

Debating as a New Approach to Learning

Interactive Students' Toolkit for
Civic Learning through Debate

Debating as a New Approach to Learning - Interactive Students' Toolkit for Civic Learning through Debate

This toolkit, resulting from an Erasmus+ KA2 project, presents a collaborative effort by esteemed organizations including Società Nazionale Debate Italia, Za in proti, zavod za kulturo dialoga, and Fundación Educativa Activa-t. Published in 2023, it offers a set of basic debate theory, exercises and self-learning activities (Public Speaking, motion analysis, argument building exercises etc.), which are useful for developing debate oriented skills.

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Debating as a New Approach to Learning project is funded with support from the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. This publication reflects the views only of the authors and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Co-funded by
the European Union

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Introduction

Education and training can only contribute to growth and job-creation if learning is focused on the knowledge and competences to be acquired by students through the learning process rather than on completing a specific stage or on time spent in school.

Education and training institutions need to review their organizational strategies and improve their capacity to adapt, promote innovation and exploit new teaching approaches.

This is the new scenario in front of the European school system, the “Debating as a New Approach to Learning” project is inline with these new challenges enhancing the opportunity to use debating for better learning and teaching.

The students’ Toolkit is aimed to target students directly, encourage students’ independent learning activity, contribute to the organization of self-learning environments and promote peer-to-peer teaching and learning.

It offers students a set of basic debate theory, exercises and self-learning activities (public

speaking, motion analysis, argument building exercises, tutorials and video-recorded debate), which are useful for developing debate oriented skills.

The main aim of the Toolkit is to equip students with basic knowledge which will enable them to engage in the debate activities. Its balanced blend of theory, practice, and additional resources equips students with the tools to engage in intellectual combat confidently and ethically, empowering them to voice their opinions and contribute to critical discourses that shape our world.

A structured database of main civic motions for students will be part of the toolkit to promote civic learning, to teach students the skills of reflection , deliberation and action , preparing them to accept the responsibilities of citizenship and the knowledge and skills to ensure this training for life.

Happy debating!



How Debating works

1.1 An overview

Debate in schools, especially in the competitive context, plays a crucial role in fostering critical thinking and effective communication.

One widely recognized debate format used in schools is the World Schools Debating Championships (WSDC) format. In this format, teams consisting of three members each are engaged in a structured and dynamic debate.

To engage in a structured debate students should follow a few key instructions:

Firstly, each team must have a balanced distribution of speakers, with each speaker having different roles and responsibilities.

Secondly, the use of evidence and logical reasoning is vital to support arguments. Students should conduct thorough research, cite credible sources, and present well-reasoned arguments.

Thirdly, each debate format emphasizes respectful engagement, where students address their opponents and the chairperson with courtesy and listen actively.

Finally, students should pay attention to time management, making sure to present their arguments concisely within the allocated time limits.

By participating in debate competitions using the WSDC format, students develop critical skills such as research, analysis, public speaking, teamwork, and the ability to think on their feet.

This format encourages students to understand diverse perspectives, engage in democratic discussions, and develop the ability to articulate their ideas effectively.

Ultimately, debate in schools, particularly in the competitive realm, has a positive and didactic impact, preparing students to become informed, confident, and engaged citizens in society.

1.2 The WSDC format in depth

In the World Schools format, a team consists of three to five members who collaborate in their preparation, with three members speaking during a specific debate (although they can rotate speakers for different debates).



2

Basics of Public Speaking

2.1 Activities on Public Speaking

The following paragraph provides a set of activities aimed at developing and strengthening oracy skills.



Exercise 1 - Count to 10

Objectives

This game teaches debaters how important non-verbal language (intonation, gaze, gestures) is when speaking in public, because the way you speak must be in accordance with what you are saying.

Participants

There is no limit to the number of students involved, the only requirement is to divide them in opposite groups. Could be two big groups or several pairs playing simultaneously.

Task

One of the two teams will be asked to count from 1 to 10 by choose one of the situations listed below:

- joke
- boredom
- tell a story
- sports commentator
- sermon/sermon
- advertisement
- teacher giving a lecture
- a general making a speech before battle
- a child who wants a toy
- speech from a boss to his employees

The other group has to guess which situation it is.



Exercise 2 - Speak Nonsense

Objectives

Raise awareness on the relevance on nonverbal and paraverbal communication. In other words, your delivery matters even more than what you say, and this exercise helps you refine it. Pay attention to your tone, inflections, and generally how you can use your voice to create more interest.

Participants

Flexible, could be adjusted to every situation. This activity perfectly suits the needs of both groups and solo learners.

Task

Find a paragraph online in a language you don't understand or simply write down a few lines of gibberish, and practice saying it aloud as though you're giving a speech.



Exercise 3 - The Blank Screen

Objectives

The blank screen exercise is designed to give practice in verbally describing the pictures and experiences that are in the mind. Most people will get lost in the description and forget to be nervous.

Participants

Flexible, could be adjusted to every situation. This activity perfectly suits the needs of both groups and solo learners.

Tools

A movie screen (optional), a clicker or other device that makes a clicking noise.

Task

The easiest way to explain this activity is to demonstrate it. As the leader, plan to describe a personal experience or a picture of your own to illustrate the technique. Suggested topics are: a vacation or trip, an embarrassing experience, a cherished memory, an experience as a brand new leader. It is important that you describe something that is REAL to you. DON'T FAKE IT.

Step up to the screen (a blank wall will do) and start with whatever is natural to you. Example - I want to tell you about the farm that I grew up on - click - This large, red barn was the center of my world. As you can see, it is in the center of a large, green pasture with a pond off to the left and our white, farmhouse in the distance. - click - This is a closer view of the front of the barn. That is me standing in the door of the hayloft with no shirt and my jeans rolled up. I was eleven years old and so skinny you can count my ribs in this picture. - click - Here I am pushing hay out of the loft to feed the cows - click - and here I am in mid-air halfway between the loft and the hay pile. That was great fun until I missed the pile one day. - click- Here you see me on crutches with a cast on my ankle. I still had to feed the cows though. (Stop after several slides.)

