should preside over the role-play debate, recognize speakers, and maintain order. Each representative should deliver a speech. After each speech, give the class 1 minute to question the speaker. After each representative has spoken, you may want to open the debate to additional floor speeches, or give each group a chance to give closing remarks.

To conclude the activity, you can have a vote by a show of hands on the issue. After the vote, have a class discussion about what happened in the scenario, including a discussion of what interests were at work and what types of arguments were most persuasive to what interest groups.

Variations: The town-hall format works well for role-play debates because you can use an issue that is relevant to your school's community and community groups that your students might be familiar with. You can also design role-play mock trials, have a mock congress on a particular state or national bill, a mock United Nations debate over an international treaty, etc.

You can increase the rigor of this activity by giving out roles and advance and requiring that students research the positions they take and prepare formal presentations.

# 1.3 Analyzing Old Resolutions

*This activity introduces students to the structure and meaning of policy debate resolutions. By examining a list of policy debate resolutions from decades past, students will look at the similarities and differences between these resolutions to determine the important features of a resolution.*

## Objectives

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- be introduced to the structure and function of a resolution in debate.
- practice working in groups to generate ideas.

## Time Allotment

15 minutes

## Materials and Preparation

A list of policy debate resolutions from at least 20 years ago for each student, at least one per student.

## Method

Hand out copies of the list of old policy debate resolutions to the students. (see appendix)

Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students. In their groups students should answer questions about policy debate resolutions, for example:

- What words or ideas do all or most of the resolutions have in common. Why might this be?
- How of the resolutions differ? Why might this be?
- Look at all the foreign policy resolutions. Do you see any trends in the way these resolutions changed over the years? What does each resolution tell us about the significant issues in US foreign policy in the year it was debated?
- Look at all of the domestic policy resolutions. Do you see any trends in the way these resolutions changed over the years? What does each resolution tell us about the significant issues in US domestic policy in the year it was debated?
- Pick two resolutions, one domestic policy and one foreign policy, and brainstorm 3-4 affirmative cases that you think might be run under each resolution.

To conclude the activity, ask each group to present what they observed about policy debate resolutions. Briefly discuss with students the basic parts of a policy resolution, using examples from the similarities they observed. Ask students to discuss as a class why they think the current resolution is relevant to recent developments in national, state, or local, politics.

Follow-up: Ask students to select a resolution from the list and participate short impromptu 1-on-1 debates (one minute speeches and 30 second rebuttals).



# 1.4 One-on-One Refutation

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*This activity introduces the technique of line-by-line refutation. Using a simple debate with only a few arguments, the instructor walks two students through a demonstration line-by-line refutation. Meanwhile, the class learns to flow arguments in an orderly fashion that will allow them to visualize the progress of an argument.*

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- be introduced to recording debate arguments in the format of a flow.
- be introduced to responding to individual arguments in a structured and understandable way.

## **Time Allotment**

10 minutes. Can be extended by repeating the activity with different student speakers.

## **Method**

Ask two students to sit face to face in desks at the front of the classroom. Ask the rest of the students to take out a piece of paper and pen in order to flow the debate they are about to observe. Each student should divide their paper into three columns in order to flow the debate. You may wish to flow the debate on the board as well to demonstrate to students the basic technique of flowing.

The first student at the front of the class should make a simple, controversial statement (e.g. "Ice cream is healthy"). The students in the class should write this statement in the first column of their paper.

The second student should come up with 3 or 4 arguments against the proposal and deliver them with clear distinction between the arguments ("My first argument is..., My second argument is..., My third argument is.....") The students in the class should write each of these points, in order, one beneath the other, in the second column of their paper.

The original speaker should answer each of the second speaker's arguments one by one. The original speaker should reference her opponent's arguments and then offer at least two responses. For example: "Her first argument is... One. [Speaker's first response] Two. [Speaker's second response] Her second argument is... One [Speaker's first response] Two [Speaker's second response]." The students in the class should write the original speaker's responses in the third column of their paper next to each of the second speaker's arguments.



# 1.5 Demonstration Debate

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*This activity introduces competitive policy debate to students through demonstration. Students watch more experienced debaters or a videotape of a debate. To facilitate active observation, ask students to take notes (free-form or flowing format) and follow-up with discussion.*

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- be familiarized with the structure of a competitive debate round.
- begin to critically interact with the debate.

## **Time Allotment**

One class period. It can take longer, depending on format.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Invite four varsity debaters from your school to stage a demonstration debate for your novice debaters. The demonstration debaters should discuss with you their argument strategy in advance. You should encourage them to speak slowly and clearly and to emphasize good argument organization and structure. You may ask the demonstration debaters to shorten their speeches to fit the debate within one class period.

Alternatively, you may choose to use a videotape of a debate for your demonstration. Videotapes may be less engaging for student observers and most videotaped debates will be longer than your class period. Videotapes have several advantages. You can find videotapes from championship rounds that demonstrate a very high caliber of debate. Videotapes can be paused and re-wound to facilitate discussion, and you can prepare a complete and accurate flow of the debate in advance for use in evaluating student flowsheets.

## **Method**

Begin by making sure that students have a basic understanding of the resolution and affirmative and negative positions they are about to observe. You may instruct student to focus on particular debate techniques, like line-by-line refutation or time allocation.

During the demonstration debate, there are several tasks you can assign to students to keep them actively listening and evaluating the debate:

**Flowing.** Each student should flow the debate. You may also wish to flow the debate on the board to model proper flowing technique. Before the debate begins, make sure that every student has enough sheets of paper to flow each contention of the case and each off-case negative argument on a different sheet of paper. You may also wish to collect student flows at the end of the activity to evaluate and offer feedback on their flowing technique, or ask students to trade flows and work with their partners to fill in arguments that they missed.

**Cross-examination from the floor.** Extend the cross examination period to allow for members of the class to cross examine the speakers.



You can also make use of several follow-up activities to improve flowing:

- Work with a partner to fill in any arguments that they missed.
- Hand out copies of a flow you completed of a single issue in the debate (like a disadvantage) and ask students to compare their flow to yours. Ask students to evaluate their own flow against yours, and write 4-5 things they will focus on the next time they flow a debate. For example, a students could focus on using more abbreviations, recording more of the author's names, or organizing the arguments on the page more neatly and clearly.
- Ask students to identify particular types of arguments, like a solvency turn or a non-uniqueness argument, and write 3-4 sentences about the importance of this argument to the debate round. You can also ask students to identify examples of good debate technique; for example, you might ask students to find an example of good clash and circle it in red. Students should write 3-4 sentences explaining the clash that happened and why the circled example was good.

# 1.6 Think Like a Judge

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*This activity introduces the skill of judge adaptation. Students are asked to view debate from the perspective of a judge. The goal is for students to think about debate as an interaction with the audience. Students should also think about how “winning” and “losing” a debate is arbitrary and subject to the thinking of a judge: you must not simply be right, but persuade another that you are right.*

## Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- think about the criteria that judges will use to evaluate their debates.
- begin to think strategically about how to “win over” judges with technique and reasoning.

## Time Allotment

20 minutes

## Materials and Preparation

You may want to prepare a list of your own judging techniques and guidelines in advance to stimulate discussion.

## Method

Ask students, as a class or in small groups, to imagine that they were supposed to judge a debate round. Assign a student from each group to take notes. Have students brainstorm what guidelines they would use to decide who won the debate round, why they would use the guidelines, and how important they think the guideline should be in decision-making. Possible judging guidelines (both “good” and “bad”) could include:

- Unanswered arguments
- Analysis of significance and impacts
- Style or demeanor
- How “realistic” their arguments are.

When the students have completed a list, have them report back to the class on what they decided. Then, have the class decide on a “master list” that a note-taker records. These criteria and guidelines should then be made into a grading sheet or rubric. When students have practice debates, you can use these guidelines and have the rest of the class evaluate and judge the round.



# 1.7 Intro to Arguments

---

*This activity introduces the structure of a complete argument. Students learn about claims, warrants, and refutation while participating in a game.*

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- be introduced to basic skills of argumentation.
- be introduced to basic vocabulary and technique of claims and refutations.

## **Time Allotment**

15 minutes. Can be extended by repeating the activity with different student speakers.

## **Materials and Preparation**

You may wish to make a deck of “topic” cards (perhaps from the list in Appendix A). Take small pieces of scrap paper and write various controversial statements on them, and have them prepared to hand out. Or, if you have time, you may wish to have students come up with their own topics (described below).

## **Method**

Have students take a small piece of paper (like an index card) and write two controversial statements on them that could be about any topic (for example: Prisoners should be able to vote, or X musical artist stole his material from Michael Jackson).

Collect all the index cards, and put them in a pile face down. Get the class out of their seats and have them form three lines - claim, warrant, and refutation. The first student in each line should step to the front of the class, and the first person from the claim line should choose a card and read one of the controversial statements (claims).

Then, the first person from the warrant line should give a warrant or reason why the claim is correct (for example: Prisoners should be able to vote because otherwise there are few protections for their rights, or X musical artist stole his material from Michael Jackson because he sampled a beat).

Finally, the first person from the refutation line should say “I disagree because ...” and then give a reason for the refutation (for example, prisoners already have means to claim grievances and they gave up claim to some rights when they committed a crime, or X musical artist only sampled Michael Jackson on one song and the rest is all original).

When they have finished, the person from the claim line should go to the warrant line, the warrant line to the refutation line, and the refutation line to the claim line. Then, the next people in line should pick a card and start.







# Chapter 2: Introduction to the Topic

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**W**hen the national policy debate resolution (available from the National Forensics League) changes each year, all debaters, novice or experienced, need to learn about the new topic. The resolutions cover a wide variety of policy areas (from Oceans to Privacy Rights to Education to Weapons of Mass Destruction) that are not always areas of high school students' expertise. For your students to get the most out of the policy debate season, it is important that, at the beginning of the year, they become familiar with the topic.

The activities in this chapter attempt to present the topic, which may seem abstract and distant to students, in an interactive way. They range from assigned reading to student presentations to simple topic brainstorming.

To really encourage student learning and participation, you may not want to spend a lot of time on the topic by itself. Try combining some of these activities with others in this manual - for instance, do a cross-examination activity using the resolution as the topic, or assign speeches to students that they must do topic-related research on.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be used for Introduction to the Topic:

- 10.2 Assumptions of the Topic
- 5.3 Skimming for Relevance
- 6.2 Finding Cards in Articles
- 7.7 Analyzing Real World Debates
- Chapter 12: Debate Games
- 11.1 Dictionary Search
- 5.2 Cards from National Papers



# Standards for Chapter 2

---

The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze two or more sources on the same subject by different authors.
- Demonstrate ability to recognize and evaluate points of contention between two or more written sources.

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentation.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.
- Demonstrate ability to use non-verbal communication effectively in a public speaking performance.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial subject.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.

## **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify causes of problems.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex task.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to find and utilize information in a wide variety of print and multimedia sources.
- Demonstrate ability to research with a purpose.
- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.

## **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.
- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.



## 2.1 Brainstorming

---

*This activity introduces basic teamwork skills and ideas and their relevance to a particular topic. The list of ideas is discussed, evaluated, and categorized for use in future assignments at the conclusion of the activity. Brainstorming is useful for generating lists of affirmative and negative arguments for research, or for generating interesting subjects of practice debates.*

### **Time Allotment**

10-20 minutes. Shorter brainstorm sessions can be used as warm-ups to activities like impromptu debates or as introductions to research assignments.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice working collaboratively with classmates to generate and evaluate ideas.
- be introduced to a variety of issues relevant to the current debate topic.

### **Materials and Preparation**

You will need either a blackboard or a large white sheet of paper and markers to conduct this activity. Paper and markers are preferable because you can save the list generated during the brainstorm for future reference. If you use a chalkboard, designate a student to record the list during or after the activity.

### **Method**

Brainstorming can be used to generate a list of ideas on a variety of debate-related themes. Brainstorm sessions could generate:

- A list of cases that would be topical under the current resolution.
- A list of possible advantages to a particular affirmative case.
- A list of possible disadvantages, critiques, or counterplans that could link to a particular affirmative case.
- A list of generic disadvantages, critiques or counterplans that could be linked to multiple affirmative cases.
- A list of possible sources (magazines, newspapers, etc) for debate research.
- A list of debate topics for impromptu speeches or debates.

Begin by presenting the intention of the brainstorm to the class and making sure that everyone understands the task at hand. Make sure students have the information they need to participate. For example, you are brainstorming negative strategies against a particular affirmative case, you may have a student read the 1AC in front of the class, or pass out a copy of the speech.

Establish a starting time and a time limit for the brainstorming session. Decide in advance whether you will brainstorm for 2 minutes or 10 minutes, according to the breadth of your topic.

Brainstorming as a class: If you decide to conduct brainstorming as a whole class, be prepared to facilitate



### A Reminder ...

Establish ground rules for the brainstorm.  
Example ground rules might include:

- Students must raise hands and be called upon to speak (For smaller groups, this may not be necessary).
- Any idea, no matter how outlandish, should be written down.
- There should be no criticism, during the brainstorm session – ideas will be sorted and critiqued after the session has concluded.

the discussion so that everyone has an opportunity to speak. You may wish to designate a student to be the “scribe” and write everyone’s ideas on the paper or blackboard.

After the brainstorming session has ended, go back through the list and pick out the most useful ideas that were generated and group similar ideas together.

**Brainstorming in small groups:** Divide the class into groups of 4-5. Assign a topic for the brainstorm. All groups can work on the same topic, or each group can work on a different topic. Instruct each group to choose a scribe

and give students a specified amount of time to generate ideas. Announce the end of the brainstorming session and give groups a few minutes to select the best ideas from their list. Conclude the activity by asking a representative from each group to present the best ideas their group generated.

### Follow-up:

After you have brainstormed a list of arguments and ideas, you can refer to this list for public speaking and research assignments. You might divide up the list and ask students to research negative strategies to cases or ask students to prepare an “issue” briefing to orient the class to the specifics of each argument.



## 2.2 Topic Warm-up Cards

---

*This activity basic public speaking skills and issues on the current debate topic. Using cards with topics for impromptu debate, students will engage in quick 1-minute pro and con speeches on issues related to the current resolution. In addition to introducing students to the resolution, this exercise is a good introductory speaking activity for beginners or a warm-up activity for the beginning of a class or practice.*

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- be introduced to issues relevant to the current debate topic.
- practice developing basic arguments under time constraint.
- become more familiar with speaking in front of the class.

### **Time Allotment**

5-50 minutes. The time length may be varied to suit the purpose, and the number of students participating. You may wish to extend this activity across several days by holding 1-2 impromptu debates at the beginning of each class until every student has had a chance to participate.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Prepare a set of index cards with debate topics written on them. The topics should thematically relate to the current resolution, but should be phrased as questions or statements that students can make arguments for and against without additional research.

### **Method**

Select one volunteer from the class to give the first speech. Ask the volunteer to draw a card and give her 2 minutes to prepare a 1-minute speech in favor of the question. Instruct the rest of the class to get out a paper and pen to take notes on the speaker's arguments.

Ask the speaker to give a speech, as the rest of the class flows. Once the speaker is finished, call on a second student to prepare a 1-minute negative speech refuting the first speaker's arguments. Allow volunteers from the class to ask the first speaker questions as the second speaker prepares. Then, the negative speaker should deliver a speech.

Repeat the activity by inviting another student to draw a card and deliver a speech, and by calling on another student to refute the initial claim.



## 2.3 Topic Pre-Reading

*This activity introduces critical reading skills using literature on the current debate topic. Students will be given a newspaper or journal article that relates to a particular aspect of the debate topic. Working individually and in small groups, students will prepare to read by first writing what they already know about the topic and then what they hope to learn from the article. Student will read the article and identify the main ideas.*

### Objectives

By the end of this activity students will:

- be introduced to reading periodical literature on the debate topic.
- be introduced to identifying the main ideas of texts.
- be able to identify details from a text that may be useful in discussions of broader issues.

### Time Allotment

One class period (optional take-home assignment)

### Materials and Preparation

Select several articles for students to read relevant to the current debate topic. Each group of 3-4 students will work with a different article, and each member of each group will need a copy of the article. For a short, introductory assignment, you can use articles from the newspaper. For a more in-depth assignment intended to help students generate ideas for a research subject, use journal articles.

### Method

Ask each student to divide a blank sheet of paper into three columns. Students should title the first column "What I Know," the second column "What I Want to Know," and the third column "What I Have Learned."

Divide the class into groups of 3-4. Assign each group a topic and tell each group the title of the article they will be reading. All of the groups can work on the same broad issue on the resolution, or each group may work on a different aspect of the resolution or possible case. Explain to students that the columns will help them direct the reading they will do about the topic and to record the useful things they will learn.

Each students should individually write as many things that they can think of under the "What I Know" section. After students have had a few minutes to think, give them a few moments to share what they know with their group members. Together the group members should fill out the second column by generating 4-5 general things they hope to learn from the article they are about to read.

Pass out the articles to the students. Depending on the length of the articles, you may wish to assign the reading as a homework assignment. After the assigned readings have been completed, each student should fill out the "What I Learned" column in her notebook.

To conclude this activity, give students time to talk with the other members of their group about what they found most useful about the article. Call on one member from each group to give a synopsis to the class.



## 2.4 Issue Briefing

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*This activity introduces affirmative and negative positions on the current debate topic. By asking each student to present a 2-4 minute "briefing" on a particular position, you can familiarize the class with many different positions. Students conduct basic research on a given topic, present both sides of the issue, and then present their own informed conclusions about it. This activity gives students the opportunity to practice public speaking and to teach their peers about a topic they have become an "expert" about.*

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- have researched one issue relating to the current resolution in-depth and have learned about many others from listening to presentations by their classmates.
- have practiced debate library and electronic research methods.
- have delivered one prepared, oral presentation.

### **Time Allotment**

Take-home assignment. Depending on the amount of research you wish students to complete, you may give them 4-10 days to research their topic. You may wish to allow some in-class time for research and preparation, especially if this is your class's first researched speaking assignment. Allow 2-3 full class periods for in-class presentations. You may also choose to ask 2-3 students to speak each day for several days.

### **Materials and Preparation**

You may wish to provide students with a list of potentially useful sources (newspapers, scholarly journals, magazines, and electronic resources) to search.

If necessary, introduce students to basic electronic and library research before assigning this activity.

### **Method**

Brainstorm as a class a list of cases, disadvantages, counterplans, etc. that you expect to encounter on the current debate resolution. If you already have such a list, you can instead briefly go over the list to familiarize students with each position.

Each student should prepare a short (3-4 minute) oral presentation, an "issue briefing" on a topic related to the current debate resolution. Assign, or allow students to choose, a single affirmative case or negative position to research and present to the class.

Student issue briefings should seek to introduce the class to the debates surrounding a particular issue. For example, if a student is presenting on a possible affirmative case, the student should describe the case, explain some major reasons why advocates support the policy, explain the reasons why detractors oppose the policy. Students should conclude their presentation by drawing their own conclusions about the plan.

Student issue briefings should draw primarily on recent evidence in order to familiarize students with the types



of sources they will use in competitive debate. Students may use newspaper sources, periodicals, journals, credible internet sources, and other electronic media accessible at your school.

For some debate resolutions, it may be appropriate and useful to assign one or two students to deliver historically oriented presentation to give the class background on the issue at hand. For example, for a resolution on US foreign policy toward Russia, a student presentation on the collapse of the Soviet Union would be useful to classmates as they research the resolution.

Each student should deliver their prepared presentation, and every member of the class should take notes on the main ideas of each speech. Encourage the students to take notes on all of the presentations in the same notebook so that they can refer to their notes throughout the course. At the conclusion of each presentation, you may choose to allow a few minutes for the class to question the speaker.

### Follow-up:

You may ask each presenter to turn in an outline and bibliography from her presentation at the conclusion of the activity. Keep the outlines on file for members of the class to reference during future research assignments.

### Variations:

If there are varsity debaters on your squad who have written files on particular issues at institute or on their own, you can give novice debaters copies of files to read and ask them to synthesize the information into a presentation for the class. This does not encourage original research, but it does help novice debaters learn about particular arguments and familiarize themselves with useful evidence files.

If you want this activity to help students to feel more engaged by the current resolution and find in it areas of personal interest, offer them significant flexibility in selecting a topic. You might encourage students to approach the topic creatively, using literature or other types of sources in their presentation.





# Chapter 3: Speaking

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**T**he thought of speaking in public is enough to send shivers down the spines of most people – it is the number one fear in the United States. People are more afraid of being on stage in front of a crowd than they are of heights, of spiders or snakes, or even of dying. High school students are no different. Stage fright can often be a huge barrier to beginner’s success in debate. But as students conquer their fears, the skills of persuasively speaking in public are some of the greatest rewards debate has to offer.

This chapter includes activities that single out speaking skills and try to encourage students to become effective and comfortable public speakers. There are activities that focus on students own speaking styles and techniques, and those that show students the techniques of accomplished public speakers to model. There are fun tongue twisters and an activity that teaches students to relax.

These activities are useful for beginners with little knowledge of debate, or with more experienced debaters who should practice to maintain and improve the clarity and fluency of their speaking. If you have dedicated debaters, try convincing them to do some of the activities in *3.5 Articulation Drills* daily.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be used for Speaking:

- 1.1 Introductory Speeches
- 1.2 Role Playing Debate
- 2.4 Issue Briefing
- 4.10 Giving Speeches from Flows
- 7.1 Chain Debates
- 7.6 Position Presentations
- 12.6 Telling Stories
- Chapter 14: Practice Debates



# Standards for Chapter 3

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.
- Demonstrate ability to adapt oral presentations to various audiences.
- Demonstrate ability to use non-verbal communication effectively in a public speaking performance.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.

## **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify causes of problems.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex task.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to research with a purpose.
- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.

## **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.
- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.



# 3.1 Impromptu Speaking

---

*This activity introduces basic public speaking skills. Using a prompt, students deliver short speeches with limited preparation time.*

## **Time Allotment**

Approximately 3-5 minutes per speech. If you don't want to devote an entire class (or two) to impromptu speaking, you can make this an ongoing activity. In the second situation, have a few students deliver an impromptu speech per class period until the entire class has had a chance to speak.

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice developing well-organized, analytical arguments with limited preparation time.
- practice good presentation technique.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Slips of paper with speech topics, one for each student in the class. Choose topics that students can speak about for 1-3 minutes without research or preparation and that require the speaker to make and defend an argument.

## **Method**

The key to impromptu speaking is organization, delivery, and the clear formation of an argument rather than the content of the speech or the strength of an argument. Begin by explaining the expectations for a speech prepared with very limited time and no research. An impromptu speaker should:

- Begin with an introduction that states the argument to be presented and end with a conclusion that sums up the argument for the audience;
- Clearly state 2-3 points that support their argument using simple analysis;
- Practice good presentation technique, including poise, eye contact, quality and use of voice, enunciation, fluency, effective and expressive gestures, and confidence.

Version 1: The first student should draw one speech topic. Allow the students a set amount of preparation time (2-3 minutes, or less for more advanced students) to write the outline of a speech. When time is up, the student should deliver a short speech (suggested time limit: 2 minutes). To keep the activity moving, the next speaker should draw a topic and begin preparing before the first speaker begins speaking.

Version 2: The first student draws two topics, one for themselves and one for the next speaker. The first student should prepare and deliver a speech as described above. In the middle of the speech, the speaker should call out the second topic, and the second student should immediately begin preparing a speech on this topic. Once the first speaker has finished speaking, the second speaker has 1 minute to finish preparing a speech. Before the second speaker begins to speak, he should draw another topic to call out for the next speaker during his speech. The activity continues like this with each speaker drawing and calling out the topic for the next speaker.



## 3.2 Effective Speaking

---

*This activity introduces basic public speaking skills. Students will observe and critique a videotaped speech as an introduction to the elements of good public speaking.*

### **Time Allotment**

10-15 minutes, depending on the length of the video clip you select.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to basic concepts in public presentation.
- be introduced to critically evaluating the public presentations of others.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A videotape of a speech. You can use a presidential debate, an historical speech, a clip from a television talk show, or any other televised speech or presentation. Try and find a speaker or speech topic that will interest your students as well as one that will serve as a model for effective speeches.

You may want to show two or more short clips or a clip with more than one speaker and ask students to examine the performances comparatively. You will also need a TV/VCR for this activity.

### **Method**

Prepare the students to watch the video by suggesting some questions or topics to keep in mind as they watch. These questions will vary depending on the clip that you choose and the aspects of public presentation you want to emphasize with the class. You could ask students to focus on:

- Presentation (How well did the speaker use tone, pace, emphasis, posture, eye contact, etc.?),
- Speech organization (Was the speech well organized and understandable?)
- Argumentation (What were the speaker's arguments and how did the speaker make them?)
- Audience (Who was the audience? Was the message appropriate to that audience? Did the speaker adapt the message to the audience?)

Instead of simply listing effective practices, you may want to brainstorm with the class ahead of time, asking them what makes a public speaker effective. Once you have generated a list as a class, and each student has this list written in his or her notebook, you are ready to proceed.

Show the video to the students. Remind the students to take notes on the presentation.

Have students evaluate the effectiveness of the speaker with respect to the questions to topics you presented or generated at the beginning of the activity. This discussion can occur in a variety of formats, depending on the needs of your class: large group discussion, individual written reflections, or small group discussion followed by having representatives from each group report their conclusions to the class.



## 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues

---

*This activity develops public speaking skills. It also introduces the students to talking about social issues in terms of problems, causes, and solutions. Students will identify controversial issues of interest to them and learn to break these issues into problems, causes and solutions. Each member of the class will present a short (3-5 minute) analytical speech on the significance of a problem, the causes of a problem, or a solution to a problem. This activity is a good way to introduce the concepts of the stock issues before introducing the policy debate jargon of solvency, significance, harms and inherency.*

### **Time Allotment**

The time allocation varies. On the long side, this activity might take up to eight days. It would include an in-class introductory lesson, a take-home assignment, and a series of in-class presentations and follow-up discussions.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to breaking a problem down into components in order to argue for a solution.
- practice public presentation techniques.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A list of controversial problems. You could have students generate the issues they want to deal with.

### **Method**

Introductory Session:

Divide the class into groups of three. Either assign or have students come up with a significant problem that will be the subject of a speaking assignment. Use class time (20 minutes or so) and have the group discuss together the problem that they will work with. Together, the group members should brainstorm and take notes about the following questions:

- Why is this problem significant? What social conditions and situations establish the do we know the problem exists?
- What are some of the causes of the problem?
- What are some possible solutions to the problem?

At the end of the brainstorming session, each student should choose to prepare one of the following persuasive speeches. Each group member must select a different speech:

- Argue that problem is both real and significant (Problem Speech)
- Identify 1-3 possible causes and argue that they are responsible for the problem (Causes Speech)
- Present a solution to the problem and argue that it will work (Solution Speech)



At the end of the class period, each group should tell you which group member is doing the problem speech, the causes speech, and the solution speech.

### Take-Home Assignment:

Each student will be responsible for preparing independently the speech they have selected. The speeches will be presented in class using only note cards on a specified date.

Set required speech length that seems reasonable for your class's experience level: maybe 3-4 minutes if it is early in the semester, longer if the class is more experienced.

Decide whether these speeches will be analytical or require some research. If you decide to require research, outline clear expectations of how research-intensive the assignment will be. However, because this is a speaking assignment, speeches should be primarily in student's own words with short quotations (not paragraphs of evidence) integrated into the speech.

### In-Class Presentations:

Have groups present together in order (problem, causes, solutions). Groups do not have to work together to unify their presentations; the purpose of having all the students in a particular group present on the same day is to illustrate to the class the different ways of looking at a controversial issue. At the end of the three presentations about an issue, have the class ask questions of the speakers and allow members of the class to offer their opinions on the issue.

