



# Debate and Debate Adjudication

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# Overview

- What is Competitive Debate
- Understanding Format
- Cases
- Clash(es)
- Arguments
- Rebuttals
- Definition
- Motion
- Team Split
- Theme Line
- Speakers' Role
- Matter, Manner, Method
- Marking Scheme
- Duty of Adjudicator



# Debate and Competitive Debate

- to convince other people that his/her opinion is better,
- to listen to what other people think of an issue,
- to find which solution is the best for a problem,
- to win a trophy
- Debating has strict rules of conduct and quite sophisticated arguing techniques and you will often be in a position where you will have to argue the opposite of what you believe in.



# Format

- 3 on 3 Debate
- 7 minutes of substantive speeches, 5 minutes of reply speeches
- No Points of Information
- 30 minutes of case building



# Cases

- A case is the collection of arguments (including facts, examples, and logical explanations) coherently based on a main idea.
- A case is constructed to propose (or oppose) the motion given in a debate.



# Clash(es):

Motion: This House would ban television advertising to children

## Pros:

Targeting TV advertisements to children is unethical. Children cannot distinguish advertising from programming and cannot judge whether an advertisement is misleading. Moreover, they are not yet able to resist sales pitches.



# Cons

- Children are not naïve innocents but canny consumers who can distinguish between advertisements and programs at a very early age. Moreover, they can learn to evaluate advertising only by being exposed to it. Responsible parents should teach children how to be good consumers by watching television with them and discussing what they have seen



# How to assess clash?

- Identify the clash that exist in a debate.
- weigh each clash to know which sides has the upper hand in that clash, and
- consider the value of the clashes at hand; which clash is more important.





# Arguments


Good arguments are **logical and relevant** to the point. It should be made up of:

**Assertion** – what you are trying to prove

**Reasoning** – the reason why that assertion is logical

**Evidence** – examples/data that support the assertion and reasoning

**Link back** – a brief explanation of how you have proven your point and that it is relevant



Motion: This House would legalize the use of performance-enhancing drugs for athletes

**Definition:** Letting people use performance-enhancing drugs is an exercise of human right

**Assertion:** Using drugs is people's freedom of choice

**Reasoning:** Using performance-enhancing drugs is an issue of freedom of choice. If athletes wish to take drugs in search of improved performances, let them do so. They harm nobody but themselves and should be treated as adults capable of making rational decisions on the basis of widely available information. We should not forbid them performance-enhancing drugs even if such drugs have long-term adverse effects. We haven't outlawed tobacco and boxing, which are proven health risks.



## ■ Evidence:


In many countries bans on performance-enhancing drugs fail to stand up in court. The legal basis for drug testing and the subsequent barring of transgressors from further participation is open to challenge, both as restraint of trade and invasion of privacy. Sports governing bodies often fight and lose such court cases, wasting vast sums of money.

**Link Back:** Right to use drugs like steroids is at the full hand of the athletes, and becomes a representation of democracy



Motion : *That quota is not the answer for women*

- Definition : *Putting a minimum limit of 30% seats for women in parliament is not the right solution to promote gender equality in society*
- **Assertion:** because this kind of privilege will only strengthen the stigma in society that undermines women
- **Reasoning:** Nowadays there is still a strong stigma in society believing that women are inferior to men and has less capability than men. Reserved seats in the parliament will only strengthen this paradigm: that women can only sit in the parliament if they are facilitated but not because they can equally compete with men. Thus justifying the wrong perception that women could not reach the same level as men unless given privilege.

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- **Evidence:** In Uganda, public opinion that does not go in favor of women increased rapidly after the implementation of this kind of quota (this was also supported by some polling)
  - **Link Back:** Quota for women in parliament will only strengthen the negative perception that undermines women, hindering the promotion of women being equal to men.



# Rebuttals

***Rebuttals are responses towards the other team's arguments. Rebuttals should prove that the other team's arguments are not as important as they claim to be.***

## **1. Irrelevant to the point being proven**

- For example:
- **Claim** : *"Prostitution should be banned because prostitution creates more porn sites in the Internet."*
- **Rebuttal**: *"The number of porn sites in the Internet has nothing to do with whether prostitution is legalized or not. Fact is, porn sites could be accessed in many countries, apart from whether it legalizes prostitution or not"*



## 2. Illogical

- For example:

- **Claim** : *“Students should be allowed to smoke at school because it will create stronger resistance from passive smokers and eventually reduce the number of smokers at school.”*

- **Rebuttal**: *“That is logically flawed because allowing students to smoke will create a permissive condition that would stimulate more students to smoke. Fact is, most teenagers start smoking because of peer influence. If school goes along with peer influence, then the reality that smoking is bad would be blurred and more students would think that smoking is ok and take up smoking.”*