"Who wants to show us your slide set? Each of you have mind pictures that you could share. Some possibilities are: your home, your room, a pet, a vacation or trip, an embarrassing experience, your best friend, a scene from nature."



Exercise 4 - The Imitation Game

Objectives

With this game we want to make the debater aware of his own body and how this can influence the communicative value of the speech.

Your body can be a valuable communication tool, if used correctly. The difficulty also lies in having to improvise a speech and concentrate on imitating gestures. At the same time, exaggerated and/or inconsistent gestures distract the audience.

Furthermore, improvising a speech allows you to enhance your argumentative skills and at the same time is useful in case of anxiety or forgetfulness of the previously prepared points.

Participants

The activity requires couples so the minimum number of people involved is two.

Task

After having chosen two participants, one of them must be given a certain topic to deliver an impromptu speech. The other person has to stand in front of the speaker and perform a random gesture. The speaker has to imitate what the other is doing without losing focus on the speech.



Exercise 5 - Photo Story

Objectives

This activity helps the students master their impromptu speaking ability, while training their storytelling and creative thinking ability. It may be useful as a wrap up activity to the overall level of the speech delivered, including the non verbal and paraverbal communication sphere.

Participants

Flexible, could be adjusted to every situation. This activity perfectly suits the needs of both groups and solo learners.

Task

Choose a random photo from the internet, it could be a picture of a real event that happened in the last weeks, an image of a work of art, even a quote. Once the instructor has chosen the picture the student has 1 minute to look at the image and take notes to develop an impromptu speech lasting at least 2 minutes.

The level of difficulty can be raised by changing the subject of the picture, going from a more descriptive and didactic picture to a more abstract one.



Exercise 6 - Fillers Beware

Objectives

The purpose of this competitive exercise is to encourage smooth and fluent speech while discouraging the use of filler phrases like 'like', 'you know what I mean', 'err...', and 'umm...'

Participants

Flexible, could be adjusted to every situation. This activity perfectly suits the needs of both groups and solo learners.

Task

Ask for a volunteer to speak on any topic for one minute. It could be subject-specific, an anecdote, or what they look forward to doing when life returns to normal. Explain the scoring system: Students earn one point for every second they speak, but they will lose one point for each filler phrase used. For example, a student who speaks for 60 seconds without any fillers will score 60 points. However, a student who runs out of material at 45 seconds and uses five filler phrases will score 40 points.

Encourage students to avoid using fillers by speaking confidently, organizing their thoughts, and maintaining a smooth flow of speech. Give the volunteer a signal to start speaking and keep track of the time. As the student speaks, be attentive to any filler phrases used. Deduct points accordingly. After the one-minute speech, calculate the student's score by subtracting the points lost for fillers from the total speaking time.





Motion

3.1 What is a motion of a Debate

A motion is a statement which sets the topic for a given debate. It is in the form of an affirmative sentence, which may lead to acceptance or rejection. The statement must be distinguished by a clear idea and correct formulation and remember that for a motion to be debatable it has to be arguable, controversial, clear, circumscribed and interesting.



Exercise 1 - Create your own motion

Objectives

This activity is aimed at understanding the complexity of motions and challenges creativity and active citizenship.

Participants

Flexible, could be adjusted to every situation. This activity perfectly suits the needs of both groups and solo learners.

Task

Imagine you are in charge of a Motion Committee and are asked to develop a motion for a new debating tournament that is going to start in your city. On your own or in groups try to brainstorm as much news as possible that recently hit the headlines of your local community for being controversial and try to draft a motion starting from a topic in your community. You need to come out with one or more short sentences that guarantee clarity, equity, ethics and appropriateness. Create your motion....

See Answer Key 3.1

3.2 Types of motions

Type of Motion	What is involved?	Examples
Fact	Motions where the teams make a judgment on the subject of the motion; whether something is or is not.	This house believes that development aid does more harm than good
Value	Motions which consider whether something is of inherent value or not.	This house believes that violent protest is a just response to political oppression
Policy	<p>Motions which indicate that some sort of policy or action needs to be made, in order to solve a problem.</p> <p>The proposition must outline a specific plan of action in accordance with the motion; they must show that the policy is needed, effective and legitimate.</p> <p>The opposition, meanwhile, will attack the motion and show why the policy is not needed, not effective and even not legitimate.</p>	<p>“This house would create quotas for women in high public offices.”</p> <p>For this motion both sides would want to reach gender equality, so the debate is about which side's policy, or mechanism to achieve that goal, is better.</p>

See also Video Tutorial [Types of Motions](#)



Exercise 2 - Types of motions flashcards

Objectives

With this exercise you will master the definitions of value, fact and policy motion by getting better at recognizing them in real life debates.

Participants

Flexible, could be adjusted to every situation. This activity perfectly suits the needs of both groups and solo learners. When done in groups it could be turned into a quick game/quiz to make it funnier.

Task

Practice the definitions of policy, fact and value motions by scanning the QR code and accessing Quizlet. You will find a set of 30 motions, based on the explanations given in the previous table and try to guess what type they fall into.



See Answer Key 3.2



Exercise 3 - Meta Debate - Debate on Debate

Objectives

The Meta Debate game offers students the opportunity to develop research skills, critical analysis, and communication abilities. It also promotes understanding of different debate categories and the ability to objectively evaluate arguments.

Participants

Flexible, could be adjusted to every situation, even though this activity is better for big groups (15+ students) as it requires a diversified audience to share ideas with.