### Follow-up:

This activity segues neatly into a discussion of the stock issues in an affirmative case. Any affirmative case must necessarily present a problem, argue that the problem entails a significant harm, and present a solution that addresses the causes of the problem. Once students understand this process of breaking down a problem, it will be easier for them to understand the importance of addressing the harms, inherency, solvency, and significance in a policy debate.

Alternately, the activity could take just two days. The first day, introduce the activity and allow students to begin writing out their speech. As home work, students would finish writing out the speech word for word. The next day, students would be randomly selected to give their speech. Only a portion of the class would present, although every student would by necessity have prepared. Each student would also be asked to submit the written version of their speech.



## 3.4 Recorded Speeches

---

*This activity builds and develops advanced public speaking skills. It involves recording a speech on tape, allowing the speaker to listen to and evaluate her own performance. This technique can be used repeatedly and in combination with a variety of other activities.*

### **Time Allotment**

The time required varies. Students may need to prepare a speech in advance and practice it in order to perform in a manner that makes recording fruitful. Audio or visual recording equipment must be acquired and tested to ensure it will work. Actually recording the speech will likely only take 1-10 minutes, depending on speech length. However, students may wish to record a speech several times, or to restart in the event of a serious mistake. Finally, depending on their skill level, students will take widely varying amounts of time evaluating the tape.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- use recording equipment to listen to and critique their own speeches.

### **Materials and Preparation**

- A prepared speech that the student is comfortable presenting.
- Video and/or audio recording and playback equipment.
- A set of evaluation guidelines (version 1).
- A set of guidelines for a paper assignment (version 3).

### **Method**

Version 1: Have each student deliver a 1-minute speech in class and video- or audiotape the speech. Create a set of evaluation questions that emphasize the aspects of delivery and/or persuasive speaking that you have recently discussed in class. Have each student watch their own tape and write a self-evaluation of their performance by identifying concrete areas that could be improved. Students can also listen to the tape while considering written instructor or peer feedback about the speech.

Version 2: Instead of doing this as a one-time activity, make a habit of periodically video or audio-taping speeches that students deliver in class as part of practice debates or other speaking exercises. Make sure that you record and offer written feedback for at least one speech by each student during the course of semester. Use the tapes in the evaluation and reflection process as described above.

Version 3: Have experienced debaters deliver more lengthy speeches. For instance, they could give a 2AC, 2NC, 1AR, etc. from a recent tournament. Once a student feels prepared and is ready to begin, have her give the entire speech while you record. Then, ask students to write an evaluation of their own performance. Let them take the tape home, and request that they return the next day with a report. The report could be a one page written evaluation, a list of areas for improvement, or personal reflection piece. It will be helpful to give students a clear set of standards regarding the nature of the paper.

## 3.5 Articulation Drills

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*This activity develops clear and fluent articulation skills. These drills give students a chance to practice clear, confident enunciation of words. Articulation drills are a good opening warm-up for your class or after-school practice and should be repeated frequently.*

### **Time Allotment**

5 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice techniques that promote good articulation of words and clear, confident speech.

### **Materials and Preparation**

(none)

### **Method**

Have the entire class stand at their seats and perform this drill at once. You can do the drill along with the students or walk around to make sure everyone is participating. If you walk around, you can ask individuals to speak louder and/ or more clearly when appropriate.

As the students stand, have them perform one of the following drills, speaking with confidence and clarity.

#### Reading Drills

Students can use any brief or text for these drills:

- Read a piece of evidence with a pen horizontally between the lips.
- Read a piece of evidence backwards, from the right-hand side of the last sentence until the left hand side of the first sentence, word by word.
- Read a piece of evidence with the syllable "oh" between each word.
- Read a piece of evidence with the syllable "A" between each word.
- Read a piece of evidence while punching the ending of every word. You can't attend would become "you "A" can "Ta" atten "Da".





### Tongue Twisters

Tongue Twisters can help students with enunciation and articulation. Write any of these phrases on the board and have students repeat several times as quickly as they can. Include the request that students enunciate clearly while reading quickly.

- My dame hath a lame tame crane.
- Red leather, yellow leather.
- How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?
- Rubber baby buggy bumpers.
- The sixth sheik's sixth sheep's sick.
- The lips, the tongue, the teeth.
- Unique New York.
- The boot black bought the black boot back.
- Toy boat. Toy boat. Toy boat.
- I slit the sheet, the sheet I slit, and on the slitted sheet I sit.
- Mrs. Smith's Fish Sauce Shop.
- Lesser leather never weathered wetter weather better.
- Knapsack straps.
- A noisy noise annoys a nose.
- Friendly Frank flips fine flapjacks.
- Vincent vowed vengeance very vehemently.
- Cheap, trick ship trip.
- Lovely lemon liniment.
- Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
- She sells seashells by the seashore.
- Flash message!
- Thieves seize skis.
- Truly rural.
- Plague-bearing prairie dogs.
- Freshly fried fresh flying fish.
- Preshrunk silk shirts.
- Are our oars oak?
- The epitome of femininity.
- Please pay promptly.
- Hi-Tech Traveling Tractor Trailor Truck Tracker.
- Irish wristwatch.
- Cows graze in groves on grass which grows in grooves in groves.
- Selfish shellfish.



## 3.6 Reading Fluency Drills

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*This activity develops fluency in public speaking. These drills will help students practice reading aloud with fluency, confidence, and proper expression. Reading fluency drills are a good opening warm-up for your class and should be repeated frequently.*

### **Time Allotment**

Approximately 5 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice techniques for improving reading expression and fluency.
- hone public speaking skills.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Each student will need some evidence to read. The content of the evidence is irrelevant.

### **Method**

Divide the class into pairs and have students take turns performing the drill as their partner listens and offers criticism.

#### **Cold Reading Drill:**

Each student should pick up a piece of evidence with which she is not familiar. The student should read this evidence loudly, fluently and with confidence. Each student's partner should offer feedback and constructive criticism on:

- Strategies for dealing with unfamiliar words and phrases
- Eye contact and gestures
- Emphasis on key words and phrases
- Confidence and assertiveness

#### **Emphasis Drill:**

Each student should take a piece of evidence and read it silently. Then, each student should circle or underline important phrases to emphasize when reading the evidence aloud. Each student should read the evidence aloud to their partner, using expression and vocal inflection where appropriate to convey the meaning of the evidence. The partner should offer criticism on:

- Whether the degree of emphasis seemed natural and appropriate.
- Whether the speaker properly selected the words and phrases to emphasize.



## 3.7 Relaxation Warm-ups

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*This activity develops public speaking skills. It presents warm-up exercises that help students relax before the often-stressful task of public speaking. If you practice these regularly, students will be familiar with these warm-ups so they can use them before a debate to relieve tension. This is a good activity to do before a tournament, exam, or in-class practice debate.*

### **Time Allotment**

5 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice techniques for relaxing the body, face, and vocal cords before delivering a speech.
- learn techniques they can use independently before every speech.

### **Method**

Have the entire class stand at their seats and perform the warm-ups at once. Each student should:

Take several slow, deep breaths.

Open the jaw wide (as if yawning) to relax the jaw muscles.

Neck-rolls: Lean the head towards the left shoulder and slowly roll it forward toward the right shoulder.

Shoulder-rolls: Raise the shoulders up as high as they will go and then slowly roll them backwards.

Take deep breath and blow the air out through relaxed lips to relax the facial muscles.





# Chapter 4: Flowing

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**F**lowing, or taking notes in a debate round, is important for everyone involved in debate. Teachers and coaches who judge at tournaments need to be able to accurately record the events of the round just as much as the participants. In advanced debate rounds, where decisions can come down to the quality of clash on the smallest of arguments, a good flow, or accurate record of what team said what when, can mean the difference between good and bad rebuttals, between victory and defeat.

The activities in this chapter introduce note-taking or flowing to students. Some of the activities call for you to demonstrate flowing, while others call for independent student work (and some can even be used as homework assignments).

Before doing some of the activities that require demonstrations of flowing, you should think about your comfort level with your own flows. It may make sense for you to review flowing technique in a debate textbook, or practice a few times before doing it in class. Depending on the legibility of your handwriting, you may want to make flows on a computer.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be used for Speaking:

- 1.4 One-on-One Refutation
- 6.5 Writing Tags
- 6.12 Improving 2AC Blocks
- 7.2 Line-by-Line Challenge
- 7.7 Introduction to Clash
- 7.10 Judge the Chalkboard
- 9.5 Affirmative Case Debates
- 14.2 Single Issue Debates
- 14.3 Rebuttal Redos
- 14.4 Observer's Assessment
- 14.9 Advantage/Disadvantage Comparison Speech

# Standards for Chapter 4

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentation.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze and respond to facts and arguments in an oral presentation.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze television and radio news and commentary.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to use an outline to structure notes.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.
- Demonstrate ability to record each argument during a speech presented by an opponent during a debate, and use these notes to respond orally to each argument individually and in proper sequence.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.

## **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify causes of problems.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex task.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.

## **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.
- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.



## 4.1 Flowing Music

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*This activity introduces listening and note-taking skills. Students practice recording words and ideas on paper quickly and accurately while listening to a song they like. It is a good warm-up for the beginning of class.*

### **Time Allotment**

Around 5 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice identifying and recording critical information from an oral presentation in a systematic way.

### **Materials and Preparation**

You will need a CD or tape with a song that is popular with your students. The song you select should have a decent pace and plenty of lyrics. You want to be careful to pick a song that students may be interested in, and that they can understand. At the same time, it is important not to select a song with which students are already intimately familiar. You will also need a CD or tape player. If possible, print out a copy of the lyrics of the songs off the internet before you use the song in this activity. If that is not possible, ensure that you have a decent flow of the song before beginning.

### **Method**

Each student will need a piece of paper to use as a flowsheet. Before you begin, emphasize the need for students to employ shorthand, given the virtual impossibility of writing down every word in a fast paced song.

Play a particular song (or a portion of a song) for the class. Students should write down as many of the lyrics as they can as the song plays.

When the song or portion of a song ends, ask students about lines in a song. Solicit feedback from students about the content of their flows. For example ask, "after she says "X" what does she say? What is the next line?" Call on individual students, so that all students are accountable for their flows. Work as a whole class, or in small groups, to construct a full flow of a given song, filling in any holes.

In some circumstances, it might make sense to have students turn in their flows. This can give you a sense of students' note-taking ability and provide an opportunity to grant credit for participation. It is important to signal to students the importance of flowing to successful debating.



## 4.2 Flowing the News

---

*This activity introduces basic listening and note-taking skills. Students practice flowing while they listen to reports on current events. For optimal success, students should have enough familiarity with the process of flowing to create a flow independently. This activity is best completed as a homework assignment.*

### **Time Allotment**

Students should complete this assignment at home. Depending on the motivation of the student, it might make sense to flow the news for a full half an hour a night. In a classroom setting, having students flow the news for 15-30 minutes one evening and then turn in their flows might make the most sense.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice identifying and recording critical information from an oral presentation in a systematic way.
- gain better flowing skills.
- practice critically analyzing current events as they are presented in the media.

### **Materials and Preparation**

- A segment of a television or radio news program.
- Students should have received an introductory lesson on flowing in preparation for this activity.

### **Method**

Ask students to take notes on the news program in the same format as they would flow speeches in a debate. Students should number each story, and include on their flow:

- A short header for each story (like a tag in a debate)
- A few key facts and people referenced in the story (like flowing the content of cards)

Students should turn in their flowsheets to you along with the station, time, and date of the news program.

**Variation:** You can also do this as an in-class exercise. Videotape a segment (10-15 minutes) from the evening news and play the videotape in class the next day. You can also use an audiotape of a radio news show. Shows with controversy and multiple sides of a position (like Crossfire) sometimes also work well. Students should flow as described above. This could be used as a warm-up activity at the beginning of class.

**Extension:** Before they turn in their flowsheets, ask a few students to give short (1-2 minute) speeches to present their opinion on one of the news stories they recorded on their flow.

This activity can be used for extra-credit in a debate course. Assign students to watch 30 minutes of news. Have them turn in a flow, and emphasize the importance of current events to successful policy debating.

Finally, this activity can also be used as an evaluative tool with your debaters. You can look at their flow of the news and talk with them about issues like shorthand, spacing, numbering, etc.





## 4.3 Basic Evidence Structure

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*This activity introduces note-taking skills using the format of a flow. This simple demonstration shows the class the different components of a piece of evidence and demonstrates how these components should be recorded on a flow sheet.*

### **Time Allotment**

10-15 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to the components of a piece of evidence.
- be introduced to recording critical information about a piece of evidence in usable form.

### **Materials and Preparation**

- 2-3 pieces of properly briefed evidence, copied onto a transparency
- Overhead projector
- Chalkboard

### **Method**

Project the sample evidence using the overhead projector and transparencies. Ask a volunteer to read the evidence aloud to the class. Using a marker, diagram the evidence on the overhead by labeling the tag, the citation and the card. Point out to students which components of the evidence they should include on their flow.

Go to the chalkboard and flow the evidence that is projected on the screen. Number the arguments and write an abbreviated tag line, the author's name, and the date for each piece of evidence on the transparency on the chalkboard. Discuss with students why each of these items is important to include on a flow. Depending on the skill level of the students, it might make sense to talk about the benefits of flowing the content of the card.

# 4.4 The Grid Drill

*This activity introduces structured note-taking skills. The grid sheet will help students visualize the way they should organize arguments on the page when flowing a debate. This activity also emphasizes direct, line-by-line refutation.*

## Time Allotment

15-25 minutes

## Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to recording ideas to be presented in a speech in a systematic, usable way.
- be introduced to the importance of line-by-line refutation in a debate.

## Materials and Preparation

One grid sheet for each student. The grid should be as large as a normal sheet of paper and have 3 rows and 4 columns. See the example on the right.

A list of possible debate topics that students can discuss off the top of their heads in a mini-debate without evidence. The topics can be related to the current debate resolution, or simply topics of interest to the class. You may want to prepare an overhead transparency with a mini-debate flowed in a grid sheet. You can introduce the activity by showing the students a properly completed grid sheet. Make sure that your grid sheet uses numbers.

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**A Sample Flow Grid**

## Method

Students should work in pairs for this activity. Assign each pair a topic for their mini-debate. The pairs of students should sit facing one another. Each student should have a grid sheet. Throughout the activity each student will give two speeches and their partner will flow these speeches.

The first student in each pair should come up with three simple arguments in favor of their assigned topic. The first student should then deliver a first affirmative speech while the second student flows. At the end of this speech, both partners should have three arguments written in the left column, with one argument in each box.

The second student should be giving a minute of preparation time to develop one direct response to each one of his partner's arguments. The second speaker, using signposts and numbering, should give a first negative speech, respond to each affirmative argument with one answer. The first student should flow this speech. At the end of the speech, both partners have the negative responses written in the second column on the grid, with each response in the box immediately to the right of the original argument it counters.



The last two speeches should proceed in similar fashion. The first student should take a minute or two of preparation time. In the second affirmative speech, the first student should rebuild her original arguments, one by one, in light of the second student's responses. The second student should flow this affirmative speech. At the end of the speech, both partners should have a solid flow of the affirmative responses in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column. Finally, the second student should take some preparation time and then give a speech that rebuilds her original arguments, one by one. Both partners should write these responses in the 4<sup>th</sup> and final column.

At the end of the activity, both students in each pair should have a 4-speech debate completely written out on the grid sheet. At this point, you can either have all students turn in their completed grid / flow sheet or make time for a couple pairs of volunteers to present their debates to the class.

**Wrap-up:**

Be sure that students understand that this is how they should flow, even when there are no boxes on the flow sheet. Each argument should be individually listed on the page and the responses to each argument should be recorded next to the original argument.

**Variation:**

You can do this exercise with a specific aspect of the resolution, such as a disadvantage or the solvency of an affirmative case. Students can use both evidence and analysis to deliver mini-constructives and mini-rebuttals. You can also adjust the number of rows on the grid to change the number of arguments per speech.

Once the students understand the concept of a grid sheet, you may want to have several model grid sheets made into overheads. You could have model sheets that exemplify typical flowing mistakes. For instance, use model grid sheets to explain dropped arguments and pulling across arguments that go unanswered. Or, use grid sheets to demonstrate grouping arguments and cross-applications. The grid sheet can be an important tool to teach the significance of line-by-line debating.

## 4.5 The Card Flow Game

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*This activity introduces structured note-taking skills. You will read off the names of playing cards in the same way a debater might read evidence in a debate round, and the students will compete with one another to record the cards accurately. This short activity can be a useful warm-up for the beginning of your class.*

### Time Allotment

This activity can be used in short, five to ten minute regular chunks of time. The first time you introduce the activity, however, it will take 20-30 minutes for students to get the hang of it.

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skill recording information in a structured, usable form.
- develop familiarity with the structure of line-by-line argumentation.

### Materials and Preparation

- A deck of standard playing cards
- A table large enough for you to spread the cards out in flowing order

### Method

Each student should begin with a piece of paper for a flow sheet. Students should divide their flow into seven columns as if they were preparing to flow speeches in a debate round. Alternately, if you have a limited amount of time or a less experienced group, you may want them to simply divide the paper into three to five columns.

Once students have their flow sheets ready, begin reading out the playing cards. Treat each card as if it is an individual argument in a debate speech. For example, you might call out:

- 1** First is the Ace of Hearts.
- 2** Second is the Queen of Spades.
- 3** Third is the Ten of Clubs”, etc.

Read off 4-5 cards for the first “speech”, and then deliver a second “speech” that responds to the first. For example:

- 1** Off the number 1, The Ace of Hearts:
  - 1a** My first response is the Three of Clubs.
  - 1b** My second response is the Jack of Spades.
- 2** Off the number 2..., etc.



You should deliver 3-4 of these “speeches” for students to flow. Each speech should directly respond to each “argument” in the speech before it in the same order.

As you read, lay the cards out on the table in the order that you read them, placing “responses” next to the original card, so students can check their flows later. Students should write down both the suit and the number of the card, using abbreviations and symbols as needed.

Have volunteers read their flows aloud at the end of the activity to check for accuracy. Or, ask the class (or individual students) specific questions about their flows. For instance, you might ask, “what did the 2AC say in response to the 1NC number six? What about the number three?” Collect the flows at the end of the activity and check them.

**Variation:**

Read (or have a volunteer read) a “speech” that contains numbered pieces of evidence interspersed with playing card titles. Have the class flow, being certain to record every “argument” whether it is a playing card or a piece of evidence. This activity forces students to listen for the main idea of the evidence in addition to catching all of the playing card titles.

## 4.6 Demonstrating Flowing

*This activity introduces structured note-taking skills. By using an overhead projector, students will examine a model flow sheet and critique their own flowing technique.*

### Time Allotment

Approximately 20 minutes. If extensive discussion about flowing ensues, this activity could take as long as 45 minutes to an hour.

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to techniques of identifying and recording critical information from a speech.
- be able to identify several ways in which they can improve their own flowing technique.

### Materials and Preparation

Photocopies of a pre-written 1AC speech on the current resolution. Students should be familiar with the case you select. The length of the 1AC should depend on the skill level of the students. For beginning debaters who are just learning to flow, it might make sense to have the 1AC be no longer than four or five cards. You will also need an overhead projector and a pre-written flow of the 1AC speech on a set of transparency sheets for the overhead projector that you prepare. Each contention of the case should be flowed on a separate transparency sheet. You might want to type up this model flow.

### Method

Ask a student volunteer to read the pre-written 1AC speech. This is an opportunity either to allow an individual with well-honed presentation skills to model effective practice, or to give a novice student the opportunity to speak in front of the course for one of the first times. Warn the volunteer that you will occasionally be stopping her during the speech. Ask students to take out a pen and paper, and to flow the speeches.

Before the student begins, set up the overhead projector with the transparency of the first contention. Cover the transparency so that none of the points are visible at the beginning of the speech.

Ask the speaker to begin presenting the 1AC, reminding the class to flow the speech. At the end of the first contention or observation, stop the speaker. Uncover the transparency with your flow of the first contention for the class to see. You can either uncover the flow one card at a time, or uncover the entire contention at once. Allow the class time to ask questions or discuss differences between their flows and yours. Students should indicate ways in which your flow needs improvement. Engage them in conversations about what information is most important to keep track of on a flow.

Ask the speaker present the rest of the speech, and stop him after each contention. Let the class see and discuss your flow of each contention after each contention has been presented. Students should try and make each contention that they flow more complete and structured than the last by modeling your examples.



## 4.7 Signposts and Numbering

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*This activity develops note-taking skills. This demonstration activity helps students understand that structure (such as signposts and numbering) makes a speech easier for a judge to flow and understand. Students will flow the same speech twice, with and without stated structure. Students will also generate strategies for flowing when presented with unstructured arguments.*

### **Time Allotment**

15 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice identifying and recording the critical ideas presented in a speech.
- understand the importance of explicit structure in speeches.

### **Materials and Preparation**

One or more pre-written 2AC blocks against disadvantages on the current resolution. Any pre-written argument will work (such as a 1AC or disadvantage shell) but 2AC blocks are well-suited to this activity because they are short, contain both evidence and analytical arguments, and are particularly difficult to understand without numbers and argument headers (like "No Link", etc.).

### **Method**

Select two students to present the pre-written 2AC block to the class. Pull the first speaker aside and instruct her to read the 2AC block to the class, but to omit the structure - she should not read the numbers, the argument headers like "No Link" or "Non-Unique". Request that she not use indicators such as "my next argument is" either. Don't let the class overhear your instructions to the speaker.

The first speaker should present the block in the manner outlined above and the class should attempt to flow the speech. After the first speaker has finished, ask the second speaker to present the same block, this time including the structure.

Once both speakers have finished, discuss as a class the reasons why the first presentation was more difficult to flow than the second. Ask questions until the class comes to the conclusion that the lack of explicit structure makes it difficult to determine and record the meaning of each argument. Be sure that the class understands that explicit structure is an important component of all speeches, not just the 2AC.

Even though structure is important, students will sometimes encounter speeches by opponents that do not have a good structure. Talk with students about how they managed to flow the first speech, and generate a list of ways to flow and respond to speeches that are not well structured.

## 4.8 Speech Reports

*This activity develops efficient note-taking skills. Students will practice flowing by listening to a speech given by a peer, and then, using their flow sheet, report the speech back to the original speaker. Each student will also practice giving constructive criticism to peers. This activity works best in an after-school setting or with a small class of students.*

### Time Allotment

Approximately 20-30 minutes

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice identifying and recording critical information from an oral presentation in a systematic way.
- practice offering constructive criticism to peers.

### Method

Choose two topics suitable for short speeches without evidence. You may want to pull topics from a list students develop. In general, pick topics where students are likely to have an opinion. For instance, you may want to have students give speeches on one of the following topics:

- Police should crack down on illegal hand gun possession.
- The government should censor music with explicit lyrics.
- The government should mandate that businesses create good paying jobs.
- The United Nations is obsolete. The United States should make decisions for the world.
- The Food Stamp program deserves funding.
- The congress should be made up of half men and half women.

Once you have assigned resolutions, divide the class into pairs. Give the class five minutes to prepare 2-minute speeches on one of the topics. Partners should be preparing speeches on different topics. It may make sense to have the class number off (one, two, one, two) so that each pair has a one and a two. Then, you can a single topic to all ones and another topic to all twos.

When the five minutes of preparation time is over, the first student in each pair should deliver their speech to her partner as the partner (the second student) flows. After the speech is over, the second student should attempt to deliver the same speech using her flow, while the first speaker flows. After this speech, the first speaker should compare her flow with the outline of her original speech, talking with the second speaker about how well the two line up and correcting any errors or omissions.

After this sequence is complete, the partners should switch roles so that each student has the opportunity to both deliver and report back on a speech.





## 4.9 Personal Shorthand

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*This activity develops efficient note-taking skills. Abbreviations and symbols are an essential element to efficient flowing. This activity is designed to help students develop individualized systems of note-taking. It is also a good way to engage the class during an in-class debate.*

### **Time Allotment**

15-30 minutes, depending on the length of the debate that students flow.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop a set of personalized symbols that will make flowing more efficient.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A list of suggested abbreviations for flowing (optional). Lists of flowing symbols are available in several handbooks and textbooks. Adjust previous resolutions' symbol lists for this year's resolution.

### **Method**

For this activity, the class will need a speech or debate to flow. The topic of the speech should be related to the current debate resolution so students can learn to abbreviate topic-specific words. This activity can be done in conjunction with an in-class mini-debate or as students flow a practice debate held by varsity debaters. If you want the activity to take less time and to lead into class discussion about the use of symbols in flowing, you can simply ask a student to read a 1AC, a disadvantage shell, or series of cards.

Students could also complete this activity working in pairs. You could assign students to have one on one mini-debates about a particular topic (for instance, a solvency debate for an affirmative case, a disadvantage, etc.). In this scenario, have the first student deliver a speech for a specified amount of time while the other student flows. Then have the second student respond directly to the first student's speech. If one student read a disadvantage shell, the other should give analytical arguments against the disadvantage. Time constraints and student skill level will determine how many speeches it makes sense for students to complete.

After the speech or debate is over, students should make a list of all the abbreviations that they used intuitively in their flow. Then students should read through their flow a second time and find words that could have abbreviated to make their flow more efficient. If there is time, have a whole class brainstorm about abbreviations. Ask students to list the abbreviations they use while you write them on the board.

From lists generated up to this point, students should create a key (a guide) for their personal shorthand. Each student should list all the words they will abbreviate in her flows along with the abbreviation or symbol she will use to represent each word.

Variation: You may wish to provide students with a list of abbreviations used in flowing to guide their personal list. However, it is important that students understand their abbreviations. Shorthand is a question of what makes sense to an individual student, not a question of memorizing a prefabricated list of abbreviations.

# 4.10

## Giving Speeches From Flows

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*This activity builds advanced flowing skills. Students will practice using their flow to write analytical responses to an opponent's arguments. Students will listen to a speech and write out their responses, flow sheet-style, for you to evaluate. Members of the class should have a general understanding of the structure of a flow and the technique of line-by-line refutation for this exercise.*

### **Time Allotment**

This activity is flexible. It can be a 10 minute drill or a 50-minute activity.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice using a flow to prepare analytical responses to an opponent's arguments.
- practice using a flow to facilitate line-by-line refutation.

### **Materials and Preparation**

One or more students should prepare to deliver a short speech for the class to flow. This speech could be reading a 1AC, a 1NC Disadvantage Shell, a 2AC Frontline, or whatever you think is most important and appropriate for students to cover. Suggested models are listed below.

### **Method**

Begin by asking one student to present a speech to the class. Each member of the class should flow this speech carefully and neatly, using standard flow structure. Students should use more than one piece of paper to flow this speech, if appropriate.

After the speech has concluded, give students a specified amount of time to write responses independently to each argument presented in the speech. Responses should be written directly next to the original argument. The amount of time you allow should depend on the length of the original speeches.

At the end of the activity, students should turn in their flows to you. You may ask students to re-copy their flows overnight so that they are legible and clearly structured.

Once everyone has finished writing their response speeches, you can ask a few volunteers to deliver the speeches they prepared for the class to listen to and critique.



A list of suggested models for this activity follows:

- Have the student speaker read a prepared 1AC and have the class write analytical responses to each contention of the case as if they were the 1NC speaker.
- Have the student speaker read one or more prepared disadvantage (or kritik or counterplan or topicality) shells and have the class write analytical responses to each argument as if they were the 2AC speaker.
- Have a student read a prepared 1AC, and then have a second student read a prepared 1NC solvency (or harms or inherency) frontline. The class should flow both speeches, and then write analytical responses to the 1NC arguments as if they were going to give a 2AC.

Variation: You can assign this activity to engage the entire class as a few students participate in an in-class practice debate. Have the entire class flow the first couple of speeches of the practice debate. Then stop the debate, and give the class time to write responses to the last speech as if they were the next speaker. For example, if you stop the debate after the 1NC, then students should write responses to this speech as if they were going to deliver the 2AC.