### 3. Morally flawed

- For example:
- **Claim** : *“The government should support death penalty because it will help decrease the population of the country.”*
- **Rebuttal**: *“Killing people simply to decrease population is morally wrong. People have the right to live and the government should not undermine that right only because they think they have too many citizens to manage.”*





#### 4. Correct, but not important or involve unacceptable implications

- For example:

- **Claim** : *“The government should ban MTV because there are some programs that are not related to music.”*

- **Rebuttal**: *“It is true that some MTV programs are not related to music, but the government should not ban a TV station simply because of that reason. Banning a TV station would lose the government a significant amount of revenue and it is more important to have this revenue rather than obliging TV stations to have programs that are true to its name.”*



## 5. Based on an error of fact or an erroneous interpretation of fact

- For example:

- **Claim:** *“Murder rates are rising in the US. This is because some states have abolished capital punishment.”*

- **Possible Rebuttals:**

- *” Murder rates are not rising in the US. Evidence shows that .. “ (direct factual error), or*
- *“If the number of murders seems to be rising, it is because more murders are being reported compared to before. So, in reality it’s not actually rising.” (indirect factual error), or*
- *“Evidence shows that capital punishment – a state-sanctioned murder – can appear to condone violent crime and leads to a rise in numbers of violent crime rather than reducing it.” (erroneous interpretation of fact)*



# Definition

- **the definition should state the issue(s) for debate arising from the motion, stating the meaning of any terms in the motion which require interpretation**
- **Prime Minister/First Speaker should provide the definition at the beginning of his/her speech**



# Definition

- the definition must:
  - (a) have a clear and logical link to the motion
  - (b) not be self-proving / truistic
  - (c) not be time-set
  - (d) not be place-set unfairly



# Definition: Accept or Reject

- The Negative, in general, must accept the definition made by the Affirmative, but the Negative shall have the right of challenging the definition if it does not conform to either of the four requirements set out above.
- If a Negative team accepts the definition, they only need to say so, and it is unnecessary to restate it. If the definition is accepted, then that definition must stand. The Negative must adjust their case to that definition.



# Definition: Accept or Reject

- a Negative team cannot raise a challenge simply on the basis that their definition seems more reasonable.
- They can only challenge a definition if they can prove it to be either Truistic, Tautological, Squirreling, or Time and Place setting.



# Motion

- Motion, also known as topic, is a full propositional statement that determine what a debate shall be about.
- In the debate, the Affirmative team must argue to defend the propositional statement of the motion, and the Negative team must argue to oppose it.



# Examples of Motions

- TH Would Oblige Doctors to Report their Patients' Domestic Violence to Police
- THBT Sport-Enhancing Drugs is not Harmful
- **THBT green tax is an effective way to mitigate carbon emissions from large industries**
- **TH will urge the international community to sanction North Korea**





# Team Split

- Debating is a team activity. One person cannot take all the arguments and become the sole defender of the team's case.
- There are many ways to make team splits:
  - \*) splitting by different aspects, e.g. philosophical vs. practical, political vs. economics, etc.;
  - \*) directly distributing the arguments to the speakers, e.g. case has 5 arguments/points: 1st speaker will deliver point 1 and 2 while 2nd speaker will deliver point 3, 4, and 5.



# Theme Line

Because debating is a team event it is important that the three speakers work together as a team.

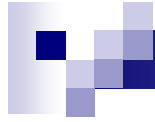
The TEAM LINE is the basic statement of "why the topic is true" (for the affirmative) and "why the topic is false" (for the negative).

It should be a short sentence, presented by the first speaker of each team and used by the other two speakers to enforce the idea of teamwork.



# Principle

1. *A good argument is a good argument, no matter where a team comes from.*
2. *Everybody else except you has a funny accent.*
3. *Just because teams back home wouldn't do it doesn't make it wrong.*



# The Role of the Speakers

In a debating team each speaker has specified roles that they must fulfill to play their part in the team.