Task

Ensure access to a motion database for debating. The database should include a variety of motions, including policy motions, value motions, and fact motions. Organize students in pairs or groups, depending on the class size and assign each group a random motion from the database.

Students should carefully read the assigned motion and discuss it within their group. Once students have understood the motion, they

must decide together whether it falls into the category of policy, value, or fact motions. Each group should reach a consensus on the category in which to classify the motion.

After identifying the category, students must prepare an argument that supports their position on the assigned motion. Think critically and consider multiple perspectives on the given motion.

Each group selects one student to present the analysis as if it were a real debate argument. Students should refer to the gathered information and reasons that support their position during the presentation. Encourage students to use persuasive strategies and communicate clearly and effectively.

After each presentation, open a debate session with the class. Students who did not present should raise their hand to express whether they agree or disagree with the analysis presented by the assigned student. Those who disagree must provide solid reasons to support their viewpoint and initiate a discussion.

3.3 How to Analyze the motion

Motion analysis plays a crucial role in a debate as it helps debaters understand and dissect the key elements of a motion. By conducting a thorough analysis, debaters can effectively develop their arguments, counter arguments, and strategies.

3.3.1 Keyword analysis

One method used for motion analysis is the “keyword analysis”, which involves the following steps:



1

Identifying Keywords and key expressions: Debaters carefully examine the motion to identify the keywords or terms that are central to the topic under discussion. These keywords are typically the core concepts that shape the arguments and define the scope of the debate. Keywords can also occur in expressions that define a context or a restriction of reference, ex. animals vs mountain wild animals.

2

Providing Standard Definitions: Once the keywords are identified, debaters refer to reliable sources, such as dictionaries, to obtain the standard definitions of each keyword. These definitions establish a common understanding and ensure clarity in the debate.

3

Enriching Definitions with Real-Life Cases and Examples: After obtaining the standard definitions, debaters enhance the understanding of the keywords by incorporating real-life cases, examples, or scenarios. This step adds depth and context to the definitions, making them more relatable and applicable to the real world.

4

Writing Pros and Cons of Every Keyword: Debaters analyze the advantages and disadvantages associated with each keyword. They explore both sides of the argument, considering the potential benefits (pros) and drawbacks (cons) related to the concept or idea represented by the keyword. This comprehensive evaluation enables debaters to present a well-rounded perspective on the topic.

See also Video Tutorial [Basic Motion Analysis](#).



Exercise 4 - Nuanced Definitions - Guided version

Objectives

Practice the ability of crafting definitions.

Task

What are the keywords in the following motion:
"TH prefers remote employment over traditional work spaces"?

See Answer Key 3.4.1



Look up the words in the dictionary and write down neutral definitions for each word.

Remote employment

Traditional work space

See Answer Key 3.4.2

Now, imagine you are the proposition team and try to nuance the definitions so that they better fit your stance.

Proposition Side Keyword Characterization

Remote employment

.....

.....

.....

Traditional work space

.....

.....

.....

See Answer key 3.4.3



Characterize definitions so that they align better with the opposition' case.

Opposition Side Keywords Characterization

Remote employment

.....

.....

.....

Traditional work space

.....

.....

.....

See Answer key 3.4.4



Exercise 5 - Nuanced Definitions

Objectives

This exercise aims to enhance students' analytical skills by examining a debate motion and focusing on the identification of keywords within it. Furthermore, it encourages students to explore the definitions of these keywords, both from a neutral standpoint and as representatives of either the supporting or opposing side.

Students will learn how to strengthen their definitions and deepen their understanding of the topic.

Participants

Suitable both for solo learners and groups

Task

Choose a random motion from the motion database, read it carefully and identify the keywords. Research the definitions of each

keyword in the dictionary; make sure you find the most appropriate yet neutral definition and discuss the keywords' definitions from a neutral perspective, avoiding any biases or personal opinions.

If necessary adjust the definitions provided from the dictionary to make them more realistic and easy to understand, you could summarize the dictionary definition or you could even mix it together with a more general and common-sense-based definition.

Now try to delve deeper into the definitions and nuance the neutral definitions to create two distinct definitions of the same word, one that better aligns with the proposition stance and one that fits better in the opposition case.

Remember to maintain a certain degree of objectivity and logical reasoning.

3.3.2 Stakeholder Approach for motion analysis

Apart from the Keywords Method used to analyze debate motions there are several alternatives that can be implemented when asked to work on a given topic such as the "stakeholder approach".

How can we define stakeholders?

Stakeholders refer to individuals, groups, organizations, or entities that have a vested interest or are directly affected by the subject matter of the debate. These stakeholders can include individuals or groups who may be impacted by the proposed policies, decisions, or actions being debated and they could be individuals from various sectors such as government, industry, civil society, or the general public. Analyzing and understanding the stakeholders' positions and incentives is important for debaters to construct

persuasive arguments and to consider the potential implications and consequences of the proposed ideas or motions.

The analysis starts with the identification of various stakeholders associated with the motion. Once you have identified the stakeholders, characterize each one by describing their incentives. Take into account their motivations, interests, and the potential benefits or drawbacks they may encounter based on their stance. Then, it's time to predict how each stakeholder is likely to react to the motion. Consider their perspectives, concerns, and goals, and anticipate whether they are inclined to support or oppose the motion, along with the underlying reasons for their reactions.



Exercise 6 - Stakeholder Analysis

Objectives

Practice stakeholder analysis method. This exercise provides a general framework for analyzing stakeholders and their incentives. The specific reactions and interests of stakeholders may vary based on the cultural, social, and political context in which the debate takes place.

Participants

Suitable both for solo learners and groups

Task

The exercise presents a worksheet with useful questions to guide you when using the stakeholder approach. Read the motion listed below and answer questions.