Once the class has had time to prepare their responses, the debate could resume. You would have to have them write their responses on a separate sheet of paper, or have two flows, so that their flows would not be useless. One way to do this would be to have the students flow their 2AC arguments in a column on blank sheets of paper that they lay next to their flows. Then they can take the sheet away and flow the actual 2AC. After the debate, hold a class discussion which will allow members of the class to compare the speaker's argument choices with the arguments they had on their own flow. You should collect and grade each student's flow sheet at the end of the activity.

Alternately, you could end the mini-debate after the 1NC. Rather than continue with the mini-debate, you could call on a couple different students to give the 2AC. If students know in advance that any one of them could be asked to give the 2AC, they will focus more attentively on flowing the first two speeches. After a couple students give a 2AC, collect and grade each student's flow.

## 4.11 Flowing Responses

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*This activity builds advanced flowing skills. Students will practice using only their flow to develop analytical responses to arguments. This activity is best for students who have basic flowing skills but need practice simultaneously flowing and writing counterarguments under time constraints.*

### **Time Allotment**

15-20 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in simultaneously recording and generating responses to arguments.
- be introduced to using analytical arguments to attack the premise and assumptions of evidence.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A disadvantage shell, part of a 1AC, critique shell, a 2AC block or any other pre-written brief of an argument related to the current resolution. You should choose an argument you would like the students to practice analyzing.

### **Method**

Read or have a student read the briefs you have selected for this activity. If you are using a negative argument (like a disadvantage) you should specify which affirmative case this argument is negating.

Each student should flow the brief as it is presented and try to simultaneously write counterarguments to each piece of evidence. Give students 1-2 minutes after the speech to finish writing their counterarguments.

If the evidence read is part of a 2AC frontline, the counterarguments should be written directly next to the original argument on their flow. They should number arguments consecutively, just like a normal flow. But it should be clear, for instance that the students' fourth argument directly counters the original number two from the frontline.

If the evidence read is part is disadvantage shell, on the other hand, students should simply list all counterarguments consecutively. But, they should find a manner to indicate the evidence that they are disputing. For instance, they might say, "My third argument is No Link. The Wallace 2003 evidence does not apply to my affirmative case, it assumes a situation where..."

In either case, students should focus on arguments they can make without evidence, like finding internal contradictions in the argument, pointing out weak evidence, or missing logical links.

If you have the time, ask several students to present their counterarguments to the class. Or, divide the class into pairs and have students present their speech to their partners. At the end of the activity, collect the flows with the counterarguments students have written to review.



# Chapter 5: Research

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**T**hose familiar with the libraries in many high schools would probably be surprised at the level of sophisticated research that takes place on debate teams across the country. Complicated research skills and resource-finding methods are not effectively taught in high schools, and yet high school debaters often conduct research beyond the level of the average college student. The flip side of the coin, though, is that debaters being introduced to the activity must learn these research techniques, and you must help them do it.

The activities in this chapter are designed to improve research skills. They aim not only to help students find information, facts, and opinion on the topic, but also help them comprehend it. Some require field trips to libraries, others can be done within your classroom.

If you do decide to take your class or team to the library, especially one outside your school, be sure to check in with the library in advance. Many college or university libraries have restricted admissions policies (that they can make exceptions to) or times when they prefer visitors come. And if you ask nicely, you may get a reference librarian at a public or university library give a tour and library orientation for you.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted to use for Research:

- 1.3 Analyzing Old Resolutions
- 2.2 Topic Warm-up Cards
- 2.3 Topic Pre-Reading
- 2.4 Issue Briefing
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 6.2 Finding Cards in Articles
- 6.7 Current Events Challenge
- 7.6 Position Presentations
- 7.8 Real World Debates
- 9.7 Writing Mini-Cases
- 13.2 Legislation Analysis



# Standards for Chapter 5

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze scholarly journal articles.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze news sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze government and public documents.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze nonfiction books.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze internet sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze two or more sources on the same subject by different authors.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to work in teams.
- Demonstrate ability to divide tasks between team members.
- Demonstrate ability to participate in a group discussion to render a decision or complete a project.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to find and utilize wide information in a wide variety of print and multimedia sources.
- Demonstrate ability to research with a purpose.
- Demonstrate ability to use electronic databases to collect information effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to use internet search engines to collect information effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to use a card catalogue and/or an electronic index to find books and periodicals.
- Demonstrate ability to assess the credibility of sources when conducting research.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.

## **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.
- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.



## 5.1 Cards from Newspapers

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*This activity introduces basic research skills. It can be used to develop research skills as well. This basic exercise is useful for beginning and more advanced debaters alike. The cards students find can be used to update your class's files and integrated into competitive and practice debates. In the process, students gain more practice reading and analyzing newspapers to find support for their debate arguments.*

### **Time Allotment**

This activity is a take-home assignment.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice locating useful articles in national newspapers.
- practice identifying useful facts and arguments in newspaper articles.
- create a set of briefs that can be used in a debate round.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Access to recent copies of several national newspapers.

### **Method**

Students should locate a given number of newspaper articles that relate to the current debate topic from national newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Financial Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal* using the Internet. You can direct the assignment by assigning different students to look at different newspapers, or focusing on specific cases or disadvantages.

Once they have found their articles, students should identify the useful pieces of evidence in each article and prepare briefs, complete with citations and tags for each card.

Have students turn in the briefs along with a copy of the original articles they found for you to evaluate and correct.

Possible follow-up activities:

Have several students deliver a one-two minute speech explaining one of their articles, how it relates to the current debate topic, and their opinion about the events described in the article.

These "updates" can be copied and distributed to the debate team to integrate into their evidence files. Before you distribute these briefs to the class, you may want each student to revise them after you or one of their peers looks over the brief and makes suggestions for improvement.

## 5.2 Skimming for Relevance

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*This activity develops research skills. Students will use several key components of a book to gather clues about whether that book is relevant to a particular research topic. This activity will help students collect information more efficiently by learning to sift out irrelevant material early in the research process.*

### **Time Allotment**

30-45 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to techniques of quickly determining relevance to a particular research topic.
- practice predicting the main idea and argument in a book by looking at specific parts of the text.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Several (6-8) different books related to the current debate topic or to a particular debate research assignment. These books will need to be screened before class: you should have a degree of familiarity with them before beginning the activity. Some books should contain cards relevant to the position, and others should be less useful. If done in conjunction with an after-school meeting, this activity could potentially take place at a university (or significantly sized public) library. This activity can take place in the stacks of the library. If the activity is conducted in a library, it is possible to adapt the activity so that each student is looking through their own book, or to have students work in pairs rather than small groups. If done in conjunction with a class, the books can be brought to the classroom or it can take place at the school library.

### **Method**

Decide upon a topic for research. This can be an affirmative case, negative responses to an affirmative case, generic negative arguments on the resolution, etc. Because of the multiple internal links built into many disadvantages, a disadvantage related topic might have to center around a specific component of a position.

When you have decided upon a topic, divide the class into small groups and give each group a book that may be relevant to this research topic.

Give each group a limited amount of time (10-12 minutes) to determine whether their book is relevant. Together, the students in each group should read and discuss:

- The title
- The table of contents
- The index
- The preface, forward, and / or introduction
- The first and last paragraph of each chapter
- The author's credentials, if given
- A few pages (each group can randomly select a 2-3 pages to read)





Tell students that when the time is up, each group should be prepared to share their findings with the class. Students should decide whether the book is useful or not, or if the book must first be read more carefully to determine whether it is relevant. If only part of the book is relevant (for instance a particular chapter), they should identify this part. Groups should provide several reasons for their conclusion based on observations about the different components of the book.

**Variation:**

Conduct the same activity, but with photo-copies of articles rather than with books. Select some articles that have a large number of cards and some that are less useful. With this variation, it is possible to give every student their own copy of an article, rather than having 4-5 students share a book.

**Possible follow-up activity:**

Based on student's presentations, compile a list of books that the groups considered useful for future reading. You can use this list as part of a research or brief-writing assignment.

## 5.3 Library Scavenger Hunt

*This activity develops research skills. This introductory research activity makes using research techniques into a competitive game. You will need to make a trip to your school (or local) library for this activity. This activity is best suited to students who have been oriented to research techniques but need more practice employing them for a research project.*

### Time Allotment

One class period

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to using multiple methods of research to find information on a variety of topics.
- practice finding evidence that supports a given argument.

### Materials and Preparation

You will need access to a library, and a prepared list of items for each group to find in the library. See suggestions below. You could bring a small prize for the winning teams (optional).

Creating scavenger hunt lists:

You may wish to create a different, but similar list for each pair or small group of students so everyone is not trying to get the same things at once. Each list should require that students utilize a variety of searching techniques to find the items. Search techniques include the library catalogue system for books, an electronic database or print index (such as the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*) for periodicals, the internet search engines, etc. Items on the list should include a variety of topics, and can require that students find articles that support a particular position. For example, an item may be "An editorial from a national newspaper from the last 6 months in favor of gun control legislation" or "An article from a scientific journal that supports the theory of global warming."

### Method

Before the activity begins, students should have a basic knowledge of what resources are available at the library to help them find different types of material. You may wish to give a brief orientation or review at before the activity begins. This activity also works ideally as a follow-up to an introduction by the librarian.

Divide the class into groups or pairs and pass out the scavenger hunt lists. Explain to students that you will clarify the meaning of any items on the list, but will not help them find items (it is a contest, after all!).

Come up with a system to check whether the items teams find are correct. You may have teams place items on a table as they find them. If they do, you can check over the materials as teams find them.

The team that finds all the items on their list first, or the team with the most items at the end of the period, wins the game. You may want to give out second and/or third place to keep the activity going longer and so all the students have more time to practice finding items.



## 5.4 Resource Collection

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*This activity develops research skills. It can also be used to build advanced research skills. The following project is a way to organize the initial stages of writing or updating a debate argument file, such as an affirmative case or disadvantage, as a class. Students work individually in a small group to collect relevant documents while recording every step of the process. This activity also ensures that students have a chance to practice using a variety of research techniques.*

### Time Allotment

This is a two to three day in-class and/or take home assignment. This activity can be adapted to be a short, overnight assignment or extended into a long project based on how many articles students need to find.

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be able to strategically employ multiple methods of research.
- be able to find evidence to support a given argument.
- identify a set of resources that can be processed for use in a debate round.

### Materials and Preparation

Access to the school, public, or university library. You will need a printed list of 4-5 different search mechanisms that can be used to find different resources. For example, you may have students use:

- An electronic or card catalogue to find books.
- An electronic or print index (like the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*) to find periodicals.
- Thomas (<http://thomas.loc.gov/>) to find congressional documents.
- A general internet search engine (like [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) to find the web sites of organizations that produce information related to the topic.

### Method

Decide upon an argument to research. The argument can be an affirmative case, a negative case file, counterplan, etc. You may want to pick 3-5 arguments to research as a class and have each student select one argument (or one component of an argument) to work on independently. If you prefer to have students work in groups to complete the activity, each group should have a different argument (or component of an argument) to research.

Individually or in groups of other students with a similar research topic, have students brainstorm a list of several potential search terms for their topic.

Give students the list of search mechanisms they must use to find information. Decide how many documents each student must find using each search mechanism. For example, you may have each student choose three of the search mechanisms and find two documents using each mechanism. If students are working in groups, you may still want to hold each individual responsible for finding a set number of documents. The goal is to ensure that each student gains experience using a variety of research techniques.



For each document they find, students should list:

- The search mechanism they used.
- The EXACT wording of the search terms (including the ANDs NOTs and ORs) that they entered to find the document.
- The full citation of the document in proper form.
- Three to four sentences summarizing the facts and arguments included in each source and why the source is relevant to the research project.

Follow up on the assignment with a class discussion about the differences between search mechanisms and strengths, weaknesses, and uses of each.

Possible Follow-up Activities:

Have each student or group give a brief oral presentation to the class using the articles (or evidence) they found. Students should first give an overview of the argument they researched. Then, students should explain the major arguments in each of the documents they found and talk about how each document can be used to support the assigned argument.

It may make sense to compile and save the bibliographies generated by the students for future research assignments. If you have access to copier or a printer, you may wish to keep a file of all the substantive, useful articles the students find to use for future research assignments. It may make sense to turn the copies of the evidence over to varsity debaters.



# Chapter 6: Evidence and Writing Briefs

**Y**ou may not want to start new novices off with lectures and activities about evidence and writing briefs, as discussions of these topics often are jargon-filled. But evidence and briefs, the warrants behind debaters' claims, are a major part of what makes policy debate so challenging and rewarding. Evidence is what separates debate from a high-powered shouting match. To be successful, debaters must not only read up on the topic and be knowledgeable on a wide variety of subjects, but they must have facts and evidence to back up their knowledge.

These activities introduce students to evidence and writing briefs. The activities range from fun and games trying to find cards (pieces of evidence) in tabloids to more serious brief building exercises, but all stress the importance of comprehension and use of debate concepts.

If your students are less than enthusiastic about brief building, remind them of the importance of evidence in making their arguments not just in debate, but for the rest of their life. In debate, as in life, to be successful you must do more than tell people that you or your arguments are right; you must show them.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted to use for Research:

- 2.2 Topic Warm-up Cards
- 2.4 Issue Briefing
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 5.1 Cards From Newspapers
- 5.2 Skimming for Relevance
- 5.3 Library Scavenger Hunt
- 5.4 Resource Collection
- 7.6 Position Presentations
- 7.5 Writing a Refutation
- 9.7 Writing Mini-Cases
- 9.3 Group Case Construction
- 11.2 T-Violation Worksheet



# Standards for Chapter 6

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze scholarly journal articles.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze news sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze government and public documents.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze nonfiction books.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze internet sources.
- Demonstrate ability to recognize and assess author's intent.
- Demonstrate ability to identify logical and factual flaws in written sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze two or more sources on the same subject by different authors.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use statistics, expert opinion, and/or historical precedent to strengthen an argument.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to critique arguments made by others.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to work in teams.
- Demonstrate ability to divide tasks between team members.
- Demonstrate ability to participate in a group discussion to render a decision or complete a project.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to assess the credibility of sources when conducting research.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.



## 6.1 Meeting the Evidence

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*Students will take turns summarizing the evidence that supports a particular position for the class. The class will be introduced to several different arguments, and the presenter will gain a deeper knowledge of one position. Students should have enough knowledge of the topic to read evidence and prepare summaries of the main arguments independently before being asked to complete this activity.*

### **Time Allotment**

This activity is a take-home assignment. In class the next day, a select number of students will give 2-5 minute in-class presentations.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to several different arguments related to the current debate resolution.
- practice identifying the main argument in a piece of evidence.
- develop presentation and leadership skills.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Each student will need pieces of evidence from a different argument related to the current resolution to prepare. Each student should have 3-8 cards of evidence to read – the shell of a disadvantage, a contention of a 1AC, etc – and that evidence should contain a complete argument or scenario. If it is not possible or practical for each student to have a different argument, you can prepare multiple sets of cards from 3-6 different argument positions. That way, multiple students might have the same cards from the same position, but the class will still be able to hear presentations on multiple positions during the report backs.

### **Method**

During the last ten minutes of a class period, give each student a set of pieces of evidence to read. As an assignment, each student should paraphrase each card and be prepared to explain their assigned argument to the group the next day.

The next day in class, select student presenters and have them briefly summarize the evidence that supports their position in their own words. Afterwards, have the class cross-examine the student presenter about the position.

Variation: Have these presentations over the course of several days, and have each student give 1-2 such presentations over the course of the semester. Or, anytime that an exercise requires that the class be familiar with the a particular argument before they begin, send the shell of the argument home with one student the night before and have that student give an introductory presentation to the class the next day before the activity begins.

## 6.2 Finding Cards in Articles

---

*This activity introduces evidence identification and carding skills. Students will take an article and mark the passages within the article that they think could be useful in a debate round to prove a given argument. This activity is a good way to guide students through the first step in converting research material into usable briefs. For this activity, students should be familiar with the topic and the use of evidence in a round and ready to learn to write their own briefs.*

### **Time Allotment**

Take-home assignment or 30-minute in-class activity.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in identifying the arguments in articles.
- develop skill in identifying evidence to support a particular claim.
- develop skills in critical reading.

### **Materials and Preparation**

The full text of 1-2 articles for each student. The articles should be relevant to the topic and useful for proving a specific argument (like a disadvantage or an affirmative case.) You can have the whole class work with the same article. Or, with more advanced students, you may have each student work with a different article. You may ask students to use articles that they have found as part of a separate activity.

### **Method**

This can be an individual take-home assignment or small group in-class activity. The experience level of your students should determine whether they work on this activity independently or with assistance.

Pass out an article to each student or small group. If you want to be able to compare different solutions, give each the same article. If you want to convert the carded articles into usable files later on, give each a different article to work with.

Have students read through the article and mark passages that could be used as evidence. For each passage they find, students should write brackets around the first and last words of the passage. Then the students should write an abbreviated tag line (4-6 words, abbreviations or incomplete sentences are OK for now) in the margin next to the text they have selected. The tag should indicate the main argument in the passage and how it would be used in a debate round.

### **Possible Follow-up Activity:**

If students all used the same article, go through the article as a class and talk about the different passages the class has chosen. If students worked on different articles, have several volunteers read out a passage they selected and describe the way they believe it will be useful in a debate round. Discuss the volunteers' choices as a class. After they have identified all the useful passages in their article, students should turn their articles in to you for review.





Variation:

Have each student read the same article. Give each student a list of possible claims that portions of the article could be used to prove, and have students identify the passage in the article that best supports the argument. Leave a space between each claim so student can paste a card below each.

For instance: I want to prove that lead poisoning is causally linked to permanent mental health problems in children. Cut out the passage you choose and paste it below, along with a citation for the article.

## 6.3 Analyzing and Comparing

*This activity introduces basic evidence evaluation skills. Students will compare the purpose and content of several different styles of articles and think about the way each could be used as evidence in a debate round. This activity will introduce students to thinking about sources as they begin to write their own briefs.*

### Time Allotment

30 minutes

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to analyze the purpose, audience, and arguments in a source.
- develop critical reading skills.

### Materials and Preparation

Each student will need 1 copy of each of 3 different newspaper or magazine articles. The 3 articles should deal with a similar event or issue. However, they should fit into three distinct categories:

- A short article that simply reports a fact or event.
- A longer article that also only reports a fact or event.
- An editorial that presents a clear argument.

For example, you may include a newspaper report that a particular bill has been vetoed by the president, an article that describes the content of the bill, and an op-ed column in favor of the bill.

### Method

Pass out the articles to the class. Give the students time (10-15 minutes, depending on article length) to read over the articles silently. Students should underline/bracket the main facts or arguments presented in the article. You may also want to pass out the articles the night before and have students read them to prepare for the activity as homework.

Break the class into groups of 3-5 students. Have students discuss the differences between the style and content of the articles. Groups should discuss questions such as:

- What is the purpose of each article? What does each attempt to prove?
- Who is the intended audience of article?
- How do the articles differ in structure and organization?
- Are there implicit arguments present in the articles which seem only to inform?
- How would the different types of articles be useful in a debate round?

Have representatives of each group share conclusions with the class in short reports.

### Follow-up Activity:

This activity can be followed up (or preceded) with a short, introductory discussion about evaluating evidence. Talk about authorial intent and bias; facts, evidence and warrants; and audience.



## 6.4 Categorizing Evidence

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*This activity introduces brief writing skills. Students will work as a class to group cards by argument. This activity is an intermediary step between collecting and cards in articles and writing briefs; at the end of the activity you will have folders of similar cards that can be divided up among the students and compiled into usable debate briefs.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-50 minutes (or more, depending on the number of cards to be sorted.)

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice identifying similarities between arguments made by different authors.
- create a file of evidence that can be used in future brief-writing assignments.
- develop an understanding of the arguments surrounding a particular position.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A large number of cards (with citations) that pertain to the current debate topic. These cards may come from an activity in which the class cut evidence on a variety of topics. Students will, in this activity divide them into categories so they can be combined into useful debate files. One file folder for each category of cards. For example, if you are working with cards for a Spending disadvantage file, you should have folders for: uniqueness, links, impacts, non-uniqueness, link turns, no impact, etc. As the instructor, read through the cards to be sorted before the activity. You should have an idea of what cards will go into which folder so that you can answer student questions and check over each folder at the end.

### **Method**

Be sure at the beginning of the activity that students understand the argument(s) supported by the evidence. You may wish to review before you begin. Show students the folders and categories into which the evidence will be sorted. You may want the students to generate these categories as a class before the activity begins. Be sure the folders are clearly marked and place them in different locations around the room.

Divide the evidence randomly among the class so that each small group or individual gets the same number of cards to read through. Students should read each card silently. Students should write an abbreviated tag (3-6 words) on the back of each card to indicate the main argument in the card. Then, each student should put each card in the appropriate folder. Create a "miscellaneous" pile where students can put cards they think are irrelevant or useless.

Once all the cards have been sorted, take the folders home and make sure that students sorted the evidence correctly. Go through the miscellaneous stack and make sure that there is nothing useful there.

The next day in class, pass out the folders to small groups of students. You could give the "uniqueness" folder to one group, the "no-link" folder to another, etc. Groups of students should work together to turn the sorted evidence into usable briefs.

## 6.5 Writing Tags

*This activity introduces basic briefing skills. In the activity, students write the tags for a several pieces of evidence. This activity can also serve to introduce students to a particular argument (such as a disadvantage, 1AC contention, or critique) depending on which cards you choose to have students tag. The cards students tag can be simply for practice or can contribute to a broader brief-writing project in which the class can engage.*

### Time Allotment

This activity can be a 30 minutes in-class exercise or a take-home assignment.

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be able to identify the main argument in a piece of evidence and write a useful tag for the card.
- develop skills in critical reading.

### Materials and Preparation

This activity requires several (3-10) untagged pieces of evidence for each student. The following are some ideas about selecting and presenting the cards:

- Give each student (or small group) the same set of cards if you want to talk about how each group tagged the cards afterwards. Give each student/group a different set if you want this activity to contribute to the production of a broader evidence production project or if you want it to simultaneously introduce students to argument positions.
- Make a worksheet for each student by copying the cards onto a page with a blank above each for the tag. This makes for an easy take-home assignment.
- Take a photocopy of a disadvantage, counterplan or critique shell, or a portion of a 1AC and white out the tags. These can also function as worksheets if you pass them out and have students write the tags for these cards. Depending on the skill level of your students, you may not want to tell them what the argument is in advance – have them decide and write up a brief summary of the position after they have written tags for all of the cards.

### Method

Introduce the activity by taking a sample piece of evidence and writing a tag for it as a class. This activity will work best if students already understand the process of tagging well enough to write the tags for cards independently.

This activity can be completed as an individual take-home assignment, or an in-class small group activity.



Pass out the cards to students and instruct them to write tags for each card they receive. A good tag:

- Should capture the main argument of the card.
- Should be in the form of a complete, concise sentence (between 5 and 15 words).
- Should contain an argument marker (like "LINK" "UNIQUENESS" "TURN") if appropriate.
- Should NOT be a sentence fragment or contain symbols or abbreviations.
- Should NOT exaggerate or misrepresent the evidence in the card.
- Should be printed legibly and neatly above the card.

**Wrap-up:**

If students all tagged the same pieces of evidence, follow-up with a comparison of different tags individuals or groups generated. Have a class discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of different tags.

If students tagged different pieces of evidence, have a few volunteers read their tag and their evidence to the class. The rest of the class should discuss whether the tag is accurate and effective. If the students will be completing future briefing activities, have them save the tagged pieces of evidence in their portfolio to be sorted and briefed later.



## 6.6 National Debate Enquirer

*This activity introduces and develops briefing skills. Students will use articles from a humorous tabloid, such as *Weekly World News*, to practice writing argument briefs. Students will practice identifying main ideas and writing briefs in proper form. This is a good activity for students who have never written their own brief before.*

### Time Allotment

This activity will take around 60 minutes. Some sections can be completed as a take-home assignment.

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to identifying the major argument presented in an article.
- be introduced to the steps involved in preparing an argument brief.

### Materials and Preparation

Several copies of a humorous tabloid, like *Weekly World News* or the *National Enquirer*. If you do not have a full class set of one edition, you can use several different editions and/or have students share. Alternately, you can buy one copy of the tabloid and photocopy a class set of a single article.

### Method

Students should begin this activity with a general understanding what a brief is supposed to look like. You may wish to begin the activity with a quick review, or introduce students to the process of briefing by carding and briefing a piece of evidence from one article as an example.

Students may work individually or in small groups to complete this activity. Pass out the tabloids and have students choose one article and card it as if they were creating briefs to use in a debate. Students should:

- Read through the article
- Identify short passages (3-6 sentences) that contain a clear argument, and mark these passages with brackets and write a few notes describing the argument in the margin.
- Cut out the evidence and tape it to a plain sheet of paper.
- Write a full citation above the article.
- Write a 1-sentence tag that summarizes the argument presented in the evidence.

You may begin by asking the whole class to work on the same article, and then discuss which evidence students selected afterwards. You may ask students to complete this process with more than one tabloid article. Depending on the student's experience level, you may wish to check in with the class at the completion of each step.

At the end of the activity, students should turn their briefs in to you for comment and / or evaluation.



## 6.7 Current Events Challenge

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*This activity develops evidence evaluation skills. In this activity, students will practice identifying the arguments in an article and integrating them into speeches. Students participate in a mini-debate or a whole class debate using the arguments and facts in one article as evidence. They debate against students using an op-ed with an opposing point of view as evidence.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-40 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop the ability to critically evaluate evidentiary support for arguments.
- practice verbally defending the logic and assumptions of published materials.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Several copies of two different newspaper or magazine articles. The articles should offer opposing points of view on the same issue. Good sources include editorials or op-eds in the *New York Times* or *the Washington Post* or articles from newsmagazines *the U.S. News and World Report*, *Newsweek*, or *the Economist*. The articles you choose should have clear arguments to debate. They should also marshal evidence to support those arguments.

### **Method**

Divide the class into two teams. Give half of the students copies of the first article and half copies of the second. Give students time (5-10 minutes) to read their article independently.

Have an informal class debate on the issue. First, ask a few volunteers on each side of the debate to summarize the claims made in their article for the class. Then ask alternate student speakers on each side to advance the arguments of their author or refute the points made by speakers for the other side. Emphasize the need for students to defend the logic and position of their article against the challenge presented by the opposing side's article.

Variation:

Find articles that represent 3-4 opposing viewpoints on the same issue. Do the activity as described above, giving each student only one article to read and use in the discussion. This will make the debate multi-sided and may create more opportunities for students to speak.

Variation:

Divide the class into groups of four. Have each group pick an issue to debate and work together find one pro and one con article on the issue. Two of the students should focus on the pro and two on the con. Using the articles they found as evidence, each group of four students should participate in a mini-debate on the issue. These mini-debates can either take place in front of the class. Or, the mini-debates can all occur at once, if the size of the room allows students to hear each other.

## 6.8 Choosing Good Evidence

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*This activity develops evidence evaluation skills. Students practice choosing the most useful evidence for proving a particular argument. In the activity, you give students a series of untagged cards and they pick which ones are relevant as if they were writing a file. This activity is best for students who are preparing to begin writing their own briefs, but still require guided practice to learn the steps.*

### **Time Allotment**

Take-home activity or in-class small group activity (20-30 minutes).

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop their ability to evaluate the quality of evidence.
- build their understanding of evidence.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Copy several untagged cards onto a page (or two). Give each student one copy. The cards you choose should relate to a debate position, like a disadvantage or an affirmative case. Some of the cards should be better than others, and some should not be relevant.