# The Role of the Speakers

## **1st Affirmative must:**

**Define the topic.**

**Present the affirmative's team line.**

**Outline briefly what each speaker in their team will talk about.**

**Present the first half of the affirmative case.**



# The Role of the Speakers

## **1st negative must:**

**Accept or reject the definition. If you don't do this it is assumed that you accept the definition.**

**Present the negative team line.**

**Outline briefly what each of the negative speakers will say.**

**Rebut a few of the main points of the first affirmative speaker.**

**The 1st negative should spend about one quarter of their time rebutting.**

**Present the first half of the negative team's case.**



# The Role of the Speakers

## **2nd affirmative must:**

**Reaffirm the affirmative's team line.**

**Rebut the main points presented by the 1st negative.**

**The 2nd affirmative should spend about one third of their time rebutting.**

**Present the second half of the affirmative's case.**



# The Role of the Speakers

## **2nd negative must:**

**Reaffirm the negative's team line.**

**Rebut some of the main points of the affirmative's case.**

**The 2nd negative should spend about one third of their time rebutting.**

**Present the second half of the negative's case.**





# The Role of the Speakers

## **3rd affirmative must:**

**Reaffirm the affirmative's team line.**

**Rebut all the remaining points of the negative's case.**

**The 3rd affirmative should spend about two thirds to three quarters of their time rebutting.**

**Present a summary of the affirmative's case.**

**Round off the debate for the affirmative.**



# The Role of the Speakers

## **3rd negative must:**

**Reaffirm the negative's team line.**

**Rebut all the remaining points of the affirmative's case.**

**The 3rd negative should spend about two thirds to three quarters of their time rebutting.**

**Present a summary of the negative's case.**

**Round off the debate for the negative.**



# Matter

**Matter is what you say, it is the substance of your speech. You should divide your matter into arguments and examples.**

**An argument is a statement "The topic is true (or false depending on which side you are on) because of x", where the argument fills in for the x .**

**Matter cannot be just a long list of examples. You do not win a debate by creating the biggest pile of facts. Facts are like bricks in a wall, if you don't use them, cement them together properly then they are useless.**

**Many debates are on currently important issues so it is good for any debater to keep themselves informed of what is happening in the world around them and what are the issues involved.**



# Manner

Manner is how you present what you say and there are various aspects of manner that you need to be aware of.

1. **CUE CARDS.** Do not write out your speech on cue cards.
2. **EYE CONTACT.** Is very closely related to cue cards.
3. **VOICE.** There are many things you can do with your voice to make it effective.
4. **BODY.** Your body is a tool for you to use. Make hand gestures deliberately and with confidence.
5. **NERVOUS HABITS.** Avoid them like the plague.
6. **ELOCUTION AND OTHER BIG WORDS.** This is not an exercise in grammar or elocution.



# Method

Where matter is what you say method is how you organize what you say. There are many pieces of the method.....

1. **TEAM.** Good team method involves unity and logic.

Unity is created by all members being aware of the definition, what the other speakers have said and what the team line is.

2. **INDIVIDUAL.** You must structure your own speech well. The first step is to have a clear idea of your own arguments and which examples you will be using to support those arguments.



# Marking Scheme

**Every adjudicator marks to a standard. You will get a mark as follow:**

- **Matter (40 %)**
  - Definition
  - Arguments
  - Rebuttals
- **Manner (40 %)**
- **Method (20 %)**
  - Understanding the Issue of the debate
  - Structure
  - Time Management
  - Consistency

**The average for any speaker is 75.**



# Adjudicator is.....

- *Average Reasonable Person.*
- *An average reasonable person is a person who has average reasonable knowledge of the topic under debate but expertise knowledge of the rules of competitive debating.*



# Duties of Adjudicators

- To evaluate and assess the debate from the beginning until the end.
- To decide which team has won the debate.
- To reflect their assessment in the adjudicator's sheet.
- To provide reasoning for the decision they have reached.
- To give constructive criticism and advice to the debaters.





# Adjudicator Must....

- **Not** be influenced by their expertise knowledge.
- **Not** be influenced by their own personal belief.
- **Not** interpret what they *think* the speaker is trying to say



# Holistic Approach

- Adjudicator must take a holistic approach in giving their marks.
- This means that adjudicator should not be caught up in the components of judgment (Matter, Manner, and Method).
- When giving a score, they must look at the speaker's overall performance, and then break it down into Matter, Manner and Method.
- Overall, *how did the speaker perform compared to other speaker?*



# Handy to Keep in Mind

- LISTEN!!!
- Don't think for the debaters!
  - Awareness → what happens in the debate v.s. what happens in your head.
  - Don't finish their arguments for them.
  - Don't rebut their arguments.
  - Handy tips: in your note, make a box for your thoughts.



# Handy to keep in mind

- Judging is not coaching!
  - Don't expect arguments.
  - Don't try to think of better arguments the debaters could have presented.
- Manner – Matter
  - Don't automatically buy arguments just because of good manner.
  - If the manner is bad, don't strain yourself to understand the matter.



# Verbal Adjudication

- Announce the winner of the debate.
- Provide explanation of the clashes and reason why giving the winning to one side.
- Giving constructive criticism.
- Good verbal adjudication is not more than 5 minutes.