1. Who are the stakeholders associated with the motion, "This House would legalize all recreational drugs"?

See Answer Key 3.6.1



2. How are the agents and actors connected to the motion, and what are their incentives?

See Answer Key 3.6.2



3. How do you predict each stakeholder will react to the motion?

See Answer Key 3.6.3

3.3.3 Context Analysis

Analyzing the context is crucial when it comes to debating a motion, particularly in addressing questions such as:

What world is it where this debate takes place?

Why is this debate relevant to the current state of affairs?

What are the significant events surrounding the motion?

What are the real examples and controversies addressed by the motion?

By grasping the current state of affairs, participants can identify the pressing issues and concerns that make the debate relevant and impactful. Moreover, exploring the significant events related to the motion allows for a deeper understanding of the historical and contemporary factors influencing the topic at hand. Real life examples and controversies offer tangible evidence and experiences that contribute to a nuanced discussion, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of the motion's implications.



Exercise 7 - Context Analysis Worksheet

Participants

Suitable both for solo learners and groups

Task

The exercise presents a worksheet with useful questions to guide you when working on the context of a motion. Read the motion listed below and do the tasks.

Motion - "This House would limit media coverage of mass shootings"

1. Identify and describe at least two critical points related to the problem determined by the status quo.

See Answer Key 3.7.1

2. Describe current and future social trends that could be influenced by limiting media coverage of mass shootings.

See Answer Key 3.7.2



3. Provide at least one historical parallel that supports your position on limiting media coverage of mass shootings.

See Answer Key 3.7.3



4. Identify and explain the underlying principles connecting the critical points, social trends, and historical parallels.

See Answer Key 3.7.4

3.4 How to research for a Debate

Research plays a crucial role in preparing for a debate. Conducting thorough research helps you understand the motion, gather relevant information, and develop strong arguments. In this process, it is essential to start by comprehending the motion itself and exploring both sides of the argument. Additionally, conducting background research on the topic provides a broader understanding and enables you to brainstorm effectively for your positions in the debate. The possibility of conducting exhaustive research on the Internet is limited to prepared motions; strategies for researching impromptu motions should be limited to the Dictionary and the Book of Facts.

3.4.1 Always understand the motion first

For a prepared or impromptu motion, the first step is to spend some time understanding the motion and both sides of it. Keep in mind: What kind of motion is this? For this first part, there is no need for online research, unless some of the words are unclear, so then it is relevant to look for them in the dictionary.

After that, it is relevant to find some general background research on the topic at hand. With a background, you will be able to proceed to effectively brainstorm your positions and discover the best arguments to make in the debate. Keep in mind: where does this debate take place in the real world?

While sources like Wikipedia or other types of encyclopedias can provide a useful starting point for understanding the context of a debate motion or topic, it is important to critically evaluate the information obtained and supplement it with other reliable sources to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness.

In academic research, this step is often framed as the research question, which is the basis of any research.





Exercise 8 - Motion standing

Task

Select a debate motion or topic. Choose a debate motion or topic for the exercise. It can be a current or hypothetical issue. For example: "Should the minimum legal drinking age be lowered".

Identify reputable sources

Identify reputable online encyclopedias or sources like Wikipedia that provide information on the chosen motion or topic. While these sources can provide a good starting point, it is important to supplement the information obtained with additional sources for a well-rounded understanding.

Access the sources

Go to the selected online encyclopedias or websites and search for the chosen motion or topic. Read the introductory section or summary

provided to get a general understanding of the context and key aspects related to the debate.

Scan the contents

Look for headings, subheadings, and sections within the source that are specifically related to the debate motion or topic. Scan these sections to identify important concepts, key arguments, historical context, relevant stakeholders, and any controversies or counter arguments mentioned.

Take concise notes

As you read through the selected sections, take concise notes on the main points, key arguments, and any supporting evidence or examples provided. Focus on capturing the essential information that will help you grasp the context of the debate motion or topic.

3.4.2 Create a case and define the keywords

To do effective research it is important to consider crafting the team's case before, also referred to as the team line or team theme. The team's case serves as the foundation of their argument. It is crucial that each individual argument presented by the team contributes to substantiating the case.

During the preparation phase, teams should not only focus on identifying their key point and therefore its keywords, but also utilize boolean

terms in conjunction with relevant keywords to refine their research. Boolean terms such as "AND," "OR," and "NOT" can be used to combine keywords and generate more targeted search results. By employing boolean operators effectively, teams can navigate through vast amounts of information available online and locate specific sources that directly support their case.



Exercise 9 - Boolean terms

Choose a topic

Select a topic or question for the exercise. For example: "Benefits of exercise for mental health."

Identify boolean terms

Familiarize yourself with the basic boolean operators: "AND," "OR," and "NOT." Understand their functions in refining search queries.

Craft a search query

Begin by formulating a simple search query using a boolean operator. For example: "exercise AND mental health benefits."

Evaluate search results

Look at the search results generated by the query. Assess whether the results align with your intention and desired information. Note any irrelevant or off-topic results.

Refine the search

Modify the search query by adjusting the boolean terms to refine the results further. For example: "exercise AND mental health benefits" can be refined to "exercise AND mental health AND scientific studies". "Exercise OR physical activity" can be refined to "exercise OR physical activity AND mental health benefits". "Exercise NOT weight loss" can be refined to "exercise AND mental health benefits NOT weight loss."

Evaluate refined results

Examine the refined search results. Assess whether they align more closely with your intended information. Take note of any new relevant sources or key insights obtained.

3.4.3 Mindful research of evidence and examples

One essential habit in research is to investigate the background of the sources you are relying on. It is crucial to understand the incentives and motivations of the authors and organizations behind the work you are reading. This practice enables you to distinguish between credible and questionable sources, ensuring the reliability and validity of the information you use. Moreover,

it is valuable to become acquainted with the biases of media outlets, think tanks, and other frequently referenced organizations in prepared debate cases. Recognizing these biases allows you to critically evaluate the information presented and consider the potential influence on the arguments presented.