### **Method**

Hand out the sheets of untagged cards to the students. Be sure that the students are familiar with the positions (disadvantage, counterplan, etc.) that the cards are supposed to support.

Beneath each card on the page, student should indicate whether the card should be kept or thrown out. Students should write a brief (1-2 sentence) reason for their decision.

If students indicate that the card should be kept, they should write a tag above or next to the card.

### **Wrap-up:**

Go through the cards as a class and talk about which ones students decided to keep. If students came to different conclusions about the evidence, allow students to discuss the reasoning behind their choices. Collect the handouts at the conclusion of the activity.





## 6.9 Card Matching Game

*This activity develops critical reading and evidence evaluation skills. Students will begin with a set of untagged cards and find pairs of cards that directly refute one another. This activity emphasizes using evidence in direct refutation and critically reading arguments in a text.*

### Time Allotment

30-45 minutes

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in critical reading.
- be introduced to using evidence to directly respond to arguments.
- develop skill in identifying and applying the major arguments in a text.

### Materials and Preparation

A set of untagged pieces of evidence with citations (10-12) for every 3-5 students in your class. Label each piece of evidence with a number so that when you discuss solutions as a class, students can refer to pieces of evidence by number. Each group of 3-5 students should have an identical set of evidence with the same numbers.

The set of evidence should contain pairs of cards with arguments that refute each other. For example, a uniqueness and a non-uniqueness card for a particular disadvantage, a solvency card and a solvency turn for a particular affirmative case, etc. There should be 5-6 of these pairs in the set of evidence that students will identify. All cards should be evidence that students might use in debates on the current resolution.

### Method

Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students and give each group one of the sets of evidence.

With their evidence set, each group of students should:

- read each piece of evidence.
- write an informal tag line (5-7 words) that sums up the major argument in the card.
- match each card with the card that directly refutes it. Write the numbers of the pairs of cards on a separate sheet of paper.

Wrap-up:

Compare the pairs and tags that groups came up with as a class. If there are different solutions, have group members explain their reasoning and decide as a class which solution is best.

## 6.10 Building A Brief

*This activity develops brief writing skills. Students will practice building an argument brief from untagged pieces of evidence. Working in groups, students will read and analyze supporting evidence for a specific argument (like a disadvantage, counterplan, affirmative case, or critique) and use the evidence to write a shell. Students should be familiar with the chosen argument and the use of evidence in a round, and ready to learn to write their own briefs.*

### Time Allotment

40-50 minutes

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in critical reading.
- be introduced to placing evidence in logical order to construct a complete argument.
- develop skill in identifying and applying the major arguments in a text.

### Materials and Preparation

Each group of students will need a set of untagged cards. Cut the tags of the cards from the 1NC shell of a disadvantage, counterplan, or critique or from a portion of a 1AC. You may want to add some additional cards so that students must evaluate both relevant and irrelevant pieces of evidence as they reconstruct the argument. Choose an argument that members of your class are likely to encounter in a debate round. Give each group of 3-5 students the same set of evidence to use.

### Method

Students should begin this activity with basic familiarity with the specific arguments with which they will be working. You may want to start the activity with an overview of the disadvantage, affirmative case, counterplan, etc. which the cards in the set support.

Break the class into groups of 3-5 students. Give each group one set of the untagged cards.

With their evidence set, each group of students should:

- Write a tag line for each card.
- Choose which cards they will use in the shell (or 1AC or 2AC block) of the argument (if there are more cards than they need).
- Organize the cards in a logical order.
- Use the cards to write a brief.
- Write a 3-4 sentence overview of the position / shell for which they construct the brief.

Wrap-up:

Discuss as a class the different solutions (order of the briefed argument) that groups have generated. If there are different orders, have groups present their rationale and come to a class consensus on an order.



## 6.11 Finding Flaws in Briefs

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*This activity both develops and builds advanced evidence evaluation and brief writing skills. Students will review a set of briefs that contain common errors, identify the errors, and think of ways to use the flaws to counter the original argument. This activity will encourage students to review opponent's evidence critically and to avoid making logical mistakes in their own briefs. Students should be familiar with using evidence in rounds and with the argument that you choose to use in for this exercise before completing this assignment.*

### Time Allotment

Take-home assignment or 25-30 minute in-class activity.

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice identifying common problems in briefs and argument construction.
- develop critical reading skills.
- develop skill in constructing logical, well-briefed arguments.

### Materials and Preparation

Create a few pages of briefs that contain various types of flaws, and make one copy for each student in your class. They will function as a worksheet for the activity. The briefs can be on an affirmative or negative position that the class has recently discussed, or that you wish to introduce to the class. Or, they can be on a subject unrelated to the resolution. Also include well-briefed cards. Possible flaws may include:

- Exaggeration in tag lines.
- Improperly (or misleadingly) tagged cards.
- Irrelevant evidence.
- Shells or frontlines that contain missing elements, contradictions, or double-turns.
- Incomplete citations.
- Outdated evidence (especially in disadvantage uniqueness cards).
- Any problems that you have observed in briefs prepared by members of the class.

### Method

Students can complete this activity as an independent homework assignment or an in-class small group activity. First, pass out the briefs to the students. Each student (or group) should:

- read over the briefs.
- identify any problems with individual cards by noting the flaws in the margins.
- write 1-2 things that they would say in a debate round if the opposing team used these briefs, given the flaws they have found. Using a separate sheet of paper, students should create a model flow by listing each flawed card by number and tag followed by counter-arguments that use the flaws to refute the original card.



After students have completed the activity, come back together as a whole group. Discuss each card one by one as a class and discuss the flaws in the briefs and the possible responses to the flawed cards.

At the end of the discussion, collect each student's briefs for comment and / or evaluation.

Variation:

Instead of having students read intentionally flawed briefs, use briefs that students have written as part of a briefing assignment and have a peer evaluation session. Have students trade briefs with a partner, and have each student read the briefs for the errors listed above, indicating errors and writing responses as described above. As follow-up, students should use the peer feedback to improve their briefs. If this peer evaluation is going to be serious and productive, students should be held accountable for their evaluations. Each pair of students should submit two original briefs, two peer evaluations, and two revised briefs.



## 6.12 Improving 2AC Blocks

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*This activity develops and builds advanced brief writing skills. Students use their flows from a previous debate round and problems they encountered to improve upon their 2AC blocks. It helps students re-examine strategies after difficulties, and encourages creativity and revision.*

### **Time Allotment**

One class period or practice

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- learn to use problems encountered in tournaments and practice to improve their strategy.
- prepare more effectively and learn techniques of critical re-examination and revision.

### **Materials and Preparation**

As a general rule, it is a good idea for students to keep their flows from tournaments and practice debate rounds. For this activity, students will need 2AC blocks for their affirmative case, and flows from an affirmative round in which they used those blocks.

### **Method**

First, break students into the teams in which they debated during the practice rounds or the tournament. Have them read over their flows, particularly those of arguments where they used 2AC blocks, and mark points that they felt they “lost” or were weak on, or that judges pointed out to them needed some work.

Students should then brainstorm improvements or additions that could be made to their blocks, using their flows as a guide. Have them try to “pre-empt” the arguments that the negative made against their blocks in the 2AC to make their positions stronger. Remind the students that they should think of possible responses or weaknesses in their arguments as they prepare them.

When they have a list of improvements and additions, have them consider which arguments are most important, and worth the time it takes to read them in the 2AC. Perhaps their blocks need to be re-ordered if it is important that a particular revision be included. Have students revise their blocks in preparation for the next tournament or practice debate.

When they have finished one argument, have them move on to the next.

Variation: Have students “update” the blocks, by searching for more recent evidence on the topics, particularly for cards or disadvantages that have time-specific link or impact scenarios. This could be given as a take-home assignment or done in class or as a trip to the library.

Variation: Remind students that the additional arguments they brainstorm during the activity that they do not include in their blocks can be saved as “extensions” to their 2AC blocks that can be used later. They should keep these filed with their affirmative responses.





# Chapter 7: Argumentation

**A**s new debaters become better at the techniques of debate, they sometimes move on without a strong foundation in argumentation. Being a good line-by-line debater or a persuasive speaker is only half of the battle. To excel at debate, your students must be able to find the flaws in their opponents' arguments, and minimize the flaws in their own. They must understand how to construct an argument, how to define problems and solutions.

In this chapter, you will find activities that introduce students to all levels of argumentation. Some activities will have them analyze the debates and arguments of others, and some will require them to quickly think of coherent arguments of their own.

When you are confident that your students are comfortable with the basic terminology and theory of argumentation, try incorporating questions and activities dealing with argumentation into other settings. When you are discussing a new position, choose a student at random to run through the argument, or have another do a four-step refutation of it.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Argumentation:

- 1.2 Role Playing Debate
- 1.4 One-on-One Refutation
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 6.10 Building a Brief
- 6.11 Finding Flaws in Briefs
- 6.12 Improving 2AC Blocks
- 8.4 Cross-Ex Preparation
- 9.3 Group Case Construction
- 9.7 Writing Mini-Cases
- 14.1 SPAR Debates
- 14.2 Single Issue Debates
- 14.4 Observer's Assessment
- 14.5 Analytical Responses
- 14.9 Advantage/Disadvantage Comparison Speech



# Standards for Chapter 7

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to identify main ideas in oral sources
- Demonstrate ability to analyze and respond to facts and arguments in an oral presentation.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.
- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.
- Demonstrate ability to record each argument during a speech presented by an opponent during a debate, and use these notes to respond orally to each argument individually and in proper sequence.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use statistics, expert opinion, and/or historical precedent to strengthen an argument.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to critique arguments made by others.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex task.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.

## **Citizenship**

- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to apply understanding of argument and source bias to ideas and text beyond the classroom.





# 7.1 Chain Debates

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*This activity introduces basic argumentation skills. In this activity, students take turns responding to arguments with agreement or disagreement. The activity is a good way to practice basic argumentation skills (giving warrants, refuting arguments directly, etc.) and get students engaged in debate.*

## **Time Allotment**

20-40 minutes

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- gain experience in directly responding to specific arguments.
- develop skills in generating arguments under time constraints.

## **Method**

Ask the students to arrange themselves so that they are sitting in a single tiered, unbroken circle. Either solicit potential topics from the class or simply give the class a general topic of debate. A topic with two clear sides often works best. The topic should be as basic or advanced as is appropriate and productive.

Now, you are ready for a chain debate. Either a volunteer or you should give the first argument on the topic. After the first argument has been presented, the student immediately to the right of the person who made the first argument must respond either by adding "And" followed by a point of agreement, or by saying "But," followed by a point of disagreement. Each point should be original, students shouldn't repeat points that have already been made.

This can continue around the class until each student has made an argument, or until you decide to switch topics.

This activity can be altered by:

- giving students preparation time to think of possible arguments in advance.
- creating the role of a student moderator, who calls on students to make arguments.
- passing a ball from student to student, as they volunteer to give their arguments.
- creating the role of the reporter, who flows all of the arguments and presents her evaluation of both sides at the end of the debate.
- holding student arguments to higher standards, insisting that each point have both a claim and a logical warrant.

## 7.2 Introduction to Clash

---

*This activity introduces clash and direct refutation skills. It makes a good lead in to an introductory lesson about clash. Students give short opposing speeches in front of the class and you point out where the arguments clashed and where they didn't.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-30 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to the concept of direct refutation.
- be introduced to argument structure and logic.

### **Method**

Divide the class in groups and give each group a proposition to debate. Have them take out a piece of paper and draw a line from top to bottom down the middle. On the top of the left-hand side, students should write "affirmative." On the top of the right-hand side, they should write "negative." Give the students five minutes to come up with and write down as many arguments as they can for both sides of the argument, writing arguments in the appropriate column.

After students have brainstormed arguments on either side of the resolution, it will be time for speeches. Either ask for a volunteer or select a student to argue in favor of the proposition and another to argue against it. Depending on the amount of time available and the comfort students have with public speaking, the speeches should be between two to four minutes. Have a student volunteer to flow the speeches on the chalk board, or flow the speeches yourself.

After the speeches have been given, it is time for a group discussion about clash. Most likely, students will have listed arguments for their position, not directly refuting their opponent's arguments. During the group discussion, you can point out where the arguments clashed and where they did not. Use the black board flow when appropriate to point out the relationship between arguments.

This activity works best when you prepare a short lesson on clash, the importance of direct refutation in debate, and the practice of line-by-line refutation, in advance and use this activity as a lead into that lesson.

This activity can be altered by:

- allowing each group of students to develop their own proposition (topic) to debate.
- using as an activity to practice direct refutation skills, asking students in advance to directly refute the arguments presented by the affirmative speaker.
- using the activity to focus explicitly on line-by-line refutation, asking students from the outset to practice line-by-line skills and giving the negative speaker some preparation time after the affirmative speech to prepare direct responses to each affirmative point.



## 7.3 Clash Kung Fu

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*This activity introduces basic clash and argumentation skills. In this activity, the concept of clash is acted out in a mock fight. This activity provides a way to express the concept of clash in an active and memorable way.*

### **Time Allotment**

10-20 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to the concept of direct refutation.

### **Method**

Have students line up in rows facing each other about two feet apart. You should demonstrate the activity in front of the class with a student volunteer. Once you have demonstrated a particular move, tell the student pairs to follow your lead.

Instruct your partner not to block, and aim a straight-armed direct punch at his face (of course, your "punch" should be slow moving and you should stop well short of completing the punch). Explain that this is analogous to a conceded argument: it will always be won due to the lack of an answer. Have the pairs of students model the action, emphasizing both the importance of not actually making any physical contact and the strategic mistake of letting your opponent directly connect with an argument.

Next, when you throw a mock punch, have your partner reach up to block your hand or move out of the way. You should explain that avoiding and blocking punches in debate, just like in kung fu, is desirable. The equivalent of a blocked punch is a defensive takeout argument (a no link argument, a statement that the opponent's argument does not apply, etc.). You want to make sure that your opponent connects as few punches as possible.

Finally, have your partner block your punch and, with his free hand, return a punch aimed at your stomach. The equivalent of this scenario in debate, you should explain, is a turned argument. Turns not only neutralize the damage of an opponent's argument, they turn the sequence around to your advantage. By using a turn you can turn an opponent's attack into your advantage. Because you minimize the significance of your opponent's argument, while gaining an offensive advantage, turns can significantly damage your opponent.

Have your students copy these motions to get the feel of them. This activity is most effective when used as a lead in to an extensive lesson about argument theory, direct refutation and line-by-line debating. In ideal situations, this activity can be connected to a previous discussion about an evidenced position. You could encourage the students to use examples that match their moves from the files for arguments you have covered in class. You might, for instance, discuss the affirmative and negative solvency debates for a particular case, asking students to find cards that correspond to defensive take outs and turns.



An alternative activity that can stand alone or compliment Clash Kung Fu is “Battleship.” In this activity, you ask the students if they have heard of Battleship. Ask a student familiar with the game to explain how it is played to the other students. As you know, the object of the game is to sink the opponent’s ships. In the debate analogy, you are trying to sink the opponent’s argument. In Battleship, as in debate, you don’t get credit for having a close hit. You either hit the ship or you don’t, there’s no room to fudge it. In debate, there has to be a direct hit to the logic or evidence of the opponent’s argument in order to neutralize it. If one’s argument doesn’t clash with her opponent’s, it is as if the missile has missed its battleship. The difference between debate and Battleship, is that in debate your opponent announces exactly what their argument is. Tell your students that it is their job to discern, rapidly understand, and then dismantle the logic and evidence upon which their opponent’s argument rests.



## 7.4 Line-by-line Challenge

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*This activity introduces basic argumentation skills. In this activity, students practice line-by-line refutation. It is a good way to get the whole class producing arguments and thinking critically.*

### **Time Allotment**

One class period

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in directly responding to specific arguments.
- develop skills in generating arguments under time constraints.
- be introduced to the concepts of extending and defending arguments.

### **Method**

Ask each student to take out a piece of paper, write his or her name on it, and draw a line top to bottom down the middle of the page. In the left hand column, ask them to write a one-sentence argument on a topic of interest. Tell them to make sure that they choose a topic that they are willing to defend.

After they write the sentence, ask students to pass the paper to the person sitting next to them. Then, have that student write one counter-argument on the left side of the page.

Continue to pass the sheets around until each sheet has collected several counter-arguments on the left side of the page. For the first couple times the sheet is passed, remind students to leave sufficient space between each counter-argument (at least two inches). Time the exercise to keep the papers moving, given students 30 seconds or a minute to write a counter-argument.

Once each sheet has four to five counter-arguments, ask the students to return the paper to its original author.

Tell students to number the counter-arguments on the page, and use line-by-line refutation to answer each counter-argument. Depending on the skill-level of the students, you can insist that students develop multiple responses to counter-arguments where necessary. Students might also group counter-arguments for response where necessary. In order to simulate the environment of a debate round, it might make sense to limit the amount of time they have to do this.

Select students to give two-minute speeches, in which they present their original argument to the class and then, one by one, list and refute the responses their classmates have written on the page. Insist that students number arguments and are clear about the argument to which they are responding.



## 7.5 Real World Debates

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*This activity introduces and develops argumentation skills. In this activity, students analyze televised debates. The activity allows students to learn argumentation concepts by using them to evaluate political and social commentary and debate.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-40 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to critical listening.
- develop understanding of argument structure and logic.
- advance their understanding of current events and controversies.

### **Materials and Preparation**

You will need a videotaped segment of a news magazine or debate program (like Crossfire, 60 Minutes, or the McLaughlin Group), or a videotape of some kind of social debate (a discussion of policy experts or political candidates, or a disagreement on a local talk show.) You will also need a TV and VCR.

### **Method**

Before students watch the taped segment, have an introductory discussion with students about the components of an effective, logical, and persuasive argument. Ask them about what standards they use to evaluate a debate or disagreement. Introduce one or more debate concepts and criteria. Such concepts may include:

- Burden of proof
- Claims and warrants (including use of evidence)
- Responding directly to opponent's points (clash)
- Challenging of popular assumptions
- Presentation of alternative causality/alternative solution to some problem

Have student take notes during the video regarding how well different presenters live up to the criteria established in this introductory discussion. After watching the video, ask students to discuss their views, as a class or as groups. Encourage them to use specific examples to support their points.



## 7.6 Four Step Refutation

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*This activity introduces basic refutation and argumentation skills. Students work as a group to practice four step refutation. The activity introduces students to a model for direct refutation.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-40 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in direct refutation.
- develop skills in constructing arguments as a group.

### **Method**

Divide students into groups of four. Give each group a short argument to refute (e.g. Police presence will make high schools safer, or Athletics make it harder for students to focus on class.)

Have the students work together to refute the argument using 4-step refutation.

Tell the groups to present their refutation to the class, with each student taking one step:

- The first student summarizes the argument in one sentence.
- The second student summarizes the counter-argument in one sentence.
- The third student offers evidence and/or analysis that supports the counter-argument.
- The fourth student explains why the counter-argument is superior to the argument and what the implications of the counter-argument are for the debate.

You can ask group members to clarify individual points, or have other groups cross-examine them.

## 7.7 Writing a Refutation

*This activity introduces basic refutation and argumentation skills. In this activity, students practice writing out direct refutations to specific evidenced arguments. It serves as a good introduction to line-by-line argumentation. This activity is a follow up activity to "Four Step Refutation."*

### Time Allotment

30-40 minutes

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to directly refuting specific arguments.
- be introduced to discussing the use of claims and warrants within cards.
- be introduced to articulating their ideas in structured arguments.
- develop skills in using published material to support their own ideas.

### Materials and Preparation

A photocopy of a piece of tagged evidence for each student. (The cards can be all the same or all different).

### Method

Explain to the students the purpose and objectives of the activity, then distribute a piece of tagged evidence to each student. Ask students to imagine that this evidence has been presented by their opponent in a debate round.

Ask students to write down an ideal refutation of this argument using this 4-step refutation model. Write the four steps below up on the board then take some time to explain and discuss these four steps:

Step 1: Write a statement summarizing your opponent's argument.

Step 2: Summarize your counter-argument.

Step 3: Offer evidence and/or analysis that supports your counterargument.

Step 4: Explain why your counter-argument is superior to the argument and what the implications of the counter-argument are for the debate.

Once you explain this model, give them five minutes to write out a four step response to the piece of evidence you gave them.

Call on a few volunteers to present their refutation. Speeches should be no longer than one minute. Give students a second chance to present the four steps in under a minute if they are not concise enough to keep it under a minute the first time. Insist that the class flows these speeches. Collect flows after the activity, giving students credit for participation for their flows.





Follow up:

Give students a tagged piece of evidence to serve as the original argument they presented in a debate round and two or three tagged pieces of evidence or analytical arguments that an opposing team made against their argument.

Brainstorm with the class in advance about the most effective ways to rebuild your argument while defending yourself against the arguments of your opponent. After this discussion, have your students go through the four steps of refutation, this time focusing on rebuilding their original argument.

## 7.8 Position Presentations

---

*This activity introduces intermediate argumentation skills. In the activity, students teach the class about a particular debate position. In the process, they develop critical reading and public speaking skills, in addition to encouraging self-managed learning and accountability.*

### Time Allotment

Presentations can be given all in one class period or spread throughout the semester.

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to argument structure and logic.
- be able to identify arguments in a text.
- be able to summarize a debate position.

### Materials and Preparation

Students should have photocopies of relevant evidence sets for affirmative cases, disadvantages, etc.

### Method

Assign students to present a particular position to the class (i.e. an affirmative case, the negative case arguments to an affirmative, a disadvantage, a critique, a counterplan, etc.) Students can choose their presentation topics or you can choose for them. You can have them present in groups or individually.

Explain to students the intent of the activity. Tell them that the class needs to become familiar with a whole range of affirmative and negative arguments while individual students improve their critical reading and public speaking skills. Explain that you have set aside time for student presentations on debate positions. Have a discussion about your expectations about what a good presentation will include. You can take the time to brainstorm with the class about what makes a presentation effective, entertaining and memorable. You can also brainstorm about what kinds of information the group will need to learn about a given position.

When the class understands, give students the evidence they will need to prepare for their presentation. Make sure each student knows what day she will be presenting, and thus when she will need to prepare. Preparation can take place in class, as a homework assignment, or as a combination of both.

Each student should give a 3 minute speech. At a minimum, the speech should explain the main arguments of their position, the major arguments against it, and how it can be used in a debate round. The class should flow the presentation.

This activity can be altered by:

- increasing the time per presentation, or including a cross-examination of the presenter.
- setting aside time for a class discussion of the position, including strategic discussions, etc.
- having students perform original research in preparation for their presentation.
- using this format to discuss research assignments and strategies produced by debaters.



## 7.9 Analysis of Argumentation

---

*This activity builds advanced argumentation skills. In this activity, students identify the elements of argumentation in newspaper articles. It is a good way to introduce basic concepts of logic in argumentation. This activity can be used as a supplement to an introductory lesson on argumentation.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-30 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to argument structure and logic.
- be able to identify arguments in a text.

### **Materials and Preparation**

One or two short articles that make arguments

### **Method**

Tell students to read the articles, in groups or individually, with a focus on identifying the elements of argumentation within the articles.

Elements of argumentation can be broken down either into "claims and warrants", or into "assertion, reasoning, and evidence."

Remind students to think about the intent or bias of the author of the article, and how the facts (and opposing viewpoints) are represented as a result of the intentions of the author.

When students are finished, you can have a class discussion or small group discussions about the articles.

## 7.10 Judge the Chalkboard

---

*This activity builds advanced argumentation and analytical skills. Students are presented with the flow of a debate about an issue and encouraged to think like a judge and come up with a rationale for who won the debate. It is a good introduction for students to think strategically about making and answering off-case arguments, and for thinking about how you win a judge's approval.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-30 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- analyze a debate from the judge's perspective in order to improve strategic decision-making.
- begin to understand the importance of persuasion and clear argumentation in debate.
- understand the importance of line-by-line argumentation.

### **Materials and Preparation**

In preparation for this activity, you will need a flow of mini-debate on a particular issue (or a flow of one issue from a debate round).

### **Method**

Using a flow of a mini-debate or a single argument in a debate (such as a disadvantage, critique, or topicality violation), flow the arguments of the entire debate on the chalkboard before the activity begins.

Have the students read over the flow, then, on a scratch piece of paper, have each student write down which team they think won each individual argument on the flow, and why. When they have finished, have students decide who they think won the entire argument, and which of the individual arguments were most important in winning it.

When they have finished, have a few students present their decisions on who won the arguments and why. Then, have the class discuss and debate the differences in student judgments. Have the students think about how each team could have made different strategic decisions that may have changed the outcome of the debate.

The students should leave with an appreciation of how difficult a judge's position is, and how important it is for them to "make the judge's job easy."



# Chapter 8: Cross-Examination

**M**ost students enjoy cross-examination, as it is the only real opportunity for direct clash and interaction in debate. But not all students think strategically about it. Too often, students begin with “Please explain your case in your own words,” and sit down before the allotted time is up. Cross-examination is a chance for both sides to clarify things that they did not understand, but it is also a chance to set-up arguments and point out weaknesses in the opponents’ arguments. Strategic thinking about the three minutes that follow each constructive speech is often lacking in beginning debates.

The activities in this chapter introduce the technique and strategy of cross-examination. Some ask students to analyze and critique demonstration cross-examinations, both good and bad, others ask students to practice thinking and answering questions on their feet, and some ask students to think and prepare strategically.

These activities can be used at any time. While it may not make sense to have a unit on cross-examination, you can do a chain cross-examination about any topic at any time, and that will not only provide practice for your students but a break from other lessons.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Cross-Examination:

- 1.4 One-on-One Refutation
- 1.5 Demonstration Debate
- 5.2 Skimming for Relevance (1AC’s)
- 6.11 Finding Flaws in Briefs
- 7.4 Four Step Refutation
- 7.8 Real World Debates
- 9.8 Anticipating Neg Strategy
- 10.3 1NC Strategy Brainstorm
- 12.6 Telling Stories
- 14.2 Single Issue Debates



# Standards for Chapter 8

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Demonstrate ability to identify logical and factual flaws in written sources.

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentations.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze and respond to facts and arguments in an oral presentation.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.
- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.
- Demonstrate ability to adapt oral presentations to various audiences.
- Demonstrate ability to use non-verbal communication effectively in a public speaking performance.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use statistics, expert opinion, and/or historical precedent to strengthen an argument.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to critique arguments made by others.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.



# 8.1 Chain Cross-Examination

---

*This activity introduces basic cross-examination skills. Students sit in a circle and, one by one, ask a cross-examination question to the student sitting next to them. Each student will answer one cross-examination question and then ask a question to the next student in the circle. This exercise helps students prepare for cross-examination questions with respect to a particular case or negative position, and to learn to ask effective questions. A more advanced variation of this activity encourages students to evaluate the effectiveness of cross-examination questions.*

## **Time Allotment**

15-20 minutes

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop basic skills in cross-examination.
- advance their understanding of an affirmative case or negative position.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Instruct students to arrange desks in a circle. Each student will need a piece of paper and a pen to take notes.

## **Method**

Students should arrange their desks in a circle.

Choose a resolution and an affirmative case to use in this exercise. The case should relate to a topic students can discuss without research and evidence, or be related to research students have already completed.

Make sure that all students are familiar with the basic components of the affirmative case you will be using for this activity. If it is an affirmative case they might debate in an actual debate round, be sure they are familiar with the plan, solvency and inherency arguments, advantages and potential disadvantages. If the case you are using for this activity is an impromptu topic, you should open with a brief discussion or group brainstorm of the arguments for and against the case.

Select one student to begin the activity. The first student will pretend to be a negative speaker and ask a cross-examination question to the student sitting next to her. The second student should respond to the question as an affirmative speaker. Then, the second student should ask a third student a cross-examination question about the affirmative case. The third student will then question the fourth student and so on until every student has both asked and answered one question.

Students should make note of particularly effective questions and answers.