Exercise 10 - Evaluating Source Backgrounds and Biases

Objectives

By practicing this exercise, you can develop critical thinking skills in assessing source backgrounds and biases. This will enhance your ability to identify credible sources and make informed judgments about the arguments and evidence presented in debates.

Task

Choose a debated topic - Select a topic of interest for the exercise, such as “The Effects of Social Media on Mental Health.”

Identify sources

Find a range of sources related to the topic, including articles, research papers, opinion pieces, and reports from different authors, organizations, and media outlets.

Research source backgrounds

Conduct a background check on each source to understand the author’s credentials, expertise, and affiliations. Look for information about the organization or publication they are associated

with and consider their track record, reputation, and potential biases.

Assess credibility

Evaluate the credibility of each source based on their expertise, objectivity, and potential conflicts of interest. Consider whether the author or organization has a particular agenda or bias that may influence their perspective on the topic.

Analyze biases

Examine the biases of media outlets, think tanks, and organizations frequently cited in the sources. Research their known affiliations, political leanings, or any other factors that may impact their objectivity.

Reflect on implications

Reflect on how the backgrounds and biases of the sources may influence the arguments and evidence presented. Consider how this knowledge can inform your evaluation of the information’s reliability and potential impact on the debate.



You can fill in the following matrix. In the “Background Information” column, you can provide a brief summary of the author’s credentials, expertise, and affiliations. In the “Biases” column, you can note any known biases, affiliations, or potential influences on the source’s perspective.

Debated Topic The Effect of Social Media on Mental Health		
Source	Background Information	Biases
Source 1		
Source 2		
Source 3		

3.4.4 Create research file

When researching, it is important to ensure that your research is debate-worthy. Focus on gathering information that is relevant and directly contributes to your arguments as evidence or example. Avoid lengthy discussions or facts that are merely of curiosity value. Instead, prioritize concise discussions of important events, relevant names, dates, and numbers. This will provide you with valuable material to develop a strong case.



Exercise 11 - Set up a Research File

Task

Create a digital or physical folder to organize your research materials.

Label it with the chosen topic and set up sections or subfolders for different aspects of the debate. For example: "The impact of climate change on ecosystems"

Identify credible sources

Find reliable sources related to the topic, such as scientific journals, reports from reputable organizations, and expert opinions. Ensure that the sources are recent, authoritative, and relevant to the debate.

Gather relevant information

Read through the sources and extract concise and pertinent information. Focus on key findings, statistics, case studies, and notable events that illustrate the impact of climate change on ecosystems.

4

How to write arguments

4.1 Crafting strong arguments

Writing effective arguments is a crucial skill in debating. It involves constructing persuasive and logical points to support your position on a given motion. Here are four key aspects to consider when crafting strong arguments.

4.1.1 Structure of a speech

A well-structured speech helps convey your ideas clearly and enhances their impact. It typically consists of three main sections:

Introduction - Capture the audience's attention, provide context for the debate, and present your stance on the motion.

Body - Present your arguments, supported by evidence and reasoning. Each argument should be developed in a separate paragraph or section.

Conclusion - Summarize your main points, restate your position, and leave a lasting impression.



Exercise 1 - Outlines

Task

Choose a motion or topic of interest and create a well-structured speech outline. Follow these steps:

→ Pick up a blank paper

→ Draw 3 different sections: a first section of $\frac{1}{5}$ of the page, a second section of $\frac{3}{4}$ and finally another section of $\frac{1}{5}$

→ Put on some information regarding the context and introduction on the first part.

→ Write or draw your arguments (you could follow the ARE model or draw a mind map)

→ Place some closing remarks in the end.



Exercise 2 - Use Storytelling to do a Debate Speech

Task

Follow the next structure of storytelling to deliver an argument for your speech.

Introduction

Begin with a captivating opening that grabs the audience's attention and sets the tone for the story.

Rising Action

Develop the story by introducing conflicts, challenges, or obstacles that the characters face. Build tension and suspense as the story progresses, keeping the audience engaged and curious about the outcome.

Climax

Reach the peak of the story, where the main conflict or turning point is resolved or addressed.

Falling Action

Begin to wind down the story by showing the consequences or aftermath of the climax.

Resolution/Conclusion

Deliver a satisfying conclusion that reflects on the lessons, insights, or impact of the story and relate it to your main argument or case. Reinforce the main argument you want the audience to remember.

See Answer Key 4.2

4.1.2 Assertion

An assertion is a clear and concise statement that presents your position or claim on a specific aspect of the motion. It serves as the foundation of your argument and should be debatable, specific, and relevant to the motion.

Ensure that your assertion is supported by evidence and logic.



Exercise 3 - Step by step argumentation

Task

Select a motion or topic and develop a clear assertion. Then, follow these steps to logically develop your argument:

Assertion: Clearly state your position or claim on the motion. Make sure your assertion is debatable, specific, and relevant to the topic.

Reasoning: Identify at least three reasons or causes that support your assertion. Connect each reason or cause to your assertion, explaining the logical progression. Use clear and concise

language to ensure the logical flow of your argument.

Evidence: Find reliable and diverse sources that provide evidence supporting each reason or cause. Include research studies, statistics, expert opinions, or real-life examples. Ensure the evidence directly relates to your assertion and strengthens your argument.

Mind map: Draw a mind map with arrows that contains and connect all 3 parts of the argument.

See Answer Key 4.3



Exercise 4 - Label your argument

Task

Choose a topic or motion for which you want to develop arguments.

Prepare a blank sheet of paper or a document to outline your arguments.

Write down the title or topic at the top of the page.

Label your arguments with clear and descriptive headings or labels.