For particularly large groups, you may wish to switch to a different case half way around the circle. Alternatively, you can introduce a disadvantage part way around the circle. The students asking questions would ask as if they were on the affirmative side and the disadvantage had been run against them, and the students answering questions would defend the disadvantage.

To conclude the activity, pick out the most effective questions and answers and discuss what made them effective. If the case you have been working with is a case students expect to debate in a competitive debate round, encourage them to save notes from this activity for future reference.

### Variation:

A variation of this activity can be used to teach students to avoid common pitfalls in asking cross-examination questions. Begin by handing out a list of these pitfalls to members of the class or by generating this list through discussion or an activity like "Ineffective Cross-examination Questions." Run the chain cross-examination as described above, with students taking turns asking questions of the student next to them in the circle. After each question, give the class a chance to object to the question if it is ineffective according to the criteria on the list. If the class deems a question ineffective, the student must ask another question until she comes up with an effective question. Then, the cross examination chain should continue around the circle as described above until another student asks an ineffective question.





## 8.2 Group Cross-Ex

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*This activity introduces basic cross-examination skills. A speaker delivers a brief speech before the class, and afterward members of the class take turns questioning the speaker. There are three variations on this activity:*

- 1. In the most basic variation, each speaker tells a brief story – a creative tale or an analytical account of a current event. This variation is good for beginning debaters.*
- 2. In second variation, the speaker summarizes an affirmative or negative argument. This variation is good for introducing students to cases they might encounter in a competitive debate round while also honing cross-examination skills.*
- 3. In a third variation, the teacher is the speaker and the class cross-examines the teacher. This allows the teacher to model good cross-examination technique.*

### **Time Allotment**

One class period

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to cross-examination.
- build confidence in public speaking.
- be introduced to generating coherent answers to spontaneous questions about an argument.

### **Method**

#### Variation 1: Cross-examining Stories

Each student should prepare a short (1-2 minute) story to present to the class. The “story” can be a short account of a current event based on a newspaper article or a short creative story. Give students 5 minutes in class to prepare a story. Alternatively, you can assign the story as homework and ask students to use an article from the newspaper as evidence.

Students should present their stories one by one to the class. After each storyteller has presented a story, the class will cross-examine the storyteller. Questions should encourage the storyteller to fill in a missed detail, explain an inconsistency, or discuss an alternate perspective on the events described. Limit the amount of time the class has to cross-examine each speaker according to the size of the class and the amount of time you wish to spend on the activity. For larger groups, you may give the class 30 seconds. For smaller groups, you may wish to allow for 1-2 minutes of questioning after each speaker

Students should make note of particularly effective questions and answers.

To conclude the activity, pick out the most effective questions and answers and discuss what made them effective. You may wish to give students a cross-examination tip sheet to refer to during this discussion.



### Variation 2: Summarizing Cases on the Current Topic

For more advanced debaters, ask each student to summarize, without reading evidence an affirmative case, counterplan, disadvantage, or critique that they may encounter during a competitive debate. For this activity, you may wish to lengthen the allotted times for speeches and for class cross-examination in order to allow for more substantive discussion. Conclude the activity in the same manner as Variation 1.

### Variation 3: Cross-examining the Teacher

You, as the teacher, should summarize a debate argument in front of the class. The students in the class will take turns asking you questions. After speaking yourself, you can continue the activity by having students speak, as in Variation 1 or 2.



## 8.3 Ineffective Cross-Ex

*This activity develops cross-examination skills. Students will take turns modeling ineffective cross-examination questions in order to spark discussion about common pitfalls. This activity will help students understand the difference between effective and ineffective cross-examination questions and answers.*

### Time Allotment

One class period

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- learn to use and respond to strategic cross-examination questions.
- develop skills in critical listening and analysis.

### Materials and Preparation

Write common cross-examination errors on cards for pairs of students draw to model in front of the class. Some sample questions are at right.

### Method

Choose an affirmative case to use in this activity. Make sure that all students in the class are familiar with the case and all its components. Have a quick review session if necessary.

#### Sample Questions

- Please summarize your affirmative case.
- Why do we need to do your plan?
- Yes or no: Will your case cost too much money?
- Doesn't your case link to the \_\_\_\_\_ DA?
- Wouldn't your case be unpopular?
- Why would Congress pass your plan? They don't like it.
- Your case is dumb.
- I couldn't understand what you said. What was it about?
- Can I please see the case? Thank you. [silence]

Explain to the class that pairs of students will model ineffective cross-examination techniques. Ask students to take out a pen and paper and prepare to write down reasons they think that each question is ineffective.

Invite a pair of students to the front of the class and allow them to draw a card. The first student is on the negative side and will ask the question, and the second student is on the affirmative side and will answer the questions. The first student should read the question aloud in front of the class and the second student will do their best to answer the question. The second student should try and take advantage of the problem in the question. For example, if the question is "Summarize the affirmative case," the second student should describe the case in as much detail as possible to use up cross-examination time.

After a pair of students have presented a question and an answer, give the students a few moments to jot down their ideas about why the question was ineffective. Discuss as a class the implications of asking this type of question, and generate reasons the question does not accomplish the aim of strategically attacking the affirmative case. Also discuss possible ways that students can take advantage of ineffective questions when their opponents ask them.

Continue by asking pairs to demonstrate more questions. Follow each demonstration with a short discussion.

## 8.4 Cross-Ex Preparation

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*This activity builds advanced skills in cross-examination. Students will collaboratively generate a list of strategic cross-examination questions in response to a particular affirmative case in order to set up a negative strategy. This activity will also encourage students to think critically about affirmative cases they might encounter in debates and develop negative strategies.*

### **Time Allotment**

One class period

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice using cross-examination questions to forward an argument strategy.
- practice critically analyzing evidence and arguments.

### **Method**

Begin this activity by having one student read the 1AC to an affirmative case that the students are likely to encounter in a competitive debate round. Each member of the class should flow the case. You may use an abbreviated version of the case. As a class, select a particular a 1NC strategy against this case. You can focus on one element of the case to attack (like solvency) or choose a short list of arguments that could be presented in a 1NC (for example, a strategy consisting of a disadvantage, topicality, and a counterplan).

Divide the class into small groups of 5-6. Instruct each group to generate a list of questions designed to “set up” the negative strategy. Give the groups 7-8 minutes to generate this list, and to discuss the intent of each question and how they think the affirmative might respond.

Each member of each group should present one question from the list and explain the intent of the question to the class. You or a student volunteer should write the questions on the board. As a class, go through the questions on the board, and select the questions that are most effective in advancing the negative strategy.

Students should keep their notes from this exercise for future reference, in case they ever oppose this case in a round. If there are students that run the case you discussed, then they should independently use the list of questions to prepare for cross-examination.

### **Follow-up or Variation:**

After completing the activity above, choose a disadvantage and/or counter plan from the negative strategy and ask a student to read the argument aloud for the class, linking it to the affirmative case that was originally presented. Do the activity again, only this time students will generate questions to ask the negative speaker about the negative argument. If you use multiple arguments (i.e. a disadvantage and a counterplan, or solvency attacks and a counterplan) you can use this as an opportunity to help students learn to think critically about the interaction between negative arguments. For example, they can practice grilling a negative speaker about contradictions between a solvency attack and a counterplan, or on a disadvantage that links to both the affirmative case and the counterplan.



## 8.5 Partner Cross-Ex Practice

---

*This activity builds advanced cross-examination skills. Students will prepare a set of cross examination questions in advance and write out the purpose and anticipated response to each questions. Working with a partner, students will test out their questions to see if their opponents respond as they expect. This activity provides and opportunity for students to think about each of the steps of building a strategic and effective question.*

### **Time Allotment**

One class period. (with optional take-home assignment)

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- learn techniques to evaluate the effectiveness of cross-examination questions.
- develop skills in critical listening and analysis.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A copy of a 1AC. You may choose to use a shortened version.

### **Method**

Select a 1AC to use for this activity. You can give a copy of the 1AC to each student the day before and ask students to prepare cross-examination questions in advance, or ask a student volunteer to read the 1AC aloud at the start of the activity while the class flows. The first way emphasizes preparation and close reading skills, the second way emphasizes quick thinking and listening skills.

In class or as homework, students should divide a blank piece of paper into four columns. Students can fill out the first three columns as homework or individually in class (if using this as an in-class activity, give students 10-15 minutes to do this):

- 1.** In the first column, each student should write 5-8 cross-examination questions that they might ask the 1AC speaker.
- 2.** In the second column, next each question the student should briefly explain the intent of the question. (i.e. "To encourage the speaker to say how much money their plan costs to establish a link between the case and a spending disadvantage. ")
- 3.** In the third column, the student should write 1-2 ways that a 1AC could answer each of their questions.
- 4.** Students should leave the fourth column blank for now.



Next, assign each student a partner. The first student will ask each prepared question to her partner, and the partner will respond as if she were the 1AC speaker. The student asking the questions should look for differences between the actual answer and the expected answer, and note these differences in the fourth column on the paper.

Once the first student in each group has had the opportunity to ask each of their questions, the partners should switch. By the end of the activity, each student should have had both the opportunity to ask and answer questions.

To conclude this activity, choose a few volunteers to present their questions in front of the whole class. Call on members of the class to answer the questions. Then discuss as a class the effectiveness of each question, and offer suggestions for improvement.

Students should turn in their four-column pages at the end of the activity for the instructor to review.

Follow-up:

As an optional follow-up, you may have a student or students deliver a 1NC speech against the affirmative case that utilizes the affirmative responses to cross-examination questions. For example, a 1NC might present a disadvantage that uses both evidence and the affirmative's cross examination response to establish the link between the plan and the disadvantage argument.



# Chapter 9: Case Debate

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**C**ase debate is the foundation of policy debate. Students are given a topic and a resolution to guide them, and then they present a policy proposal that aims to change the world for the better. The case is the first speech, it sets the boundaries for the debate, and your students have infinite time (well, sort of) to prepare it. The 1AC is not simply a case or an affirmative position – it is a solution to a problem, a policy proposal.

The activities in this chapter introduce students to the structure and logic of affirmative cases. They vary from the introduction of stock issues (Solvency, Harms, Inherency, Topicality, and Significance) to practice developing and writing cases.

If the debate resolution seems abstract to your students, try using topics that are closer to their lives to start with. For instance, substitute an issue from local or school board politics instead of international oceans policy to introduce students to the structure of an affirmative case.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Case Debate:

- 1.3 Analyzing Old Resolutions
- 1.5 Demonstration Debate
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 6.4 Categorizing Evidence
- 6.10 Building a Brief
- 6.11 Finding Flaws in Briefs
- 6.12 Improving 2AC Blocks
- 10.3 1NC Strategy Brainstorm
- 11.1 Dictionary Search
- 12.6 Telling Stories
- 14.2 Single Issue Debates
- 14.9 Advantage/Disadvantage Comparison Speech



# Standards for Chapter 9

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Read, comprehend, and analyze two or more sources on the same subject by different authors.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.
- Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation using written notes.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use statistics, expert opinion, and/or historical precedent to strengthen an argument.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to critique arguments made by others.
- Demonstrate ability to construct and advocate a complete policy proposal.
- Demonstrate ability to respond to a policy proposal submitted by others.

## **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify the cause of the problem.
- Demonstrate ability to use research and/or logical reasoning to assess various solutions to a problem.
- Demonstrate ability to develop a solution and assess the effectiveness of the solution.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to divide tasks between team members.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.

## **Citizenship**

- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.





# 9.1 Identifying Stock Issues

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*This activity introduces the concept of Stock Issues in an affirmative case. This activity is great for translating debate jargon into meaningful language and it introduces students to the concept and language of stock issues.*

## **Time Allotment**

30-40 minutes

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to argument structure and logic.
- be introduced to logical burdens in advocacy.

## **Method**

Tell students to brainstorm societal problems to be solved. For instance, they may want to talk about unemployment, low wages, bad schools, pollution, police brutality, or homelessness. Write their list of problems on the board.

Alternatively, you may want to start using a list of possible policy resolutions. A list is provided on the next page.

Arrange students in small groups. Assign a "case" from the list on the board to each small group. For each of the assigned cases, write the following phrases on the board:

1. What is the problem and why does it matter? [Significant Harms]
2. Why hasn't the problem been solved already? [Inherency]
3. What can we do to solve the problem? Why will that work? [Solvency.]

NOTE: Do not write the bracketed material on the board until groups have presented their answers to these questions.

Have each group answer these questions for their "case" and present them to the class. Finally, next to the questions on the board write the debate term that describes the answers they came up with. Hold a discussion about the meaning of each debate term.

(NOTE: This activity does not include the topicality stock issue. However, if you use the list of resolutions, topicality can be easily incorporated into the activity.)



Resolution #1: Resolved: That animal testing should be abolished.

Resolution #2: Resolved: That the U.S. should immediately disarm all of its nuclear weapons.

Resolution #3: Resolved: That a constitutional amendment outlawing gay marriages should be enacted.

Resolution #4: Resolved: That the federal government should produce and distribute condoms free of charge.

Resolution #5: Resolved: That medicinal marijuana should be decriminalized nationwide.

Resolution #6: Resolved: That the U.S. should implement a one-payer medical system.

Resolution #7: Resolved: That all public cigarette smoking should be banned

Resolution #8: Resolved: That the FCC should establish more aggressive standards and enforcement measures for controlling sex and violence on television.

Resolution #9: Resolved: That assisted suicides and euthanasia should be legalized.

Resolution #10: Resolved: That undocumented immigrants should be allowed to obtain driver's licences.



## 9.2 Affirmative and Stock Issues Presentation

*This activity develops critical thinking skills while increasing understanding of the affirmative case and the stock issues. This activity is a homework assignment in which students build a structured case idea from a policy resolution. It encourages students to use problem-solving skills in a creative and rigorous project. This activity should be used to follow up on an introductory lesson on Stock Issues and Affirmative Case structure.*

### Time Allotment

After homework assignment, about 10-15 minutes

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- begin to understand how Stock Issues apply to a range of different potential affirmative cases.
- have experience with outlining their own affirmative case.
- be introduced to articulating their ideas in structured arguments.

### Method

Provide students with a resolution. Or, you could let them select a preferred resolution from a list of options. Once each student has a resolution, as homework assign each one to write the following:

- An outline of an idea for an affirmative case supporting that resolution (highlighting a specific problem that must be solved.)
- A plan that specifies the action of that case (highlighting the barriers to action in the status quo.)
- An advantage that specifies the benefit of that policy action (highlighting, with several analytical points of proof, how the action will solve the problem).

In the next class, all students will hand in their assignment. Select several students to present their arguments to the class in the form of one to three-minute speeches. These presentations should highlight the stock issues (Inherency, Solvency, Harms, etc.).

You can use these speeches to lead into a large group discussion of an issue raised by a particular case. You may also want to design follow-up activities, based on the case outlines students submit. For instance, if a student turns in an outline of a case on Single Payer Health Care Policy, you may want to assign follow up reading, research, or even a paper project related to that student's idea for a case.

## 9.3 Group Case Construction

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*This activity introduces affirmative case structure. In this activity, students present the components of affirmative cases in their own words. It is a good way for students to learn about affirmative case structure and familiarize themselves with the central arguments made in affirmative cases.*

### **Time Allotment**

40-60 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to articulating their ideas in structured arguments.
- be able to summarize an affirmative case.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Choose several 1ACs from this year's topic, preferably ones that students will be either use or run up against in debate rounds. Write out signs for each component of the cases. The specific components will vary depending on the structure of the cases. Examples are: inherency, solvency, plan, harms, advantages, etc.

### **Method**

Divide the class into groups (one student for each sign.) Hand out the signs to each group. Each student should have a specific sign, denoting a specific component of a case (for instance, solvency). Hand each group a photo copy of a different 1AC. Each student should have the pages of the 1AC that correspond to the component of the case listed on her sign.

Tell each group to discuss and prepare to explain in their own words the corresponding components of their 1AC to the class.

Once each group has prepared their presentation, each group member should give a short speech on her component. In this way, each student will speak and each group will present, in order, the components of their case.



## 9.4 Stock Issues in Evidence

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*This activity introduces the skill of using evidence to support basic case arguments. In the activity, students identify stock issues in evidence.*

### **Time Allotment**

15-30 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be able to identify each of the stock issues in evidence.
- be able to identify the main ideas in a text.
- be introduced to logical burdens in advocacy.

### **Materials and Preparation**

1AC evidence on stock issues, without tag lines. Make several photocopies of a 1AC. Cut the cards out of each 1AC, making sure to cut off the tag lines. Depending on the size of your class and the size of the small groups you divide the class into, you may need to do this with 1AC evidence from multiple cases.

### **Method**

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group cards from a different component of the 1AC. For example, one group with solvency, one with inherency, one with harms, etc. Tell the class that each group has evidence from one component of a 1AC. Give the group a set amount of time (five minutes, perhaps) to determine which stock issue they believe they have. Tell them to decide on a stock issue, and then to write an explanation of why they believe their evidence supports the stock issue they picked.

Have the class give presentations. Have each group read their evidence to the class, explain what stock issue they think it serves, and why. If they are unsure, ask them what confused them about the evidence and discuss it as a class.

A modified version of this activity can be used to introduce disadvantages, counterplans, negative evidence, etc. Use the activity to get students talking about how evidence relates to organizing structures of arguments while they learn about new argument positions.

## 9.5 Affirmative Case Debates

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*This activity introduces strategies for attacking and rebuilding the affirmative case. In this activity, students produce and compare arguments about the affirmative case. This is a good follow up to the introduction of stock issues.*

### **Time Allotment**

Varies

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to articulating their ideas in structured arguments.
- be introduced to directly responding to specific arguments.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Photocopies of sets of 1AC evidence.

### **Method**

Assign students to read the 1AC of an affirmative case the night before this activity. Start the activity with a whole class discussion about the 1AC. Take enough time to raise the important ideas of case and to discuss questions students have.

When the introductory discussion concludes, divide the students into small groups. Assign each group a contention of the case to refute. For example, have one group come up with two arguments to refute the affirmative harms, another group refute solvency, etc. Students should write out their arguments.

Once arguments are written, have each group present their refutations while the class flows them. If there is time and you would like to add another dimension to the activity, a group or individual can be assigned to cross-examine the presenters.

In the same small groups, or as a class discussion, ask students to identify the most powerful arguments. Lead a discussion about why particular arguments are the most powerful. After that, assign the same groups to come up with affirmative answers to the best negative arguments. These affirmative answers could be analytical. You could also ask the small groups to point to 1AC evidence that refutes the negative arguments. Or, if students have an entire affirmative case file, you might ask them to find evidence that could be used to refute the negative argument and rebuild the affirmative case.



## 9.6 The Affirmative Plan

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*This activity develops understanding of the affirmative plan. In this activity, students evaluate and criticize different policy proposals. The activity focuses on improving student understanding of the affirmative plan.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-40 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- have a better sense of what makes a strong plan.
- be able to evaluate proposals.
- develop critical thinking.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Three sample plans, preferably plans of cases run on this year's resolution. One should be clear and well thought out, providing a powerful, specific solution to a pressing social problem. The other two should be slightly weaker, more vague, and less effective proposals.

### **Method**

Divide the class into groups. Give each group a different plan.

Tell the entire class that one of the plans is structured well, while the other two have serious weaknesses. Ask each group to discuss and decide whether their plan is the quality plan or one of the weak plans. Ask students not to talk with students from another group until the activity this phase of the activity is over.

Ask them to present their reasons for that conclusion to the class, defending each claim that some element is a weakness or strength.

Be sure to emphasize to your students that there are no right or wrong responses and ideas. It is most important for groups to justify their claims than to have "right" claims.

## 9.7 Writing Mini-Cases

---

*This activity develops case construction skills. In this activity, students write scaled down versions of first constructive speeches (with evidence you provide). The activity is a great activity to teach students about affirmative cases. It provides a nice lead in to negative case argumentation and engages students in selecting and summarizing their arguments.*

### **Time Allotment**

40-80 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop understanding of argument structure and logic.
- be able to identify arguments in a text.
- be introduced to comparatively evaluating pieces of evidence.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Untagged cards (with citations) for and against a particular plan. (You can pull these cards from a handbook, a completed case file or a previous research assignment that the students have completed.)

The affirmative evidence should include at least one card identifying a significant problem (harms) one that demonstrates the problem will not be solved under current policies (inherency) and one that shows the plan will solve the problem (solvency.) You may choose to include several cards for each of these case components.

The negative cards should include many different arguments against the affirmative.

### **Method**

**Writing the mini-affirmative:** Divide the students into groups. Tell them to pick the best three or four 1AC cards, one for each category. Once they have selected the best card in each category, they should arrange the cards in a logical order, tape them down on paper, and write tags for them. After each card, they should also write a sentence or two that explains the implications of the card.

Next, have them write an introduction to their 1AC speech that states their plan and lists the reasons they will give to support their plan. Finally, have them write a conclusion that sums up their speech in one sentence.

**Writing the mini-negative:** Divide the students into groups and tell them to pick the best three or four 1NC cards, put them in a logical order, tape them down, and give them tags. After each card, they should write a quick explanation (like the affirmative did) of why the card is important to the debate. Like the affirmative, they should write an introduction to the negative position and a one sentence conclusion.

**Mini-Debate:** This is optional. Once the students have completed the above steps, they can have a mini-debate with the affirmative and negative mini-cases.





## 9.8 Anticipating Neg Strategy

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*This activity develops case-building and critical thinking skills. Students try to anticipate arguments that negative teams would run against their case, and then make responses to those arguments. It is especially useful for students running a new case.*

### **Time Allotment**

One to two class periods

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- begin to think about both sides of arguments, seeing the strengths and weaknesses of positions.
- be more prepared for and confident about running a case at a tournament.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Each student should have a copy of a 1AC to use during the activity. The entire class may use the same case, or teams of students may work on the cases that they use.

### **Method**

Students should read carefully the text of the 1AC and think about the most likely negative strategies against the case. Individually or in groups, students should come up with a list of case attacks, disadvantages, critiques, counterplans, and topicality violations that they will likely have to deal with in debate rounds. A good prompt is to have students imagine that they were debating a team that was running the same case, and they needed a negative strategy.

For each potential negative argument, students should list several possible affirmative responses. Students should make note of responses that will require evidence to back it up. Students should record their ideas in a notebook for future reference and research.

As the student participates in practice debates and tournaments, this list should expand to include new negative positions that the affirmative needs to prepare for.

This activity can be extended into a series of assignments to write 2AC blocks or complete the research necessary to strengthen the case and respond to negative case attacks.

Variation:

The negative counterpart to this activity is to create a running list of all the possible affirmative cases and prepare strategies against them.





# Chapter 10: Negative Off-Case

**O**ff-case arguments are the most important strategic tool of the negative team in debate. If teams were simply relegated to debating the pros and cons of the intricacies of a specific affirmative plan, the negative would have very little chance to win. On-case arguments, for the negative, are usually defensive in nature – your plan will not solve everything, the problem is not as big as you say, etc. With off-case arguments (disadvantages, critiques, counterplans), the negative can bring offensive argumentation into the round – your plan will make things worse, this is a better way to do it, etc.

This chapter introduces the negative’s offense to debaters. Some deal specifically with counterplans, disadvantages, and critiques, and others are more general, asking students to come up with comprehensive negative strategies for attacking the affirmative.

When you think your students are comfortable with the basics of off-case and on-case argumentation, make sure you stress to them the importance of the interaction between the two. Something that is often hard for beginning debaters to grasp is the importance of connecting all of the arguments in the round, weighing them against each other, and thinking strategically about the entire debate.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Negative Off-Case:

- 2.4 Issue Briefing
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 4.5 Signposts and Numbering
- 5.1 Cards from Newspapers
- 6.7 Current Events Challenge
- 7.6 Position Presentations
- 7.8 Real World Debates
- 7.10 Judge the Chalkboard
- 8.4 Cross-Ex Preparation
- 9.8 Anticipating Neg Strategy
- Chapter 12: Debate Games
- Chapter 14: Practice Debates



# Standards for Chapter 10

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Demonstrate ability to identify logical and factual flaws in written sources.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use statistics, expert opinion, and/or historical precedent to strengthen an argument.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to critique arguments made by others.
- Demonstrate ability to respond to a policy proposal submitted by others.

## **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify the cause of the problem.
- Demonstrate ability to use research and/or logical reasoning to assess various solutions to a problem.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to divide tasks between team members.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.

## **Citizenship**

- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.



# 10.1 I Have Another Idea ...

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*This activity introduces the use of counterplans in debate. It can be used to reinforce an introductory lesson on counterplans. In this activity, students are given a mock affirmative case and asked to draft a counterplan in response to the case. Once they have written a shell for their counterplan, the small group should write affirmative answers against their own counterplan.*

## **Time Allotment**

One class period

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- hone critical thinking and argument analysis skills.
- practice constructing and considering the strategic implications of counterplans.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Create a handout for each student. The handout should have a mock resolution that is relatively easy for the students to discuss (for example, "Resolved: The class should go out to see a movie.") at the top. Under the mock resolution, write out a 1AC, including inherency, a plan, advantages, and solvency. Given the above example, the plan might propose that the class go out to see a specific movie, talk about how good the movie is, and how it will fill a specific need. The 1AC does not need to be long or detailed, but should clearly address solvency and potential advantages of the plan. This mock case should be easy to understand and not especially difficult to create arguments for or against.

## **Method**

Distribute the handout to each student, then divide the class up into small groups of 4 or 5 students.

Each group should generate the idea for and then create a counterplan to the 1AC that the handout presents. They may propose to go to a play, to go to the mall, or to go take a field trip to the zoo. The counterplan should be written out just as it would be before a debate. The students should write out counterplan text and a coherent description of competition and solvency.

You should type up and distribute or write a model counterplan shell on the board. Depending on the skill level of the students, you will want to adjust the thoroughness of the model shell. Potential counterplan shell structures include:

- A counterplan text
- An observation about the counterplans' non-topicality
- An observation about the counterplan's mutual exclusivity
- An observation about the counterplan's competitiveness
- An observation about the counterplan's advantages
- An observation about the counterplan's solvency of the 1AC advantages



As the students write up a counterplan text and fill in these structures, walk around and check each counterplan to make sure that it responds to the affirmative plan.

Keep in mind that this activity is only designed to give students practice with counterplans. If they cannot remember what a permutation is or whether it is legitimate to run a topical counterplan, do not worry about it now. In fact, this activity can produce concrete examples that can be used later when you introduce concepts like permutations and topical counterplans.

Once each group has written a counterplan, they should “flip sides” and create five affirmative answers to their counterplan. A student frequently will think of permutations or solvency deficit arguments on her own. For example, she might propose to go to the mall because the mall is relaxing and some students can choose to go the movies at the mall, but not everyone has to do the same thing.

In fact, a student may develop this type of argument without knowing that she has, for instance, developed a permutation. If she does, this is a chance to teach her (and the other students) new terms, praise her intelligence, and show your students that much of debate is made up of simple, intuitive concepts that have multi-syllabic, fancy-sounding names.

Students will finish the exercise at different paces – some might take a bit longer to grasp the concepts. If a group finishes early, have them repeat with a different counterplan.

Optionally, you may have each group present its counterplan and affirmative arguments to the rest of the class, fielding cross-examination questions after presenting.

### Variation:

Writing counterplans against their own 1AC. Rather than having students write a counterplan against a hypothetical case, have each student develop a counterplan against the affirmative case that she runs in tournaments. Each student should know the plan text and advantages of her own case well and should be able to generate an effective counterplan. Have each student list disadvantages that her affirmative plan might cause but that the counterplan avoids. If you have time, have students brainstorm a set of affirmative responses to that counterplan

### Variation:

Writing 2AC blocks against counterplans. If you have a class that has some tournament experience and your students are encountering counterplans this is the right activity for your class. Divide the students into groups according to what 1AC they run. In an ideal situation, your entire class of first year debaters will only be running between 1 and 3 cases. So there will not be that many groups. Have each group develop a list of all of the counterplans against which they have debated.

Once they have this list, ensure that all of the students understand what each of the counterplans does and how each one works. It may make sense to model this kind of conversation by asking a group to explain name a counterplan and then explain its text, nontopicality, competitiveness, advantages and solvency. Once the students in each group understand these features of the counterplans that can be run against their case, it is time to begin writing 2AC blocks. Have students write 2AC blocks against counterplans that they have debated, if possible. Otherwise, have students write 2AC blocks against counterplans that apply to their case and which they may encounter.



## 10.2 Assumptions of the Topic

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*This activity introduces critiques. It increases student understanding of the assumptions that underlie the resolution. As a class, students brainstorm a list of plans relevant to the current resolution. Once they have developed this list, they answer a series of pointed questions requiring that they analyze the plans and the resolution.*

### Time Allotment

One class period

### Goals

By the end of this activity, students will:

- gain the ability to critically examine the assumptions of the resolution and common cases.
- gain a broad familiarity with the affirmative cases that are prominent on this year's resolution.

### Materials and Preparation

Students should have some knowledge of the common cases being run on the debate topic.

In addition, you should have:

A list of 6-10 potential cases, so that you are prepared if the students have difficulty brainstorming a sufficient number.

An understanding of several critiques and their applications to the current resolutions.

Students should have read a chapter on, or participated in an introductory discussion of, critiques.

### Method

As a class, brainstorm a list of affirmative plans that fall under the current topic. Once you have a list of 6-10 cases that are prominent on this year's topic, you should have the class respond to a series of questions about each case. Break students into small groups, and assign each group a case. For each case, the small groups should answer these questions:

- In the real world, who proposes and advocates this policy? Do these proponents share any common (perhaps self-interested) motivations? How would you characterize the world-view of this policy's proponents? What is their professional and political background? What are their material interests? Who probably funds them to write what they write? Who funds their research?
- If this policy were implemented, who would benefit most? Who would suffer the most?
- Why is federal and governmental action uniquely important? What assumptions does the affirmative case hold about governmental action?
- Does the language employed by the primary solvency authors betray any biases? If so, what are these biases?
- What economic, political, linguistic, and social structures does the plan operate within? In what ways does the affirmative case implicitly and explicitly endorse broader institutions and structures like capitalism, patriarchy, institutional racism, etc.?



- Are there underlying assumptions informing this policy. Do those assumptions conflict with other values?
- Are there any underlying assumptions common to these policies? Are these assumptions inherent to the resolution?
- If these assumptions were acted upon in every circumstance, if they guided all policy decision making, what would be the possible (negative) consequences?
- What kinds of problems are these strategies designed to solve? Are these really problems? Does anyone benefit from the existence of these problems?

Not all of these questions will be relevant to every case. Once small groups have answered all of the relevant questions, have the whole class discuss the answers to and meanings of these questions in the larger context of critique debate. Use this activity as a lead into broader discussions about critiques.





## 10.3 1NC Strategy Brainstorm

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*This activity introduces basic negative strategy-building. It can also be used to develop understanding of off-case argument strategy. In this activity, students work as a group to think through and ultimately develop negative strategies against core of the topic cases.*

### **Time Allotment**

Several days

### **Goals**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- work together to develop potential negative strategies against commonly run cases.
- hone strategic and critical thinking skills.
- increase understanding of how to use negative off-case arguments.

### **Materials and Preparation**

This activity makes most sense for students who already have a certain amount of tournament experience.

Students will need a basic understanding of the off-case positions that are being run on this topic. They should understand the structure of disadvantages, counterplans and topicality. They should also have a sense of the strengths and weaknesses of each disadvantage scenario, counterplan and topicality violation before the activity begins. They should also have a sense of the types of cases against which each shell can be run. Each of these sets of knowledge is both necessary for this activity and presents the opportunity for a potential introductory activity in the negative off-case argumentation unit.

Depending on how you structure the activity, both you and the class may need photocopies of the shells of the negative off-case positions that you will be discussing.

### **Method**

Briefly have a discussion with the class about the importance of effective negative strategy. Once you have had a general discussion about this topic, have students brainstorm some of the best, or most difficult to answer, affirmative case arguments against which they have debated. Few debaters want to be in the position of saying the problems that affirmative cases claim to ameliorate (species loss, environmental degradation, dehumanization, racism, genocide, etc.) are positive. But, negative teams cannot simply throw up their hands every time an affirmative team accurately identifies a social issue of pressing social concern and import.

You should have the class create a list of affirmative cases and arguments that they do not feel adequately prepared to answer on the negative (you may list the arguments on the board as students brainstorm).



When this first section of the activity is complete, take 20 minutes with the class to brainstorm a set of criteria for a successful negative strategy. Explain what you mean by a successful negative strategy. Then ask the students to individually write up a list of 2-3 factors that they believe makes a off-case negative strategy solid. For instance, a student might say that a solid off-case strategy takes the following factors into account:

- Time constraints: The 1NC can only introduce a small set of arguments compared with the entire universe of potential positions. 1NC positions must be selected wisely.
- Strategic considerations: Ultimately, the negative needs to develop a single position or a set of positions that they can use to win the round. Topicality violations, counterplans and disadvantages should all be evaluated strategically.
- The need to press the 2AC: Sometimes it is strategic for the 1NC to present solid arguments that are difficult for the 2AC to respond to even if the 2NR has little intention of winning the round on that particular argument. You want to ensure that all of your arguments have the potential to win the round (potentially in combination with other arguments) under the right circumstances, otherwise the 2AR will be able to easily dismiss your arguments as interesting but irrelevant to the round.
- The need for positions to be complimentary: Off-case arguments should not contradict other negative on-case positions or other negative off-case positions. Although, it is often advantageous to use off-case positions to put the affirmative team in a double bind. For example, teams often use topicality arguments in an effort to force the affirmative to concede the link to a particular disadvantage.

Once you have a list of affirmative cases against which students do not feel adequately prepared and students understand some of what makes a negative strategy successful, it is time to develop negative strategies to these cases. This can be done in any of the following ways:

- Have students break into small groups and then work together develop a negative strategy to a particular case. Have the small groups report back to the class.
- Assign multiple students the same case and give them the homework assignment to develop a comprehensive negative strategy against it. Once they have completed this strategy, have all of the students who worked on a particular case meet together as small groups. Have the small groups develop a presentation outlining either several negative options (and the strengths and weaknesses of each option).
- Have students (individually, in small groups, or as a class) make a list of the disadvantage, counterplan, and topicality shells they possess. Then, have the students list all of the cases each shell should potentially be run against. Finally, hold a discussion about which off-case arguments (out of all of the options) should be run against a specific case. Develop a negative strategy for each case.

The results of any of these discussions can be posted on the classroom wall, documented on negative strategy sheets, or recorded by students as part of a strategy notebook. You want to make sure that students have the results of these discussions in a format that will be useful at the next tournament when it comes time to select negative arguments during rounds.



## 10.4 Are You My Link?

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*This activity introduces disadvantage structure and components. It is also a good way to introduce the class to the shells and arguments of several, topic-related disadvantage scenarios. This activity should be completed before students are familiar with the disadvantage shells upon which the activity rests. It is a good way to introduce the core set of positions that the students might use or encounter at debate tournaments this year.*

### **Time Allotment**

This activity takes one class period or less.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be able to explain the structure of a disadvantage and how its components relate to one another.
- learn about several specific disadvantage scenarios that are relevant to this year's resolution.

### **Materials and Preparation**

For this activity you will need to have multiple disadvantage shells. Disadvantage shells typically have somewhere between 3-5 cards. You will need enough shells so that there is one card for each student. If you have 30 students, but do not have the requisite 8-10 disadvantage shells, you may need to double up. In this situation, you will have multiple copies of certain disadvantages.

Once you have the appropriate number of photocopies of disadvantage shells, cut the cards out of the disadvantage shells, taking care to remove the tags but leave the cites. Once you have a pile of cards, shuffle the pile so that the cards are no longer in order.

Each group of students will also need access to a few sheets of briefing paper and some tape.

### **Method**

Hand out a card to each student. Explain to the students that they each have one card and that the card they have is either the uniqueness, link, internal link or impact of a disadvantage scenario.

Once each student has a card, have them spend 3-4 minutes reading the card and outlining the content of the evidence on a separate sheet of paper. Next, have them write a hypothetical tag for their card.

Once each student has written a tag, tell the students that each of them needs to find the other students who have cards from the same disadvantage shell. Each student should mingle with her classmates, telling her counterparts what component of a disadvantage she has (a link, an impact, etc.) and what her evidence says. She should also listen to the same information from the other student and, together, they should decide whether or not it seems as though they have pieces of evidence from the same disadvantage shell.

Ask the students to put the component parts of a disadvantage together. Each student should talk to the other members of the class to find the missing link, uniqueness, and/or impact to their disadvantage. After



all the students have found their mates, have small groups present their disadvantage to the whole group.

Students should identify the students who have the other cards from their disadvantage. As a group, they should identify who has the uniqueness card, who has the link card, etc. They should then rewrite each of their tags. Then, they should call you over and have you confirm that they have found the right students to pair with (i.e. that they have all of the right cards and none of the wrong cards).

If you have so many students or so few disadvantage shells that you decided to double up (and use the same disadvantage twice), tell the students at the beginning of the activity that there are one (or however many) sets of doubles. Set rules for dealing with duplicates in advance. For instance, explicitly forbid students with the same card from being in the same group. Tell students that if she talks to a student that has the same card that she does, she needs to go and find another group of which to be a part.

Once you have confirmed that a set of students have gathered all of the necessary cards to have a complete shell (and that they don't have any unnecessary cards), those students can move onto the next phase of the activity. Ask all of the students to tape the cards onto sheets of briefing paper in the appropriate order. Then, have them rewrite the tag lines, for instance, "Link, the affirmative plan increases federal allocations towards environmental protection. Any increase in spending trades off with military spending." Once they have completed the shells, have the students write an overview.

Have the small groups prepare a 2-4 minute presentation explaining the disadvantage shell that they constructed. Have the student present the disadvantage scenarios. You may want to evaluate the quality and thoroughness of these presentations.

### Variation:

This activity can be used with critique shells, negative solvency blocks, generic case turns, counterplan solvency cards, etc.



# 10.5 In-Round Division of Labor

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*This activity develops teamwork and strategic decision-making on the negative side of the debate. It gets students to think about when and why to divide work between teammates.*

## **Time Allotment**

30 minutes.

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- generate as a class efficient ways of working as partners during a debate round
- begin to think about the importance of teamwork and cooperation in debate.

## **Method**

In small groups or as a class, have students discuss strategies for dividing in-round labor between partners, especially between the 2NC and 1NR speeches in the negative block. Before they begin, have a large group brainstorming session about why dividing tasks is important: you don't want to repeat yourself, it keeps the judge's flow clean, time constraints, etc.

Students could begin their discussion by talking about how they approached dividing responsibilities in a recent practice round or tournament. Then they should talk about different ways to divide tasks. Possibilities include dividing:

- By expertise: "My partner knows more about X disadvantage"
- Because of time required: "It's a complicated flow, there may not be time in the 1NR."
- Because of strategic importance: "The 2N is going to be going for it in the 2NR, so he may as well cover it in the 2NC," or "We should put it in the 1NR so the 1AR has less time to respond."

When the students are finished, have the class discuss the pros and cons of each strategy.

Variation:

When the discussions are finished, you could break up the students into partners and have teams strategize different ways they will divide the negative block during their next tournament. But remember to emphasize that these plans should be flexible, and they should adapt to different rounds.





# Chapter 11: Topicality

**T**opicality is a relatively complicated area of debate theory. It is rare for students to enjoy debating topicality in a round, and very rare for students to enjoy learning about topicality. Topicality is a position run by the negative team which argues that the affirmative team’s case is not within the bounds of the resolution – that it is not part of the topic, or topical. It can be viewed as an appeal to the “rules” of debate. While it is sometimes used just to force the affirmative to waste 2AC time responding to it, it is still something that students must learn.

The activities in this chapter introduce the theory of the resolution and topicality to students. One focuses on understanding definitions, while the other is a more practical examination of topicality violations that your debaters will come across in debate rounds.

Try getting your students well acquainted with the topic, wording, and meaning of the resolution before you begin in-depth lessons on topicality. If students are comfortable with their knowledge of what the resolution is and what cases fall within the resolution, they will be better prepared to learn about topicality.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Topicality:

- 1.3 Analyzing Old Resolutions
- 1.5 Demonstration Debate
- 2.3 Topic Pre-Reading
- 4.5 Signposts and Numbering
- 6.10 Building a Brief
- 6.12 Improving 2AC Blocks
- 7.1 Chain Debates
- 7.6 Position Presentations
- 7.10 Judge the Chalkboard
- 8.4 Cross-Ex Preparation
- 9.2 Affirmative and Stock Issues Presentation
- 10.3 1NC Strategy Brainstorm
- 12.6 Telling Stories
- 14.2 Single Issue Debate



# Standards for Chapter 11

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Demonstrate ability to recognize and assess author's intent.
- Demonstrate ability to identify logical and factual flaws in written sources.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to use an outline to structure notes.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to respond to a policy proposal submitted by others.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to work in teams.
- Demonstrate ability to divide tasks between team members.
- Demonstrate ability to participate in a group discussion to render a decision or complete a project.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex project.
- Demonstrate ability to create systems to organize information in a useful manner.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.





# 11.1 Dictionary Search

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*This activity introduces topicality. It also develops understanding of topicality. In it, students must find multiple definitions of words in the resolution. It is a short homework assignment that gets students ready for a practice debate on topicality.*

## **Time Allotment**

The homework assignment will take approximately 25 minutes. The first phase (small group discussions) will take approximately 15-25 minutes. The mini-debates will take approximately 15-30 minutes.

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- advance their understanding of topicality.
- be introduced to evaluating the implications of arguments.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Students will need access to a few different dictionaries and/or access to the Internet. You will need a list of affirmative cases on this year's resolution that the students understand. It may make sense to have a one-page sheet with the name and plans from several cases to distribute to groups.

## **Method**

Select a few key words in this year's resolution and assign one to each student. One suggestion is to select words (or phrases) that have commonly debated in topicality on this year's resolution. Words with many possible interpretations work best.

Before assigning the homework, introduce students to the idea that words can have multiple meanings. For instance:

- Blue is a color and a feeling.
- A case is either a box or a position.
- A watch is either a timepiece or a guard shift or a verb.
- A dish is either a platter or a cuisine.
- A walk is either a pathway or a gait.
- Something that is bright is either intelligent or luminescent.
- The weather is cool and so are you.

However you want to explain that words have multiple meanings, make sure to communicate the relevance of this concept to debate resolutions. Resolutions are sentences comprised of words, each of which has multiple meanings, that when taken as a whole frame every debate. The resolution determines what the affirmative team can advocate for and what is off-limits.



Assigning students the homework, ask them to find as many definitions of their word as possible. Encourage them to find at least three. They can use dictionaries from the library or on the Internet after school.

The next day in class, arrange students in small groups according to the word they were assigned. Give students the example of a few affirmative cases with which they are familiar. Explain to students that the way one interprets the words in the resolution will determine whether a particular case is topical. Have students discuss the following questions about the definitions they collected:

- Did the students come up with the same definitions of the terms? Is there overlap in the definitions student's came up with? Where are there differences?
- Which definitions are most appropriate and relevant to the resolution? Why? How many of the definitions are actually plausible for this resolution?
- Which definitions might include the cases on the one-page hand out of cases on this year's resolution and which might exclude them?
- If you are an affirmative debater running a particular plan (you chose), what is the most advantageous definition to use? If you are a negative debater against a particular plan, what is the most advantageous definition to use?

If you are planning to have mini-debates, it may make sense to assign the small group a particular case and tell them in advance that they are preparing for mini-debates as they answer the questions.

After this small group discussion, you may want to have mini-debates. If so, select representatives from each group to participate in short topicality mini-debates. In pairs, one student will represent a particular affirmative case and the other will argue that the case does not meet the resolution because of a particular word. These mini-debates will stem organically from the small group discussions. In other words, these mini-debates will use arguments generated in the small group discussions, rather than pre-written topicality shells. The two students can debate the meaning of the word, each arguing that their definition is more accurate and useful for debate.

After the debate, students can comment on what they thought was effective in the debate and what was ineffective. As a follow up to this activity, you can use this as an opportunity to explain the typical model for a topicality violation, emphasizing the way that standards for good debate help determine which definition is best.



# 11.2 T-Violation Worksheet

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*This activity develops understanding of topicality argumentation and structure. It introduces students to the process of writing topicality violation shells. Students work in groups to construct a basic violation using a pre-written topicality shell worksheet. This activity can also be done as an individual homework assignment.*

## **Time Allotment**

30-40 minutes

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- advance their understanding of topicality.
- develop skills in constructing written arguments as a group.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Students should have a thorough understanding of the component parts of a topicality violation before the activity begins. Depending on the class's level of understanding of topicality, they may need to have reviewed a topicality worksheet or a section of a chapter as homework the night before. Prepare an empty topicality shell worksheet. This shell is a worksheet and should have blanks for a definition, a violation, a set of two or three standards, a set of one or two voting issues.

A list of topicality violations relevant to this year's resolution. This list might be constructed from topicality file from a summer institute or from a core file. The list should outline specific violations that are relevant to affirmative cases with which the class is familiar.

## **Method**

Divide students in groups. Assign each group a specific topicality violation shell to write. Tell the students to find a useful definition of their word (either in a dictionary or from the files produced in the dictionary search activity). When they have found a definition that is appropriate to the resolution they intend to write, each group should begin filling out the empty topicality shell worksheet.

Explain that on the worksheet, they should write in their definition of the relevant word and its source. In the violation blank, the students should explain in writing why the plan does not meet their definition of the word from the resolution. In the standards blanks, they should explain in writing what standards they think ought to be used in evaluating definitions and why those standards hold their definition superior. Finally, in the voting issues blank, they should select and explain reasons why this topicality violation they have constructed is a voting issue.

When each group has finished the violations, they can exchange violations and make written comments of the worksheets of their peers. In addition (or alternatively), you may also want students to turn in the worksheets for your evaluation and comments.





# Chapter 12: Debate Games

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**E**ven the most dedicated of your students will have days when they just do not feel like debating. Debate, like all other activities, must deal with turnover and student burnout. The difficulty of being a successful coach lies in how to respond to tired, cranky, complaining students. If you can keep them on board, on the team, or interested in class, you are on the way to building a successful program.

The activities in this chapter are games. They attempt to remind students of the fun aspects of debate. Some operate like game shows, others incorporate elements of sports, and some use aspects of theatre and drama games.

Not all of the activities in this chapter will instantly make students excited about debate, but if you use these and other games regularly in your debate classes and practices, you may be able to prevent burnout. Try using activities, whether games or not, regularly in your class to try to keep students engaged and excited about debate, and you may be able to keep students from ever getting tired of debate.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Debate Games:

- 1.7 Intro to Arguments
- 3.1 Impromptu Speaking
- 3.5 Articulation Drills
- 3.7 Relaxation Warm-ups
- 4.1 Flowing Music
- 4.7 The Card Flow Game
- 5.3 Library Scavenger Hunt
- 6.6 National Debate Enquirer
- 7.10 Judge the Chalkboard
- 8.3 Ineffective Cross-Ex
- 14.1 SPAR Debates



# Standards for Chapter 12

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Demonstrate ability to recognize and assess author's intent.
- Demonstrate ability to identify logical and factual flaws in written sources.

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentations.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to use an outline to structure notes.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.
- Demonstrate ability to adapt oral presentations to various audiences.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to work in teams.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex project.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to synthesize information from different sources to communicate a coherent idea.
- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.

## **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.



# 12.1 Debate Baseball

---

*This activity reinforces basic debate concepts. It is a fun activity that allows you to get a sense of which debate concepts students understand well and which are not as clear to them. Students answer questions in the format of a mock baseball game.*

## **Time Allotment**

Approximately 40-60 minutes

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- review important debate terms and concepts.
- engage in collaborative learning, reinforcing material to which they have already been introduced.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Write lists of questions that cover the debate concepts and terms for which your students are accountable. This list might include concepts that have been introduced in the previous several weeks of class or concepts introduced in textbook readings. Break the questions into four categories: 1) Single (difficult); 2) Double (very difficult); 3) Triple (second most difficult); 4) Home Run (most difficult). The questions can be made harder or easier depending on the experience level of the students. Make sure that the lists are prepared in a manner that allows you to give a single question, from any category, to the "pitcher" at any given moment. Have the classroom arranged in a manner conducive to the game, with four bases.

## **Method**

Divide the class into two teams. If you would like, have the students name their team. Explain the rules of Debate Baseball to the class. Debate Baseball simulates a baseball game, but is adapted for a classroom review session. Students from the "at bat" team actually step up to the plate. When a student is on the plate, she is given the choice of the category of question they want. For instance, she may say she is interested in a double. Once the student "at bat" has selected a category (difficulty level) for her question, the student the other team has designated as the "pitcher" reads the question from the card you give her.

As the teacher, you will function as an umpire. In this role, you decide whether each student gets the question right or not. If the student misses a question, her team gets an out. If she answers the question and thus gets a "hit", she moves to base that corresponds to the category she selected. In the example where she selects a double, she would move to second base. She would stay there until another member of her team got a hit. At that point, she would advance the same number of bases as does the batter.

As in baseball, when the student gets to home plate, her team receives one point. Record points on the board. After three outs it is the other team's turn to bat. Play as many innings as you have time for and as is pedagogically useful. Unlike baseball, there are no opportunities to tag another student out. Once a student has answered a question accurately, the only way to prevent her from scoring a point is make sure she does not get to the home plate before her team has gotten three outs. Adapt the rules as necessary depending on what is appropriate for your students.



## 12.2 Debate Jeopardy!

*This activity reinforces basic debate concepts. It is a fun activity that allows you to get a sense of which debate concepts students understand well and which are not as clear to them. It is also an easy way for students to review what they know.*

### Time Allotment

One class period

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- review important debate terms and concepts.
- engage in collaborative learning, reinforcing material to which they have already been introduced.

### Materials and Preparation

Create a list of 10 questions for at least 6 categories. It is preferable to have two rounds (10-12) of categories prepared, but time constraints might prevent the class from playing two full rounds. Focus on debate concepts to which students have been introduced. It makes sense to have this activity before the first tournament in order to boost student's confidence and ensure they have reviewed material they will need to know in the average round. Possible categories include:

- The affirmative case structure / Stock issues
- Specific affirmative case arguments
- Disadvantage structure
- Specific disadvantage scenarios
- Critique structure
- Topicality structure or Specific Topicality arguments
- Negative Theory
- Potpourri (which could include flowing, research, and filing).

These lists should cover materials for which your students are accountable. They may cover concepts that have been introduced in the previous several weeks of class or concepts introduced in a debate textbook that the students have been assigned to read. The questions should be framed just as questions are in jeopardy (i.e. what is \_\_\_\_\_).

Once the questions have been generated, create a Jeopardy game board: a ten by six column grid. Each column should be labeled with a different category. The rows should be numbered 100 through 1000 (the first question for each category should be the least difficult; the tenth should be the most difficult and they should increase in increments of 100.) If there is time for a second round, it might make sense to have double Jeopardy wherein the point-values of questions is doubled. It may make sense to assign certain squares as daily double squares – wherein the square is actually worth twice the points it would otherwise be worth. The game board does not have to be too fancy – in most situations it makes sense to just use the chalkboard. You may also want prizes (candy, etc.) to reward teams for performing well during the game.





## Method

The activity is a group review exercise that is modeled on the television show Jeopardy. At the beginning of the class, explain (or have a student explain) the rules of Jeopardy. To adapt Jeopardy to a classroom setting, break the class into two (or potentially three) teams and have these teams compete against each other. Elect a score keeper to keep track of each team's points on the black board.

Once you have divided the class into teams and elected a score keeper, begin by letting the first student from the first team select a question. To select a question, a student should ask for a category and a point value (for example, Flowing for 100). If the student answers the question correctly related to that category and point value accurately, their team gets the points associated with the question. If not, another team has the opportunity to steal the points by answering the question correctly. If no team can answer a question correctly, the points are forfeited. Allowing teams to "steal" questions ensures that the competition is stiffened and that all students are paying attention.

Rotate who answers questions so that each student on a given team answers one question before any student on that same team answers two questions. Although, when the first team has missed a question and another team is trying to steal the points, it may make sense to allow the other team to talk silently as a group before attempting to steal the points. This type of whole group, timed (20 seconds or so) discussion provides an opportunity for collaborative learning because teams have to work together to decide upon the right answer.

If the activity has enough time, each student will get to answer multiple questions.

## 12.3 Nerf Football Review

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*This activity introduces or reinforces new debate terms and concepts. Students pass around a football with debate terms written on its sides. When a student catches the ball, she must define the term on which her thumb lands.*

### **Time Allotment**

20-30 minutes

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to the meanings of new terms and concepts in debate.
- have reinforced their understanding of certain debate concepts.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A nerf football labeled with the names of debate terms and concepts. For example, if you want the class to review the stock issues, one side of the football would be labeled harms, one side solvency, one side inherency, one side topicality, etc. If you want the class to review disadvantage structure, one side would be labeled uniqueness, one side link, one side internal link, and one side impact.

### **Method**

After a brief introductory lecture on the concepts you would like students to master (for instance, the structures of a disadvantage), tell the students to move their chairs in circle. The students will pass the football around the circle. Whomever catches it must, in her own words, define the term on which her thumb rests. If she defines the term accurately, she gets to pass the football on to whomever she wants. If she has trouble defining a term, it is a fumble. In the case of a fumble, she must pass the ball back to the person who threw it to them.



## 12.4 Debate Millionaire

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*This activity reinforces basic debate concepts. It is a fun activity that allows you to get a sense of which debate concepts students understand well and which are not as clear to them. It is also an easy way for students to review what they know. It is modeled after the television show, "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?"*

### **Time Allotment**

Approximately one class period

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- review important debate terms and concepts.
- engage in collaborative learning, reinforcing material to which they have already been introduced.

### **Materials and Preparation**

A list of questions that review important debate terms and concepts of varying difficulty. In order to prepare for the game, rank the difficulty of the questions.

That way, when you ask questions that become increasingly difficult, you will be able to select the appropriate questions with greater ease.

### **Method**

The game operates similarly to the game show. Three students (instead of just one) go up as a team to sit in the "hot seat." The students in the "hot seat" can confer with each other, but must come up with an answer within a limited (30 second) timeframe. After discussion, one of them must answer the question. The students must alternate so that each of them answers one question out of every three.

If they answer the question accurately, they get the points associated with the question they asked. In addition, every time the students get the answer right, you ask debate trivia questions that become increasingly difficult. If they answer the question inaccurately, they lose and are no longer in the "hot seat".

Every 4-5 questions, there should be a milestone question. If the students answer the milestone question correctly, they are guaranteed the point-value of that question. For instance, if the milestone question is worth 1,000 points and the students answer the question correctly, they will get 1,000 points.

If they get up to the milestone question, but answer incorrectly, they will lose the points for all of the questions that they answered correctly. Thus, the only way to ensure that they receive points for a turn is to answer a milestone question correctly. The point-scale continues to increase until 1,000,000, as in the game show.



You can adapt the format from the game show, so that the students have to come up with their own answers to the questions. Or, they can be asked in the format of the game show (in which students choose between four possible answers).

Poll the class, phone calls, 50/50, etc. can be used as "Lifelines". Lifelines are used when the three students in the hot seat do not know the answer. They have one of each type of Lifeline. Poll the class allows the students to get a show of hands about what the class thinks the answer is. Phone calls allows the students in the hot seat to select a particular student out of the entire class and ask her the answer. 50/50 is only appropriate if the questions have four possible answers. In these situations, 50/50 eliminates two incorrect answers, leaving one right and one wrong answer. If there are not four possible answers, 50/50 cannot be used as a lifeline.