List of possible labels:

- Advantages
- Benefits
- Positive Impact
- Strengths
- Proponents' Viewpoints
- Opportunities
- Disadvantages
- Drawbacks
- Negative Impact
- Limitations
- Critics' Viewpoints
- Challenges
- Economic Impact
- Financial Considerations
- Cost Analysis
- Revenue Generation
- Job Creation or Loss
- Economic Growth
- Social Impact
- Societal Consequences
- Impact on Communities
- Equity and Inequality
- Social Norms and Values
- Public Perception
- Ethical Considerations:
- Moral Implications
- Human Rights
- Privacy and Consent
- Fairness and Justice
- Responsible Use
- Environmental Issues
- Sustainability
- Climate Change
- Resource Conservation
- Ecological Impact
- Carbon Footprint
- Technological Advancements
- Innovation
- Technological Breakthroughs
- Automation and Efficiency
- Integration and Interoperability
- Potential for Future Developments
- Legal and Regulatory Aspects
- Compliance and Governance
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Liability and Accountability
- Regulatory Framework
- Policy Implications
- Cultural and Social Change
- Shifts in Behavior and Norms
- Impact on Lifestyle and Relationships
- Cultural Adaptation
- Education and Skills Development
- Digital Divide
- Health and Safety
- Patient Outcomes
- Healthcare Delivery
- Safety Concerns
- Data Security
- Medical Errors and Risk Mitigation

For each argument, provide a concise and specific label that captures the main idea or point you want to make.

Use labels that are informative and help organize your thoughts effectively.

For example, some labels are: economic impact, social inequality, ethical considerations, environmental issues, et cetera.

4.1.3 Logical development of the speech

To develop your speech effectively, consider the following principles:

Provide reasoning: Clearly explain the logical connection between your assertion and the evidence you present. Do not use logical fallacies to avoid flawed reasoning.

Use evidence: Support your arguments with credible sources, such as research studies, expert opinions, and statistical data. Ensure your evidence is relevant and reliable.

Address counterarguments: Anticipate opposing viewpoints and counter them with strong rebuttals. This demonstrates critical thinking and strengthens your position.



Exercise 5 – Developing an Argument

Objectives

Understand how to build a strong and logical argument

Task

Choose a motion or topic of interest and develop an argument around it.

Follow these steps:

→ **Identify your assertion:**

Clearly state your position or claim on the motion.

→ **Gather evidence:**

Conduct research to find supporting evidence that validates your assertion. Remember to use reliable and diverse sources.

→ **Develop your reasoning:**

Connect your assertion to the evidence by explaining the logical progression of your argument.

→ **Anticipate counterarguments:**

Consider possible objections or opposing viewpoints and prepare rebuttals to strengthen your argument.

See Answer Key 4.5



Exercise 6 - The Why Chain of an Argument

Objectives

Understand how to build a strong and logical argument. Is a powerful tool for building strong and logical arguments. It involves connecting a statement or claim to a series of reasons, causes, and effects in order to explain why it is true or false. By using the Why Chain, you can provide a clear and coherent line of reasoning that strengthens your argument and convinces your audience. This method helps uncover the underlying factors and consequences that support or refute a particular statement.

Task

Constructing an argument to a given statement using the why chain. You will need to explain why the statement is true or false by connecting it to a series of reasons, causes, and effects.

Statement - Social media has a negative impact on mental health

Why is social media a negative influence on mental health?

.....

.....

.....

.....

See Answer Key 4.6.1



Why do social media platforms create unrealistic expectations?

.....

.....

.....

.....

See Answer Key 4.6.2

Why do these unrealistic expectations lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem?

See Answer Key 4.6.3



Why is it harmful to feel inadequate and have low self-esteem?

See Answer Key 4.6.4



Exercise 7 - Use logic (Assertion and logical development)

Objectives

Learn to use different types of reasoning to develop the same argument.

→ *Deductive reasoning*

→ *Inductive reasoning*

→ *Analogy*

Task

Use the three types of reasoning to develop the same argument for the argument: "Regular exercise contributes to weight loss"

See Answer Key 4.7



Exercise 8 - Drawing Argument

Objectives

Drawing arguments using mind maps can be a helpful visual tool for organizing and presenting complex ideas.

Task

Here's a step-by-step guide on how to draw arguments using mind maps.

- **Start with the main argument** - Write the main argument or topic at the center of the page. Draw a circle or box around it to emphasize its centrality.
- **Identify supporting points** - Think about the key supporting points or sub-arguments that contribute to the main argument. These points should logically connect to and reinforce the main argument.
- **Branch out the supporting points** - Create branches radiating out from the main argument, with each branch representing a supporting point. Label each branch with a concise statement summarizing the supporting point.
- **Add evidence and examples** - For each supporting point, consider including evidence or examples that further strengthen the argument. Draw smaller branches or lines extending from the supporting points and label them with relevant evidence or examples.
- **Connect the ideas** - Look for connections and relationships between the supporting points. Draw lines or arrows between related points to illustrate how they interact or build upon each other. This helps demonstrate the logical flow of the argument.



See Answer Key 4.8

4.1.4 Evidence in Debating

Use evidence to support your argument and prove its relevance and reliability

→ Source evidence from official websites, accredited magazines and newspapers, almanacs

→ Make sure that information is updated and true (roughly not older than 5 years or still relevant in the social/political climate)

→ Avoid overgeneralization, examples that are only true for a very restricted audience and do not translate on a larger scale



Exercise 9 - Choice of evidences

Task

You will be given an outline of a speech with key bullet points for assertions and reasoning. You will then have 15 minutes to research about the following topic and assess if the examples sustaining the motion are suitable:

THBT International cooperation is essential for protecting the environment

Assertion: Joint international cooperation to protect the environment is necessary to assure that decisive resolutions are discussed and enforced.

Reasoning: International cooperation is necessary because all governments have the duty to protect the environment. Some nations like China and the United States hold the highest percentage of global carbon emissions. No government should ever step down from international agreements as it hinders all other members, the possibility of making the agreements legally binding should be considered.

Evidence: Nations with a high impact on climate have the duty to endorse international treaties as in the case of the Paris Agreement. As of 2020 The United States, who is responsible for 15% of carbon emissions, withdrew from the agreement, a decision that has been frowned upon by the international community. (Source - BBC News)

Do you think the evidence is suitable? YES NO

How is evidence backing the statement?

See Answer Key 4.9.1

**THBT the use of language learning apps and technology
is an effective way to learn a new language**

Assertion: Language skills represent a valuable asset for personal and professional development in a connected world. Learning languages has been made accessible to the vast majority through technology and language apps.

Reasoning: Some languages are increasingly more demanded in many career paths and necessary to even access some job opportunities. As in the case of English that nowadays represents the Lingua Franca across the globe. It is estimated that more than half of the world's population is bilingual and on top of professional career opportunities available in different languages, the benefits of language learning have been proven to keep the brain healthy and less prone to diseases. Nowadays language learning apps have made it possible for the vast majority of people to have access to: qualified language professionals for face to face classes; individual learning on language platforms and apps;

online communities with other peers on the same learning path; all of the benefits are accompanied by an affordable subscription to apps/websites and flexible hours. The latter is a modern solution as learning can be tailored to any schedule needs as it is always accessible.

Evidence: Platforms like Duolingo, British Council Learn English provide a completely free of charge language learning experience with interactive activities always available. Companies like Babbel, Rosetta Stone, Transparent Language, provide inexpensive subscription plans that range from €7.99 to €24.99 a month to learn a new language. These companies include the possibility to join classes with a teacher and provide the necessary human interaction to practice the skills.

Do you think the evidence is suitable? YES NO

How is evidence backing the statement?

.....

.....

See Answer Key 4.9.2



Exercise 10 - Choose the best way

Task

Read carefully the proposed motions and choose the best approach to analyze them.



THBT monuments dedicated to Christopher Columbus should be removed

- outcome of similar issues
- policies to implement
- values and principles

See Answer Key 4.10.1



THW ban make up in middle schools

- policies to implement
- facts and data
- values and principles

See Answer Key 4.10.2



THB the Internet is a public good

- policies to implement
- facts and data
- values and principles

See Answer key 4.10.3



THBT freedom of speech on the web is illusory

- policies to implement
- facts and data
- values and principles

See Answer Key 4.10.4



Exercise 11 - Group survey (for bigger groups)

Objectives

Research and quote evidence to back up assertion.

Participants

For this activity you will have to interview all of your classmates and use the results of the survey as evidence for your speech.

Task

Work on the difference between evidence based on the general knowledge of voters compared to experts in the field.

For each topic you have to prepare a survey. You can include multiple choice questions or open ended questions.

After collecting all the information, make an easy statistic based on the categories that can help you: age, gender, experience...

Give propositions and opposition speeches on the topic.

Modifier

For some topics you could choose to make a “panel of specialists”, students that know more about the topic, their answer of the survey could be worth more compared to others who aren’t “specialists”.

Possible funny topics

- *Cats are better pets than dogs*
- *You should never put pineapple on a pizza*
- *Iced coffee is better than hot coffee*
- *Fruit counts as dessert*
- *Tik Tok is better than Instagram*
- *Monday is the worst day of the week*



4.2 Case, argument and refutation structure

Motion:

Side:

Framing (How does the world look like in our eyes)

Definitions

Burdens (What we need to prove)

1.

2.

3.

Do we need a model? If yes, this is how it would work

1st Argument

Thesis

2nd Argument

Thesis

3rd Argument

Thesis

Argument Name

Thesis (one sentence summary)

.....

Analysis (try to be as thorough as possible)

.....

Example (Illustrate your logic, make me understand on an example)

.....

Impact (What does your argument prove? Why does it exist? What burden does it address?)

.....

They said (what opponent point are you referring to)

.....

This is wrong because

.....

Impact (why is it important that they are wrong)

[Empty dotted box for writing]

They said (what opponent point are you referring to)

[Empty dotted box for writing]

This is wrong because

[Empty dotted box for writing]

Impact (Why is it important that they are wrong)

[Empty dotted box for writing]

5

Point of Information

5.1 What are POIs

POIs are vital in debate as they enable debaters to gather information, challenge assumptions, clarify arguments, uncover inconsistencies, shape the narrative, engage the audience, and effectively counter the opponent's position.

5.2 How use them strategically

By utilizing questions strategically, debaters can strengthen their own arguments and expose weaknesses in their opponent's case.





Exercise 1 - Three POIs

Task

Think of the debate topic “This house would ban private cars in city centers” and try coming up with 3 questions that fit these uses.

→ *Information Gathering: Questions allow debaters to gather relevant information and facts from their opponents. By asking strategic questions, debaters can extract key details, evidence, or perspectives that can be used to strengthen their own arguments or expose weaknesses in the opponent’s position.*

→ *Challenging Assumptions: Questions in a debate can challenge the underlying assumptions or premises on which an argument is based. By questioning the foundational principles or beliefs, debaters can prompt their opponents to critically evaluate and justify their position.*

→ *Clarification and Elaboration: Questions help to clarify and expand upon arguments and statements made by the opposing side. Through thoughtful questioning, debaters can request additional explanations, evidence, or examples to gain a deeper understanding of their opponent’s perspective. This can assist in identifying potential inconsistencies or gaps in their reasoning.*

→ *Uncovering Inconsistencies: Questions in a debate can expose inconsistencies, contradictions, or logical fallacies in the opponent’s argument. By carefully crafting questions that highlight discrepancies or weaknesses, debaters can challenge the credibility and coherence of their opponent’s position.*

→ *Framing the Narrative: Questions allow debaters to shape the narrative and guide the direction of the debate. By strategically framing questions, debaters can bring attention to specific aspects of the topic or force the opponent to address certain issues, thus influencing the focus and flow of the debate.*

→ *Rebuttal and Refutation: Questions serve as a powerful tool for rebuttal and refutation. Through targeted questions, debaters can challenge the validity of their opponent’s evidence, point out logical fallacies, or present counter arguments. This allows them to directly address and undermine the opponent’s claims.*



Exercise 2 - 10 POIs

Objectives

Improve your question asking

Task

Prepare a debate speech. Ask 10 questions trying to find faults in your own arguments. Things to look out for: make sure your questions are more complex and not just yes/no questions.