In order to allow this review game to run its course, you will need to have extensive lists of questions. After one to three rounds of play, the team of three students with the most points wins.



## 12.5 Debate Skits

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*This activity reinforces basic debate concepts. Students express their knowledge of a particular debate concept through skits.*

### **Time Allotment**

Approximately one class period. Potentially longer.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in expressing complex ideas in their own words.
- build confidence in public speaking.

### **Method**

Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group a debate topic or theme and tell them to construct a short skit (5 minutes or less) from that theme.

Presentation topics might be anything from the concept of inherency to the implementation of a particular plan to the impact scenario of a particular disadvantage. Let students know that they can create the skit with any scene or characters that they want, so long as it does a thorough and engaging job introducing the topic.

When students are designing their skit, there should be a period of creativity. While you want students to come up with new interpretations of debate concepts, it is important that you stay involved, encouraging each group and making sure that all groups are on task, brainstorming and writing down ideas. Additionally, you should be available to clarify ideas about the topics of presentation.

After each group is finished planning their skit, have every group perform for the other members of the class.



## 12.6 Telling Stories

---

*This activity develops speaking and story-telling skills. In it, each team of debaters writes a summary of their affirmative case. It gives students practice explaining the affirmative. This activity is especially appropriate for students who are already partners who have tournament experience or students who are preparing for their first tournament.*

### **Time Allotment**

Approximately 40-80 minutes at the shortest. Depending on the variations and follow-up activities, this can take several days.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in argumentation through narrative.
- develop skills in summarizing arguments.

### **Method**

Each team (pair of two students) in the class should write a brief (you should select a length - 30, 45, or 60 second) introduction to the affirmative case that they either do or plan to run at tournaments. Writing this overview can be homework or an in-class assignment.

Students may need instruction about what an effective overview looks like. If you have (or can write) a model of an excellent overview (introduction to the case), you may want to hand out photocopies or project it with an overhead. Have the students read the model and then brainstorm a list of characteristics of effective overviews as a class. If you do not have such a model, then hold a brainstorm session without one.

In addition to whatever ideas students generate during the brainstorm, you can give them an introduction to overviews. An overview is read at the beginning of the 2AC or the 2AR. It frames the debate and the rest of the speech, outlining the reasons why an affirmative ballot is justified. It addresses the inherency, harms and solvency of the case. It tells the whole story of the affirmative in an engaging, persuasive, and word-efficient way. It uses compelling, pithy language – sometimes pulling the best sentences or phrases from the text of cards.

Once the overview is written, have a speaker from each team deliver this speech to the class. After each speaker presents, have the rest of the class discuss the speech. They can address what elements of the story were most and least effective, what else could have been included or excluded, and what they did not understand. You may also have students offer constructive criticism about presentation style. After each pair has presented and received criticism, the students should re-write their introductions. You can also give students the time to practice their revised overviews, integrating some of the feedback they received on presentation style.



At the end of the activity, ask student to submit a draft of their original overview, a typed set of notes of all of the feedback they received from the class, and a revised draft of the overview.

**Potential Variations:**

This activity can be adapted and become “The Story of the Counter Plan,” “The Story of the Disadvantage,” or the Story of the Case Turn.” In other words, the process of this activity can be adapted to a variety of negative positions. Affirmative teams can also write 2AR overviews that are advantage specific (if the case has multiple advantages). When affirmative cases have specific strategic “tricks,” it makes sense to have overviews speaking to these specific strategies.

Varsity debaters (and advanced novice debaters) often have short overviews written out before debate tournaments. These overviews ensure that the position upon which a student is trying to win the round is persuasively and concisely explains. This activity is a great way for a debater to prepare for tournaments: if she has overviews written in advance, she will be able to use preparation time more effectively.

**NOTE:** This activity is particularly useful for improving the effectiveness of Second Affirmative Rebuttal speeches.







# Chapter 13: Debate In Society

One of the most exciting things about debate in general and urban debate leagues in particular is the way debaters often become vocal leaders in their community. From the male debaters who wore tube tops to protest their school's new dress code, to debaters who become members, and occasionally leaders, of community organizations struggling to make their neighborhoods and cities safer, more livable, and better for all of its residents, debaters are often inspired by their skills and knowledge to critically examine the world around them. Unfortunately, while almost all debaters use skills gained through debate to look at the world around them, not all use their skills to try and change it. As a person in a position of authority, you can have a dramatic effect by encouraging students to become active in their community.

The activities in this chapter seek to help students to understand the connections between their debates and their world, and analyze the debates that are already underway in our society.

While there are only two activities here, there are countless possibilities. Keep your eyes open for organizations based around your school that welcome youth members, and encourage your students to join.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be used for Debate In Society:

- 1.2 Role Playing Debate
- 2.3 Topic Pre-Reading
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 4.2 Flowing the News
- 4.9 Speech Reports
- 6.7 Current Events Challenge
- 7.8 Real World Debates
- 10.1 I Have Another Idea ...
- 12.6 Telling Stories
- 14.9 Advantage/Disadvantage Comparison Speech



# Standards for Chapter 13

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Critical Reading and Literacy**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in written sources.
- Demonstrate ability to recognize and assess author's intent.
- Demonstrate ability to identify logical and factual flaws in written sources.

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentations.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to use an outline to structure notes.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.

## **Solving Problems**

- Demonstrate ability to identify the cause of a problems.
- Demonstrate ability to use research and/or logical reasoning to assess various solutions to a problem.
- Demonstrate ability to develop a solution and assess the effectiveness of the solution.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex project.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.

## **Citizenship**

- Increase awareness of current political controversies.
- Develop tools to comprehend and respond to political arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to apply understanding of argument and source bias to ideas and text beyond the classroom.



# 13.1 Public Meetings

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*This activity introduces students to the broader social implications of debate. Students will apply the argument analysis skills they learn in debate by attending public meetings and critically analyzing the presentations they encounter. Students will flow the content of the meetings. They will then prepare a written summary of the arguments and speeches they heard and potentially present a brief speech on the topic in class.*

## **Time Allotment**

This is a take-home assignment

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop the ability to criticize the argumentation styles of others.
- gain self-awareness about the components of a successful public speaker.
- develop familiarity with and an informed opinion about current issues of pressing community concern.

## **Materials and Preparation**

The instructor should make available a calendar of public meetings that students can attend to complete this assignment. Alternately, it can be an assignment for the students to compile such a list.

The instructor should prepare a set of questions or criteria that students should look for in the speeches they observe. These questions can easily be tailored to the topics in presentation, analysis or refutation that the class has recently discussed. For example, if a current topic for class discussion is claims and warrants, students should identify whether speakers back their claims with warrants. If a current topic is line-by-line refutation, students could look for instances when speakers fail to respond to issues raised by previous speakers on the opposing side and comment on the implications of “dropping” these arguments. In addition to these specific questions, you may chose to distribute a more comprehensive speech evaluation form. This option is discussed below.

If possible and appropriate, the instructor should brief students on the topics and speakers they may encounter in the meeting before they attend.

## **Method**

Each student should attend a parent-teacher organization, city council, school board, or other community meeting.

At the meeting, students should flow the speeches presented on one or more major issues, noting the major arguments made by each side.

Students should analyze the content and presentation style of individual speakers, either by preparing a written statement or notes for an oral presentation. You may wish to create a set of guiding questions for this activity that emphasize concepts in public speaking and debate that your class has recently covered.



Alternatively, you can give students a copy of the evaluation form you use to assess their speeches. By using this form to evaluate another speaker, students will learn to reflect upon the different components of an effective speech. They will learn the vocabulary and self-awareness necessary to manage their own progress as public speakers.

Students should prepare critiques to present in class of the strengths and weaknesses of one particular speaker. These critiques can be presented to the instructor in the form of journals, or presented orally to the class on the day following the meeting.

### Extension Activity:

Students can prepare speeches or written position statements for or against one of the major issues they encounter at the meeting they attend. If more than one student attended the same meeting, have them debate the issue in front of the class.

### Variation:

Have students watch a video taped or a live political debate. This could be a presidential debate, a congressional debate, an academic debate, a candidates forum, or a public debate. Have students analyze and assess these speeches. The advantage of this variation is that students will likely observe more polished speakers delivering more pointed, structured speeches. The disadvantage of this variation is that students will not be able to see the speaker live. Speeches recorded for televised audiences are less relevant to the study of debate and public speaking (in certain ways), than are live speeches that have a full range of body language.



## 13.2 Legislation Analysis

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*This activity develops understanding of the broader social implications of debate. Students will apply argument analysis skill they learned through debate to examine a current issue of interest to them. Students will collect an article portfolio tracing an issue of pressing social concern over the course of several weeks. After the research, students will write response papers analyzing the arguments they observe and presenting an informed personal opinion on the issue.*

### **Time Allotment**

This activity is a long-term project that is largely completed out of class. It might take between 2-4 weeks, but takes minimal class time.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skills in analyzing the arguments presented by multiple sides on a particular issue.
- develop familiarity with a current issue of pressing social concern in which they are interested.

### **Method**

This project can be completed individually or in groups. It might be helpful to think of it as unfolding in four discrete steps:

Step 1: Students (or groups) should identify an issue of pressing social concern that interests them that is currently being debated in the city council, the state legislature or United States Congress. It may make sense to brainstorm with the class about how one would go about researching an issue being debated in each of the settings (so that students have a sense of the relative challenges of each) before they select their final topic. For instance, it will be easiest to find documents and do research if the issue is being contested in Congress because so many documents are well-prepared and in the public record. On the flip side, the hands-on, person-to-person research necessary to collect documents on an issue being debated in the city council has an intrigue all its own. At this phase in the activity, each student should find a copy of the full text of the initial bill online or in a public records depository. Finally, you want to emphasize the importance of selecting an issue that will have ongoing, contentious debate over the full course of a month. While this is sometimes hard to predict, let students know that they will be accountable for collecting and reading documents on the issue regularly and that they should select a topic accordingly. Thus, it is better to select a federal topic like "should we go to war with X country," or "should the health care system be reformed in X way" than to select a topic that may be resolved within a few days. Local topics that are being debated in an ongoing and rigorous fashion fit this criteria.

Step 2: Each student will compile a portfolio of newspaper articles, editorial columns, and other documents that trace the progress of the legislation over a specified period of time (perhaps one month). This portfolio should include a variety of different opposing viewpoints, even if the student does not agree with them. It should include as wide of a set of resources as possible (for instance, congressional testimony, op-eds, policy briefs, advocacy documents, etc.) If the issue is local, students should try and attend a city council session



or public meeting on the issue. To ensure that students are keeping up with the research on a regular basis, you may want to ask them to submit a current portfolio every Thursday. Have them paper-clip all of the documents from that week together. That way, you can quickly skim the new documents that the student collected and evaluate each student's progress. For the students to get the most out of the activity, you want to push them to follow the developments regarding their issue on a daily basis.

**Step 3:** Once students have collected documents over the course of the month, they should begin to write an analytical account of the arguments presented on the issue on all sides. Students should identify the major players (factions) in the debate and describe each faction's interests and how these interests affect their positions on the issue. Students should identify the major arguments for and against the passage of a specific piece of legislation linked to the issue and evaluate the strength of each argument. Finally, the students should take a personal stance on the issue and explain their position.

If students are working in small groups, each student should have a clear focus and set of responsibilities within the group (such as focusing on a particular perspective or a few key players). Each student should write a statement of their own opinion; it is OK if the whole group does not agree.

**Step 4:** Each student or group should present their findings to the class. If there is time, allow them to lead a short class debate on the issue.



# Chapter 14: Practice Debates

**P**ractice makes perfect, and practice debates make for better debaters. Practice debates are not only fun, engaging learning tools (especially when you use topics and prompts that connect to students), but they also simulate the competitive debate environment, preparing students for tournaments, allowing them to become acclimated with speaking in front of their team (and a crowd), and encouraging them to think on their feet.

The activities in this chapter attempt to give you more options than simply having team members debate their affirmative and negative strategies. These activities range from spontaneous debate on random topics to rebuttal practice to in-depth practice on a single issue.

While some of these activities can and should take up an entire class or practice (for instance, *Rebuttal Redos* after a tournament), many of them can be finished quickly. When your debaters run through these practice debate activities a few times and are comfortable, you may want to use them as fun activities at the beginning and end of a class or practice. Use a variation of *SPAR Debates* as a warm-up to practice, or close the day with speeches comparing whatever you worked on that day, as in *Advantage Comparison*.

## Adaptable Activities

These activities from other chapters could be adapted for Practice Debates:

- 1.2 Role Playing Debate
- 1.4 One-on-One Refutation
- 1.5 Demonstration Debates
- 3.3 Speaking About Social Issues
- 4.10 Giving Speeches from Flows
- 6.12 Improving 2AC Blocks
- Chapter 7: Argumentation
- 8.1 Chain Cross-Examination
- 8.2 Group Cross-Ex
- 9.5 Affirmative Case Debates

# Standards for Chapter 14

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The following standards are met by the activities in this chapter:

## **Listening**

- Demonstrate ability to comprehend and identify main ideas in oral sources.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize facts and arguments from oral presentations.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze and respond to facts and arguments in an oral presentation.

## **Writing and Note-taking**

- Demonstrate ability to develop and utilize effective personal note-taking strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to use an outline to structure notes.
- Demonstrate ability to summarize main ideas of texts and oral presentations in writing.
- Demonstrate ability to write persuasively.
- Demonstrate ability to record each argument during a speech presented by an opponent during a debate, and use these notes to respond orally to each argument individually and in proper sequence.

## **Speaking and Presentation**

- Develop familiarity and comfort speaking in public.
- Demonstrate ability to adapt oral presentations to various audiences.

## **Critical Thinking and Argumentation**

- Demonstrate ability to structure arguments clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate ability to understand both sides of a controversial argument.
- Demonstrate ability to identify the logical reasoning in statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use logical reasoning to form statements and arguments.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to strengthen an argument.
- Demonstrate ability to use evidence to critique arguments made by others.
- Demonstrate ability to construct and advocate a complete policy proposal.
- Demonstrate ability to respond to a policy proposal presented by others.

## **Teamwork**

- Demonstrate ability to work in teams.
- Demonstrate ability to divide tasks between team members.

## **Organization and Self-Management of Learning**

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own performance.
- Demonstrate ability to manage time independently and effectively in order to complete a complex project.

## **Research and Synthesis**

- Demonstrate ability to apply information to new contexts and situations.
- Demonstrate ability to use appropriate methods of citation to credit sources.





# 14.1 Observer's Assessment

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*This activity introduces and/or develops critical listening, note-taking, and analytical skills. It engages students who are not participating in a practice debate. It encourages students to critically reflect on the practice debate round. This activity is complimentary to many practice round activities. It can also be adapted to apply to many activities where students practice giving speeches. This activity can be linked into students' evaluation for the course and gives students something to do during the practice debate, hopefully improving the degree to which students stay engaged throughout the course of the practice debate.*

## **Time Allotment**

This activity occurs concurrently with a practice debate. Remind students to fill out the Observer Post Round Assessment Form during the course of the debate. At the end of the practice debate activity either give the observers 10 minutes to complete the Form or assign the the form to the class as homework.

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- begin developing meta-cognitive skills associated with analyzing arguments of a practice round.
- increase their understanding of what it means to critically analyze debate round performance and basic argumentation strategy.

## **Materials and Preparation**

You must prepare a worksheet that asks evaluative questions for the student Observers to fill out during the course of the practice debate. This worksheet should contain questions for the students to answer regarding the elements of the practice debate and suggestions for evaluating the debate round. Alternatively, you may want to write these questions on the board and have the students copy the questions into a notebook at the beginning of the class.

## **Method**

Students serving as Observers act as judges. They take notes on various elements of the debate they observe. You need to let the students know in advance which questions they are responsible for answering. In general, there are three types of questions for students to answer: questions about facts, questions about presentation, and questions about argumentation. Students should keep comprehensive notes in response to each question in addition to flowing the practice debate.

Below are three lists. These lists are intended to serve as examples of the kinds of questions you may ask students on Observer Post Debate Assessment Forms. Based on the skill level of the class and focus of the current unit, make a decision about which questions to include on the Form you write. Write questions, and adapt the ones below, so that they make sense for your class.

Questions of fact related to the debate:

- Who participated in this debate and what speeches did they give?
- Who delivered the second negative constructive speech? Etc.



- What affirmative case was run in this debate? What arguments did the affirmative team make with regard to Inherency? Harms? Solvency? Topicality? What were the advantages of the affirmative case? Briefly explain the advantage scenarios?
- What are the names the key affirmative solvency authors?
- What positions comprised the "negative strategy" in this debate? What set of arguments or positions did the negative team run?

Questions related to the effectiveness and style of the presentation:

- Name two things that each speaker did well
- Name two things that each speaker could do to improve
- How would you characterize the presentation style of each presenter?
- Which presenter are you most likely to believe? Why?
- Which presenter do you relate to the best? Why?
- How would you evaluate the effectiveness of each presenter's communication style?

Questions related to the substance and strategy of argumentation:

- What issues, arguments, and strategies did this debate revolve around?
- What arguments were most effective? Why? The least effective? Why?
- What arguments did the affirmative team mishandle? Explain what you mean? How about the negative team?
- How could the affirmative team have better prepared for this debate? The negative team?
- What do you think ended up being the two most important issues / positions in this debate?
- How would you evaluate the round and why?

Variation:

Create an opportunity for students to engage in critical evaluation and assessment of the practice debate in small groups. After the practice debate, divide the observers into small groups or even teams. If it makes sense, allow the participants in the debate to join small groups. For small groups, have each group decide upon a moderator who can facilitate discussion. Have a set of questions that frame the discussion. Before breaking into small groups, give the students time to reflect upon the questions individually. This variation is intended to give students the opportunity to discuss their reflections as a group, comparing notes.

Variation:

This activity can also be used to create the opportunity for peer evaluations of practice debates. In addition to having students judge the debate and fill out sample ballots, have them fill out Observer Post Debate Assessment Forms. Whether the results of the debate are disclosed or not, have peers present oral criticism of the practice debate. Explain the kinds of things an oral criticism touches upon. Give students some time to review notes after the practice debate concludes. Then randomly call upon students to make presentations regarding style of presentation and strength of argumentation. Or, add a written component to practice debates. After a practice debate, have students write a paragraph explaining how they would have voted and why and exploring the questions on the Observer Post Debate Assessment Form.



## 14.2 SPAR Debates

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*This activity introduces debate and argumentation skills. SPAR stands for SPontaneous ARgumentation. As an introductory activity, it is designed to familiarize students with making arguments, asking questions about arguments, and judging the relative strength of competing arguments. The format of the exercise (quick start-up time and short speeches) allows teachers and students to build excitement about and interest in debating. The activity also creates opportunities for teachers to interject constructive comments that frame debate as a supportive, interactive, intellectual and creative form of communication. The advantages of a SPAR debate format are that it (1) reduces stress associated with debate; (2) engages students in an enjoyable, debate-related public speaking activity; (3) it provides an excellent format to hone public speaking skills (organization, delivery, etc.). The quality of SPAR debates will be much improved if the students have had some previous discussion of the process of argument invention and strategy.*

### **Time Allotment**

The time allotment will vary depending on the format of the SPAR and the number of SPAR debates you conduct. SPAR debates can be a regular feature of a class or of an after school practice. Or, you can set aside a class period or two and have every student participate in a SPAR debate.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to many of the basic tenants of argumentation and debate.
- gain first hand experience with delivering a speech, conducting a cross examination, and preparing a rebuttal.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Before beginning the debate, write a list of possible topics on the chalkboard. Topics that could be listed include:

- Honesty is always the best policy
- Slavery still exists today
- True love really does exist
- The power of science is dangerous
- X music star is better than Y music star (you fill in the blanks)
- Violence is a necessary means to settle disputes
- Police are necessary for safety
- People should eat meat
- Creationism should be taught in schools
- Abortion should be illegal in our state
- Students should work after-school jobs
- The death penalty should be abolished in the United States
- The history textbooks in our school need serious revision



- The United States should cancel debts to the Third World
- Girls should be able to play on the boy's football (or wrestling) team
- Stories with violent content should be banned from high schools
- Music with explicit lyrics should be played on the radio without censoring certain words
- School uniforms should be made mandatory
- Animals think like humans
- The fast food industry is bad for our society
- The government should control the maximum and the minimum amount of money that each citizen earns
- Spanking is a bad form of discipline, parents should have alternatives
- Books are more fun than video games
- There are good lessons to be learned from cartoons
- School starts too early
- Suicide bombers evil
- Youth loitering laws should be overturned
- Students should obey authority
- The legal driving age should be lowered to 14
- School should last 12 months a year
- Our school should have a dress code
- Gangs provide youth with a family and a support structure
- Police in our city overstep their constitutional authority
- Our school should cut all funding for sports
- People should not be allowed to own pets
- High school students should not receive a diploma unless they pass a High Stakes Test

### Method

First, you should decide upon a format for the SPAR debate. One example of a format for a SPAR debate is as follows:

- Affirmative opening speech (90 seconds)
- Cross-examination by the negative (60 seconds)
- Negative opening speech (90 seconds)
- Cross-examination by affirmative (60 seconds)
- Affirmative closing speech (45 seconds)
- Negative closing speech (45 seconds)

You may want to select a format without cross examination, although students tend to enjoy that part of SPARing. You may also choose to shorten or lengthen these speeches or to add second rebuttal speech.

Explain the format you select to the class. When they are clear on the format, ask two teams or two debaters to step up to the front of the room. Flip a coin and have one debater call the flip. The winner of the coin flip gets the option to either:

- Select a topic for the debate from the list on the chalkboard.
- Defer selection of topic choice to their opponent and pick the side of the topic they wish to defend.



Once a topic and sides are determined, give debaters 3-5 minutes preparation time to brainstorm arguments as a pair and write them down. If you are using the SPAR debate as a whole class demonstration debate, it may work best to conduct the argument brainstorm as a whole class and write the arguments on the chalkboard. If not, simply have the students brainstorm arguments and prepare as a pair.

Conduct a SPAR debate according to the format. Decide in advance of the SPAR whether you would like student comments and questions to be fielded during or after the debate.

If you are only running one or two SPAR debates during a given class period, it may make sense to have the students prepare arguments the night before as an assignment. To do this, you should break students who will debate the following day into pairs, decide upon a topic, and assign each pair to a side of the topic. Although, assigning the topic in advance makes the debates less spontaneous.

If you are running a series of SPAR debates for an entire class period there are things you can do to ensure that the exercise runs fluidly. For instance, you may decide that at all times there be two pairs of debaters that are "on deck." This group should prepare their arguments while the preceding group debates. In this system, two pairs need to be selected initially and given five minutes to prepare arguments in a designated "preparation space." After the first SPAR debate is completed, a new pair should be invited to the front of the room to select a topic and sides, while an "on-deck" pair that has been preparing takes the stage and begins its debate.

#### Follow Up:

You may want to leave time for discussion after the SPAR debates. If so, students can be given the opportunity to discuss things about the debate process that they noticed, things they liked or disliked, things that they learned, etc. Teachers should also take the opportunity to point out examples of strong arguments and outstanding performances, and then isolate one or two main issues they want these students to work on for next time.

#### Variation:

Break the students into teams of two and tell each pair of students that they will be debating against another pair of students. Have students develop an argument area or select a resolution from the list above. For instance, they may opt to debate the resolution, "Violence is a necessary means to settle disputes." Once a group of students has selected a resolution, let the pairs of students decide side of the issue for which they would like to argue in favor. Pair them as affirmative and negative according to interests (or, according to the side of the issue that the students will learn the most defending). Give the students 5-10 minutes to prepare. Then, as a small group, let each pair of teams deliver a 60 second constructive and a 45 second rebuttal. This variation demonstrates that you can let students decide which issue they debate, that the students can select the side of the issue that they debate, that you can change speech time, and that you can eliminate cross examination. Finally, it demonstrates that students can perform SPAR debates in small groups rather than in front of the class.

# 14.3 Analytical Responses

*This activity develops refutation and argumentation skills. Students are presented with the shell of a negative argument, given a limited amount of time, and asked to write as many good responses to the position as possible.*

## Time Allotment

The time allotment will vary depending on the number of students you have responding to the negative position. It will take 3-4 minutes to read the disadvantage shell, 5 minutes for students to write responses, and approximately 2 minutes for each student to respond. If 6 students are responding to a disadvantage the activity will take 20-25 minutes.

This activity can be a regular feature of a class or of an after school practice. Or, you can set aside a class period or two and have every student read their responses whatever position to which they are responding.

## Objectives

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- gain familiarity with the process and techniques involved in responding to specific negative positions.
- improve speech delivery, flowing, and critical thinking skills.

## Materials and Preparation

To complete this activity you will need the following materials:

- Paper, pens, and a timer.
- Basic familiarity with the specific issue being debated.
- Basic familiarity with and photocopies of the affirmative case being defended.
- Photocopies of the shells for the specific issue that is being debated. Depending on the number of students participating in the activity, you may need multiple sets of evidence for each mini specific issue debate.

Specific issues that may be debated include:

- A specific disadvantage.
- A specific topicality violation shell.
- A specific counterplan shell.
- A specific critique shell.

## Method

Decide what size of groups you would like students to be in for this activity. If you have a class with 25 students, you may want to complete this activity as a whole group, in which case all students will write responses but only a few will deliver a speech. Or, you can break the class into five groups. Each of the



small groups can conduct the activity within their group, rather than presenting to the whole class.

Break the class up into groups. You should decide in advance whether you would like every small group to receive the same negative position, or different negative positions. If each group receives different negative positions, they might develop a set of effective responses to a variety of positions, which could then be distributed.

Tell all of the students in the group but one that they will be affirmative, defending a given case against a negative position. In order to participate in this activity, all students should understand the case that they are defending.

Start with one student on the negative side who delivers a shell of a negative position (a topicality violation, a disadvantage, a critique, etc.) that applies to the affirmative case. All of the affirmative debaters should flow.

Allow each of the students who are affirmative time to examine the shell it receives and list as many answers as it can which do not require evidence to challenge the assumptions of the argument. If you would like, brainstorm with students the kinds of flaws that arguments possess. Students should concentrate on identifying holes in the position such as:

- logical fallacies in arguments.
- indictable assumptions of arguments and evidence.
- contradictions in argumentation.
- reasons why the full weight of the argument should not be considered.

Remind students to respond to each of the component parts of the position, if possible. For instance, if the students are responding to a disadvantage, have them develop arguments to support each of the following claims:

- Non-Unique:
- No Brink:
- No Link:
- No Internal Link:
- No Threshold:
- No Impact:
- Turn:

Those students who do not end up speaking should still draft answers and should be required to submit their flows. You can also ask them to participate in a post activity discussion.

Follow up:

After each student has presented her analytical responses, have each group compile the very best responses into a master list and develop an analytical 2AC block. This activity thus provides an opportunity for students to learn how to write 2AC blocks and allows you to solicit input from your students as you construct analytical 2AC answers to the Disadvantages. If you are using this activity to help students draft analytical blocks, you have two choices. Either rewrite the blocks so that the students have high quality arguments, or work to



ensure the product is largely representative of their efforts. The result of this activity will be “blocks” that can be read at tournaments. If you break the entire class into small groups, you may want to give each small group a different position. Then make them responsible for drafting a finished 2AC block against that position to share with the class.

### Follow up:

Once students have completed one single issue debate, you have students to switch sides. If a student was affirmative, she would become negative on the same issue. If you have students switch sides, this variation allows students to focus on mastering clash on specific issues and emphasizes depth and analysis-heavy debate.

### Variation:

Have a one on one analytical debate on a particular negative position. Pair students off, so that one is negative and one is affirmative. Have the shell be the only evidence used in the round. Have the negative debater read the shell and the affirmative debater develop and then present a 2AC. The students can continue through the entire debate round, with abbreviated speech times. Or they can have a limited number of speeches.

### Variation:

If you are using this activity to practice debating the components of a disadvantage, have each group practice telling the link story of their disadvantage, in ways that alternately increase and decrease the credibility of the argument, before the activity begins. In addition, have students practice assessing the impact of the disadvantage as compared to the impact of the affirmative case.





## 14.4 Responding to Components of a Position

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*This activity develops and builds advanced skill at debating single issues (such as a disadvantage, a topicality violation, etc.). In this activity, two groups of four students debate a single issue through a series of speeches. The affirmative team will defend a particular case against the specific argument forwarded by the negative team. Each of the four students on each team is responsible for debating about a specific component of the position. For instance, if the debate centers around a disadvantage, one student might be responsible for the uniqueness, one the link, one the internal links, and one the impact.*

### Goals

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- gain familiarity with the process involved in responding to specific components of a position.
- improve speech delivery, line-by-line argumentation, flowing, and critical thinking skills.

### Time Allotment

The time allotment will vary depending on the format of the practice debates and the number of debates you conduct. The debates take a minimum of 20 minutes.

Single Issue debates can be a regular feature of a class or of an after school practice. Or, you can set aside a class period or two and have every student participate in a Single Issue debate.

### Materials and Preparation

To complete this activity you will need the following materials and preparation:

- Paper, pens, and a timer.
- A chalk board or over head projector on which to flow.
- Basic familiarity with the specific issue being debated.
- Basic familiarity with and photocopies of the affirmative case being defended.
- Photocopies of the shells for the specific issue that is being debated. You will need one to two sets of evidence for each mini specific issue debate.

Specific issues that may be debated include:

- A specific disadvantage.
- A specific topicality violation shell.
- A specific counterplan shell.
- A specific critique shell.



## Method

Decide upon a format for this activity. One example of a format is as follows:

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| First Affirmative Constructive:  | 1 minute |
| Second Affirmative Constructive: | 1 minute |
| Third Affirmative Constructive:  | 1 minute |
| Fourth Affirmative Constructive: | 1 minute |
| First Negative Rebuttal:         | 1 minute |
| Second Negative Rebuttal:        | 1 minute |
| Third Negative Rebuttal:         | 1 minute |
| Fourth Negative Rebuttal:        | 1 minute |
| First Affirmative Rebuttal:      | 1 minute |
| Second Affirmative Rebuttal:     | 1 minute |
| Third Affirmative Rebuttal:      | 1 minute |
| Fourth Affirmative Rebuttal:     | 1 minute |
| First Negative Rebuttal:         | 1 minute |
| Second Negative Rebuttal:        | 1 minute |
| Third Negative Rebuttal:         | 1 minute |
| Fourth Negative Rebuttal:        | 1 minute |

You may choose to shorten or lengthen these speeches.

Start with two four-person teams of students. Ensure that all students understand the case that the affirmative team is defending.

Have the negative team prepare and deliver a specific argument shell (a topicality violation, a disadvantage, a critique, etc.) that applies to the affirmative case. Observers and the other debaters should flow. Give each of the affirmative speakers time to develop answers to the component of the position for which they are responsible.

Have each of the four affirmative speakers give a one-minute speech in response to the negative argument. Be clear before the activity begins that each (negative and affirmative) speaker is responsible for a particular component of the argument. A student should only advance arguments pertinent to the component of the position that it is her responsibility to discuss.

For instance, if the negative team presents a disadvantage each of the students on the affirmative team will be responsible for advancing arguments relevant to a particular component of the disadvantage. One student will respond to the uniqueness, one to the link, one to the internal links, and one to the impact scenario. Each student should be given 1 full minute to list as many answers as possible. For the sake of this activity, each component should be flowed on its own sheet of paper.

In this scenario, the first affirmative speaker might argue that the disadvantage is non unique, that there is no brink, etc.



When each of the four affirmative speakers have spoken, give the negative team some preparation time. In the case of this example, one negative student will rebuild the uniqueness, one the link, one the internal links, and on the impact scenario. Each of these negative constructive speeches will be 1 minute in length. All of the debaters should make an extraordinary effort to debate line by line. To facilitate this, it may make sense to treat each component of the disadvantage (the link, the impact, etc. ) as if it were an independent contention. Thus, the link debate might have 3 arguments, while the uniqueness debate has 4.

This debate will unfold in a like manner. The affirmative team will give rebuttal speeches and then the negative team will do the same.

Those students in the class who are not debating should be required to submit their flows. You can also ask them to participate in a post round discussion.

#### Follow Up:

Once students have completed one single issue debate, you have students to switch sides. If a student was affirmative, she would become negative on the same issue. You may even have the student who delivered a constructive speech deliver a rebuttal. If you have students switch sides, this variation allows students to focus on mastering clash on specific issues and emphasizes depth and analysis-heavy debate.

#### Variation:

You can vary the number of 2AC or 1NC arguments to make it more appropriate to the debater's experience level. For beginning debaters, have the debate center around fewer arguments and focus on line by line debating.

#### Variation:

For topicality, have the affirmative team run a can that has questionable topicality. And have the negative team prepare and deliver a topicality violation for that case. Also, if a team has lost affirmative rounds to a particular topicality violation, have them conduct single issue debates defending their case against that violation in the format presented above.

#### Variation:

If you are using this activity to practice debating the components of a disadvantage, have each group practice telling the link story of their disadvantage, in ways that alternately increase and decrease the credibility of the argument, before the activity begins. In addition, have students practice assessing the impact of the disadvantage as compared to the impact of the affirmative case. You may also want to give extra time to those students debating the link and the impact of the disadvantage. You may require that the students debating the link give a 45 second overview of their position and then debate the line by line. You may also require that the students debating the impact spend minute or so comparing the impact of the disadvantage with that of the case advantages.



## 14.5 Single Issue Debates

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*This activity develops and builds advanced skill at debating single issues (such as a disadvantage, a topicality violation, etc.). In this activity, small groups of students debate a single issue through a course of speeches. The affirmative team will defend a particular case against the specific argument forwarded by the negative team. Or, the affirmative team will defend a specific component of their affirmative case (for instance, solvency) against a 1NC block. The students will debate a set number of speeches, concluding with rebuttals. This activity works best as an after-school activity but can also be used in a classroom setting.*

### **Time Allotment**

The time allotment will vary depending on the format of the Single Issue debates and the number of Single Issue debates you conduct. Single Issue debates can be a regular feature of a class or of an after school practice. Or, you can set aside a class period or two and have every student participate in a Single Issue debate.

### **Goals**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- gain familiarity with the process and techniques involved in responding to and defending a specific issue (such as a counterplan or a topicality violation).
- improve speech delivery, line-by-line argumentation, flowing, and critical thinking skills.
- improve general knowledge of the specific argument around which the debate centers.

### **Materials and Preparation**

To complete this activity you will need basic familiarity with the issue being debated and the affirmative case being defended. the following materials and preparation:

- Paper, pens, and a timer.
- Basic familiarity with the specific issue being debated.
- Photocopies of the affirmative case being defended.
- Photocopies of the evidence and argument shells for the specific issue that is being debated. You will need one to two sets of evidence for each mini specific issue debate.
- If available, it may be helpful to have case specific 2AC blocks or negative frontlines.

Specific issues that may be debated include:

- A specific disadvantage.
- A specific topicality violation shell.
- A specific counterplan shell.
- A specific critique shell.
- A specific advantage scenario.
- A solvency contention.
- A particular theoretical argument (for instance, conditionality of counterplans).



## Method

First, you should decide upon a format for the single issue debates. In general, a single issue debate might follow the format of a normal debate round, but have reduced time constraints (this is because the students are only debating a single issue). One example of a format for a single issue debate is as follows:

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| First Negative Constructive:     | 2-3 minutes |
| Second Affirmative Constructive: | 2 minutes   |
| First Negative Rebuttal:         | 2 minutes   |
| First Affirmative Rebuttal:      | 1-2 minutes |
| Second Negative Rebuttal:        | 2 minutes   |
| Second Affirmative Rebuttal:     | 2 minutes   |

You may want a format without cross examination, in order to save time. Or, you can add a cross examination component. You may also choose to shorten or lengthen these speeches or to add second rebuttal speech.

Next, agree upon an affirmative case that the students in the class will be defending.

Break the class up into groups (of four students or larger). Each group should divide into an affirmative and a negative team. Tell each team that they will be preparing to stage mini practice debates on single issues.

Distribute, or ask students to take out of their files, the shell or frontline relating to the specific issue they will debate. This issue may be a specific topicality violation, a solvency contention, etc.

Once you have assigned issues to teams of students, have them begin to prepare. For example, the student on the negative team might read over a disadvantage shell while her opponents on the affirmative team would read a 2AC block defending their case against that disadvantage.

If one team does not have pre-blocked answers, the team should examine the shell of the argument and list as many answers as it can which do not require evidence to challenge the assumptions of the argument.

Once the students have drafted responses to the shell, the mini single issue debates should begin. The debates begin with the primary argument (in this case the disadvantage shell, the 1NC solvency block, etc.) being read. The students on the other team (and any students observing the debate) should flow all speeches. Then the affirmative team will respond to the argument. From there, the debate will unfold according to the format.

The audience for the debate can either be the entire class or the other students in the group. If the entire class observes the debate, the whole class should flow and there should be time allocated for a post round discussion. If the debates happen in small groups, you should ask students to turn in their flows from the debates. You may even have student observers evaluate the rounds.



### Follow Up:

Once students have completed one single issue debate, you have students to switch sides. If a student was affirmative, she would become negative on the same issue. You may even have the student who delivered a constructive speech deliver a rebuttal. If you have students switch sides, this variation allows students to focus on mastering clash on specific issues and emphasizes depth and analysis-heavy debate.

### Variation:

You can vary the number of 2AC or 1NC arguments to make it more appropriate to the debater's experience level. For beginning debaters, have the debate center around fewer arguments and focus on line by line debating.

### Variation:

For topicality, have the affirmative team run a can that has questionable topicality. And have the negative team prepare and deliver a topicality violation for that case. Also, if a team has lost affirmative rounds to a particular topicality violation, have them conduct single issue debates defending their case against that violation.

### Variation:

Before a disadvantage mini debate begins, have each group practice telling the link story of their disadvantage in ways that alternately increase and decrease the credibility of the argument. Have students practice assessing the impact of the disadvantage as compared to the impact of the affirmative case.

### Variation:

Practice debating a particular issue (a critique, a counter plan, etc.) twice, each time assuming that the judge holds a different paradigm. For instance, in different mini debates assume that the judge is either a policy maker, a hypothesis tester, a games player judge, a stock issue judge, etc. Conduct the same mini debates (or even the rebuttals of the same mini debates) as if you are debating the same issue in two different rounds in front of two judges with different paradigms.



# 14.6 Advantage Comparison

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*This activity develops rebuttal and argumentation skills. Students practice persuasively weighing disadvantages against affirmative advantages.*

## **Time Allotment**

The time allotment will vary depending on how long you give students to prepare their speeches and what format you ask students to deliver speeches within. If this activity is used in an after school setting, it is possible for the entire activity to take 15 minutes. If you are going to have 4-5 pairs of students present in a classroom setting, it may take closer to 30 minutes. It doesn't necessarily make sense to have every student in the class present, because after a while the speeches will begin to get repetitive.

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- learn comparative argumentation through the practice of weighing the impacts of advantages against disadvantages.
- hone their ability to deliver effective rebuttal speech in which they compare the impacts of affirmative advantages with a disadvantages.
- improve persuasiveness, argumentation skill and word economy.

## **Materials and Preparation**

To complete this activity, students will need the following materials and preparation:

- Paper, pens, and a timer.
- Basic familiarity with the affirmative case and the disadvantage being debated.
- Photocopies of evidence for an affirmative case advantage and a negative disadvantage shell.

## **Method**

Before the activity begins, brainstorm with the whole class about the kinds of arguments you can use to compare advantages and disadvantages. Push the class to articulate how a judge should assess student efforts to weigh the impacts of advantages against the impacts of disadvantages. For instance, it might make sense to talk about the items in the box at right.

Break the students into pairs. Assign one student to debate affirmative and the other student negative. Tell the students that they need to prepare to present short speeches comparing an affirmative case advantage to a negative disadvantage. Give them 5-10 minutes to prepare this speech.

Affirmative speakers will speak from the affirmative perspective, arguing that the affirmative case outweighs the disadvantage. Negative speakers will speak from the negative perspective. Tell the students to assume that each side is winning their position to a significant degree, and to argue assuming that the opposing side's position is strong.



Have the negative speaker deliver a short 30 second – 2 minute speech. Then have the affirmative deliver a speech of comparable length.

You will want to consider what format of presentations will work best for your class. With a motivated class comprised of students with some tournament experience, this activity can work by just having students deliver the speeches to each other and having them each flow the other's speech. In other situations, it may make sense to have the students prepare in pairs, and then to randomly select several pairs to come up to the front of the class and present their speeches. If a student delivers a speech in front of the entire class, have the whole class flow and /or evaluate her speech. You might ask each student to submit the outline of her speech.

#### Follow Up:

Once students have completed one debate comparing an advantage with a disadvantage, have students to switch sides. If a student was affirmative, she would become negative on the same issue. This variation allows students to focus on mastering clash on specific issues and emphasizes depth and analysis-heavy debate. It helps them learn to see multiple sides of an issue.

#### Variation:

You can conduct the entire activity the same as above, only assuming that one or another team is only winning a small risk of their position. For instance, assume that the negative team is only winning a small risk of the disadvantage or that the affirmative team only has 30% chance of solvency. This will give debaters the ability to practice comparing scenarios when they are only winning a risk of an argument, rather than winning the entire scenario.

#### Variation:

This activity can be used to practice comparing any of the following situations:

- A Critique vs. an affirmative case.
- A Counterplan and a Net Benefit vs. an affirmative case.
- Solvency turns vs. an affirmative solvency story.
- Impact Turns on a Disadvantage vs the Impact Scenario of the Disadvantage.

Or, you can use this activity to give students a chance to hone their story telling ability in other areas (for instance, link stories vs. link turns and take outs, uniqueness for a disadvantage vs. uniqueness for impact turns, etc.)

## Speech Prompts

- Time Frame (when will the scenario occur, given that nearer term risks tend to be more significant than longer term risks).
- Probability (the ultimate impact of a scenario can be thought of a function of probability times harm).
- Moral considerations (some advantages and disadvantages raise moral considerations that students may argue are more significant than utilitarian considerations).
- Quantification (students should make every effort to pinpoint a specific number of lives that the opposing team helps and then work to decrease that number with analytical arguments).
- Severity (the impacts should be evaluated in terms of seriousness – sickness is less severe than death, etc.)
- Reversibility (hurting a relationship with a foreign country is not irreversible – in many cases negative occurrences are reversible).
- Historicity (a sense of the historical context within which negative events are occurring, for instance, while hunger may look bad today, a smaller percentage of people might be hungry in the United today than at any point in history).





# 14.7 Rebuttal Redos

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*This activity develops effective rebuttal skills. In this activity, students prepare and rework rebuttal speeches that they have delivered during rounds at recent debate tournaments. They fine tune presentation skills, learn lessons from past debates and develop ways to improve rebuttal performance. This activity works best for after school practices. It is most appropriate for students who have successfully completed a debate tournament.*

## **Time Allotment**

20 -35 minutes

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- hone their ability to deliver effective rebuttal speech.
- improve word economy, persuasiveness, and argumentation skill.

## **Materials and Preparation**

- A solid flow from the debate round in question.
- Any blocks or evidence the student might have used in the speech.
- Pens and paper.
- A timer.

## **Method**

Students need to have a flow of a full debate, either from a practice round or from a recent tournament. In general, this activity will be most helpful when the student selects a round that was difficult. Ask each student to review the flow and develop a list of concrete aspects of the speech that she could have done better in their rebuttal. Each student should write this list down on a fresh sheet of paper. The list might include the specific aspects of the following speech components:

- Time allocation
- Organization
- Overviews and/or underviews
- Line by line coverage
- Impact assessment
- Strategic argument selection
- Style and persuasiveness

When each student has identified the features of the rebuttal she would like to improve, she should take 10 minutes to fix her flow and prepare an improved rebuttal speech.

When each student has rewritten her rebuttal, she should take 5 minutes to regive the rebuttal. She should put specific attention on her efforts to improve upon the items she listed.



### Variation:

Have students form pairs. Using a timer or stopwatch, have a student re-give the rebuttal to her partner while the nonspeaking partner records needless words and phrases, writes comments, and gives time signals. Have the nonspeaking partner offer a critique by identifying issues relating to time allocation, organization, overviews, line by line coverage, strategic argument selection, etc.

### Variation:

Have the student deliver the rebuttal in 4 and a half minutes. Have the nonspeaking partner offer feedback about how to make the speech more efficient. Then have the student deliver the same speech within a 4 minute timeframe.

### Follow Up:

You may want to create self-evaluation forms and allow each student to assess her own progress and identify areas for further growth.



# 14.8 Analysis of Judgments

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*This activity develops judge adaptation and argumentation skills. Students practice "thinking like a judge" by evaluation the arguments in a practice debate using a model flow. This encourages students to weigh different arguments against each other and consider argument interaction in debate.*

## **Time Allotment**

One class period

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- think about the process a judge uses to evaluate debate rounds.
- begin to understand the importance of the interaction between different arguments in a round.

## **Materials and Preparation**

Come up with a few model mini-debates that would be a challenge for a judge to decide who won. You can make up controversial scenarios, or you may want to use flows of actual debate rounds that you have judged or observed. Your scenario write-ups should include the issues the judge must weigh at the end of the last rebuttal. You can either describe these scenarios orally to the class, or type up a short handout.

## **Method**

Present the debate decision scenarios to the class in detail. Start with the first, then have a discussion, and move on to the next. Be prepared for some questions of clarification.

In small groups or as a class discuss each scenario. Students should debate and decide who won each scenario, and, most importantly, be able to defend why they made their decision. Emphasize to the students that they should pay attention to who they think won individual arguments in the round, and especially, how those arguments interacted with each other. Their decisions should be based on both of those factors.



# 14.9 Debating Paradigms

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*This activity develops and builds advanced judge adaptation and sophisticated argumentation skills. Students consider judging paradigms and practice adapting their style to suit different judges. It is useful for advanced debaters, especially those who complain about judges.*

## **Time Allotment**

One class period

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, students will:

- think about the importance of the debate paradigms used to adjudicate debate rounds.
- understand the necessity of tailoring one's arguments to the intended audience.

## **Materials and Preparation**

You should have a mini-debate prepared that, if possible, highlights the differences between different judging paradigms. Select volunteers before class to perform the debate, or do it with a coaching assistant.

## **Method**

Have students brainstorm a list of the different judging paradigms that are used in your area or league. Some examples are:

- Stock Issues
- Policy Maker
- Tabla Rasa
- Hypothesis Testing

Have the students choose the paradigm that they think best represents their attitude toward debate. Have a few students argue for why debates should be judged from the paradigm of their choice.

Have a scripted mini-debate in front of the class, in which each student judges from the perspective with which she has identified herself. Then, the class can discuss in small groups (preferably of mixed paradigm affiliates) how their paradigms affected their resolution of the arguments (to work best, the debate should be close and have different possible resolutions).

As a class, have a discussion of the ways the affirmative and negative teams could adjust to the judging paradigms.

Variation: When students have brainstormed the different types of judging paradigms, have the students prepare a short speech or rebuttal on a specific topic geared towards a particular judging paradigm. Have a student give the speech in front of the class. Then, have the same student deliver the same speech to a different type of judge with a different judging paradigm. Discuss as a class the differences between the two speeches and offer feedback.



# Glossary of Policy Debate

Prepared by Wayne Tang

## I. THE DEBATE ROUND

**Debate Round** - One complete debate. This consists of two teams of two debaters. One called the affirmative team. The other called the negative team. A judge decides the winner of the round. Each debater on each team is identified by the speech that he or she gives. For example, the affirmative debaters are the first affirmative (1A) and the second affirmative (2A). The negative debaters are the first negative (1N) and the second negative (2N).

**Constructive** - The first speech given by every debater. It is eight minutes long and is used to establish a particular position.

**Rebuttal** -The second speech given by each debater. It is 5 minutes long and is used to answer opposing team’s attacks presented in previous speeches and to sum up one’s own position.

**Cross Examination** - A three minute question and answer period following each constructive.

**Order of Speeches:** All four debaters in a round give two speeches. The order in which these speeches are given are as follows:

| Speech                          | Abbreviation | Time    |
|---------------------------------|--------------|---------|
| First Affirmative Constructive  | 1AC          | 8 mins. |
| 2N cross examines 1A (cross-ex) | c-x          | 3 mins. |
| First Negative Constructive     | 1NC          | 8 mins. |
| 1A cross examines 1N (cross-ex) | c-x          | 3 mins. |
| Second Affirmative Constructive | 2AC          | 8 mins. |
| 1N cross examines 2A (cross-ex) | c-x          | 3 mins. |
| Second Negative Constructive    | 2NC          | 8 mins. |
| 2A cross examines 2N (cross-ex) | c-x          | 3 mins. |
| First Negative Rebuttal         | 1NR          | 5 mins. |
| First Affirmative Rebuttal      | 1AR          | 5 mins. |
| Second Negative Rebuttal        | 2NR          | 5 mins. |
| Second Affirmative Rebuttal     | 2AR          | 5 mins. |



**Preparation Time**-Set amount of time given to each team to prepare their speeches, usually 5-10 minutes. A team may split this time for preparing for any speeches.

**Flowing the Round** - Taking notes of speeches presented in the round. These notes also provide the debater with an outline of his or her own speeches. The flow is taken on a flow pad which may be a legal pad.

**Tournament** - A large number of debaters gathered for interscholastic competition at a high school or college usually on a weekend.

**Speaker Points** - Points awarded by the judge measuring individual performances.

## II. THE AFFIRMATIVE

**Resolution**- The area of discussion that is subject for debate which is uniform for all high schools in the country.

**Affirmative Team** - Debaters who are arguing in favor of the resolution. They do this by advocating a change from the present system (status quo). This change is called the plan.

**Status Quo** - The present system of laws and attitudes, also termed the "present system."

**Case or 1AC** - The first speech in a debate round that presents the plan for change and reasons and evidence for making this change.

**Harm** - A problem in the status quo that justifies the need for the affirmative plan. Harms can be quantitative (expressible as a number) or qualitative.

**Solvency** - Proof that the Affirmative plan will solve the harm to gain an advantage over the present system.

**Advantage** - Benefits which will result from adoption of the affirmative plan. This is usually shown by proving solvency and harm.

**Inherency** - A barrier preventing the adoption of the plan in the present system.

**Fiat** - The affirmative right to state that the machinery and personnel will be made available for plan to come into existence. It stems from the fact that we are debating whether the resolution *should* be adopted, not whether it *would* be.

## III. THE NEGATIVE

**Negative Team** - The pair of debaters arguing against the adoption of the resolution. The Negative team usually wins by proving that the affirmative plan is not desirable.



**Topicality or T** - Concept that affirmative plan must fall under the resolution. Topicality is usually a negative attack run in the 1NC which includes the following arguments:

**Definition** - What a word in the resolution means. This is usually taken from a dictionary like Webster's or Black's Law Dictionary

**Violation** - The reasons why the affirmative plan does not fall under (meet) the definition of the word.

**Standards** - The reasons why the definition is a good way to interpret the particular word or words in the resolution. The standards are used to decide which of two definitions actually defines a word.

**Topicality Is a Voting Issue** - The reasons why the judge should vote negative if the affirmative is not topical.

**Disadvantage** - (DA) - A harm resulting from adoption of the affirmative plan.

**Link** - A logical connection between two events ie affirmative does A and A causes B. As it is applied to DAs, it is a statement of how the affirmative plan will lead to a disadvantage.

**Impact** - The resulting harm from a disadvantage.

**Uniqueness** - The burden of the negative in arguing a DA to show that impacts will occur solely as a result of the affirmative plan

**Shell** - The initial structure of the DA with supporting evidence run in 1NC.

**Internal Link** – The components of the causal chains to which debaters attest. The logical steps connecting the link to the impact.

**Threshold** - Burden of the negative to show that the affirmative plan is sufficient to cause the impact. In other words, we are at a threshold point now and the plan would cause us to cross that threshold (push us over the brink), causing the impact.

**Turn** - An argument that reverses either the link or the impact making the original argument an advantage for the other side.

**Double Turn** - Turning both the impact and the link, a definite no-no since it makes a brand new DA.

**Non-Uniqueness** - An affirmative argument against a DA, claiming either the impact will occur regardless of whether plan is implemented or because the impact will occur for other reasons. If this is proven, the DA is rendered impotent.

**Counterplan** - A negative tactic stating that the present system is flawed, but there is a better non-topical solution superior to the affirmative plan and the status quo. The negative team becomes in effect another affirmative team with a case and plan and the obligation to prove certain burdens.





**Critique** - An argument that takes the position that the fundamental assumptions of the ideas advocated by the other team are significantly flawed and must be rejected.

**Case Takeouts** - Arguments usually made in 1NC that try to disprove Affirmative case arguments such as inherency, harm and solvency. Usually, these simply diminish the scope of the Affirmative case, they are not winning arguments like a DA or T.

**Case Turns** - Arguments usually made in 1NC which try to turn an affirmative advantage into a disadvantage. This consists of either 1) a harm turn ie proving that the harm occurring in the present system is actually a good thing or 2) a solvency turn ie proving the affirmative will actually increase the harm.

#### **IV. EVIDENCE AND TACTICS**

**Evidence** - All published material such as books, newspapers and magazines, used as reference and support in a debate. This includes statistics, quotes, facts and examples.

**Card** - A single quote from a source which serves to support an argument.

**Citation or Cite** - The source of the quotation or card. The full cite includes the following information, Author (e.g. Ehrlich), qualifications (e.g. Prof. of Biology at Stanford), publication (i.e. Time or Journal of Foreign Affairs), date (May, 1997), and page number.

**Tag or Label** - A brief summary of what a card says, it's put on the top of the card.

**Highlighting or Underlining** - A tactic to cut down the amount of text which must be read in a card. Certain parts of the card are highlighted or underlined and those parts are actually read.

**Pre-Flow** - A post it note which has a flow of evidence or arguments which saves a debater the time it takes to write the argument or evidence on the flow.

**Blocks** - A set of prepared prewritten arguments and evidence against a specific argument. A well prepared team has blocks against all DAs, affirmatives, counterplans, topicality and any other argument they have ever heard before.

**Front Lines** - A block which is read in the first negative speech against a specific affirmative. A front line typically has a number of different initial arguments and supporting evidence. Later in the round, further blocks may be read supporting each argument in the front line.

**Voting Issues** - Issues in the round such as inherency, harm, solvency, DAs, or topicality that are weighed in the judge's decisions.

**Decision Rules** - Criteria which clarify and assist a judge in weighting certain issues in the round. For example, one could read a decision rule that human rights outweigh the loss of life.

**Responses or Answers** - An argument which addresses an opponent's argument.



**Overview** - A summation given at the beginning of the 2NR and the 2AR speech which is 30 second - 1 minute long which tells the judge why the team is winning the round and what issues are important.

**Grouping** - Answering several arguments together instead of separately.

**Line by Line** - Answering the specific argumentation. In debates most arguments are numbered and labeled and a debater goes down the line of their opponent's arguments to answer each one.

**Word Economy** - Eliminating unnecessary words or phrases in order to increase the number of arguments without increasing your rate of delivery.

**Adapting to Judges** - Adapting debating and speaking style and speed to suit the tastes and comprehension of different judges.





# About the Contributors

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