Exercise 3 - Three Activities

Task

Watch this debate:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwEOQTjcmGY&list=PLkUqPv0V08paobsop8DeV6LxhYmi-W3FVo&index=3&ab_channel=ZAINPROTI

→ *During one speech repeat exercise n. 2 (come up with 10 questions)*

See Answer Key 5.3.1

→ *During the next speech, pause every 20s and come up with a question you would ask at that point.*

See Answer Key 5.3.2

→ *At any point of the debate when a question happens, pause the video and try guessing what the question will be.*

See Answer Key 5.3.3

→ *POI on the POI.*

See Answer Key 5.3.4

5.3 When to accept and how to address POIs

POIs take away some of the time of the speech (up to 15 seconds + answer), so be careful not to take too many, 3 per speech are more than enough.

POIs also disrupt your “flow”, do not accept them mid-sentence but rather after you finish with making a certain point or before you move on to the next part of your speech.

After taking a POI, do not try avoiding it by saying things like “I’ll discuss that later”, especially if you don’t plan on actually doing that - answering a POI directly shows the judge that you are confident in your case and in control of the debate.

Try to incorporate the answer to the POI into your own case - so making additional analysis

or logic as to why the POI is “wrong” or adding the analysis to provide a missing link that the opposing speaker attacked.

You can also concede POI and turn them into your advantage (for example that’s true, but exactly because of that it will lead to xy...) or prove that even if you concede that, you still get what you want to prove.

If you can’t think of the answer at the moment, you can give yourself some extra seconds of time with phrases like “thank you for that question, I’ll gladly answer it”.

If you really think you cannot answer it, you can say that the next speaker is going to engage with it but that should be used as a last resort.

5.4 How to do an effective POI

Choose the correct timing, so either when you believe the opponent is talking about one of their weaker points or a point that you believe you can win, however, do also try to deal with their best-case scenario and don't only rely on engaging with their weakest points.

When it comes to timing, it is also important that the POI is relevant to the things that were just said in the speech.

A POI should either question the opponent's case or provide additional relevance to your own case.

POI for attacking opponents' case should point out stuff like missing links in their case or just provide direct negations.

Adding to your own case through POI is done

after the opponents' rebuttal of your point when you feel like it's important to reestablish them or when your content clashes with the opponent's content (in this case for example you can compare your content to theirs in your question).

POIs are a strategic tool so don't waste them, don't use them for disproving irrelevant examples or points that can easily be taken care of in your speech.

Also don't just put your own reworded arguments in POIs, the speaker will just respond with the same negation as before.

Avoid rhetorical and too open-ended questions, because they are easy to get away with.

POIs should not take over 15 seconds of time, so be clear and succinct.





Exercise 4 - Think of effective POIs

Task

Read the following proposition speech related to the motion

“This house believes that national war memorials should commemorate the casualties on all sides of the conflict”

You are the opposition...” think about your arguments and possible lines of negations you could give to the opposing team’s arguments. Now read the speech of the first proposition and ask a POI you think would be most effective every time we marked the speech. Compare with the Answer Key. Were your POIs similar? “



The national war memorials are serving as a glorification of the horrors of war, shaping the mind of the people living in the country by presenting their leaders and soldiers as heroes, justifying their every move. Yet the millions that died on the other side of the war are presented as barbarians, as the ones that are responsible for every crime and every casualty that happened during the wartime. This is the world we on the side of prop, do not want to live in.

Firstly, stance

- *we believe that war is always bad and hence it should never be glorified*
- *every victim of the war, is a victim too much - all casualties are equal bad*
- *the purpose of the war memorial = commemorate those who died or were injured in the war - and it should not be specific to one nation but rather serving as a repayment for all victims of the war.*

Majority of war memorials commemorate one side of the conflict → the ones in Russia only memorialize soviet troops, only the Russian soldiers in WW2, which we can see with the examples of the Soldier and Sailor Monument, which shows how the leaders and the soldiers were fighting for the “right” cause.

We, on the other hand, support the world where war memorials do not commemorate either side exclusively, but their purpose simply shifts to commemorating the soldiers that fought in the conflict, commemorating their suffering, death and casualties (1) in a broader sense.

This then looks like example the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers, a monument dedicated to the services of unknown soldiers and to the common memories of all soldiers killed in war; or like the Monument

of Victims of All Wars in the capital of Slovenia, which was put in place to remember the terrible things that happened in all wars and to commemorate all victims.

Our burden in this debate is then to show you why principally and practically the glorification of war, but more specifically one side of the conflict, is bad and should not be justified.

1st Argument - Why is the state principally obliged to commemorate casualties of all sides?

Two things this argument proves: 1) obligation of the state; 2) purpose of war memorials

State is the one that has an obligation (2) to set up the narrative in which the society should function, this is specifically an obligation during the time of the war, because the state is also the one responsible for the war - every country that participated in it, both sides are the ones that sent the soldiers to war and were complicit in the actions.

Furthermore, the war for the state is always just a political game, played with the lives of innocent civilians, making soldiers fight for the things they want to achieve and drag the other side into the same political game alongside them.

We then believe that the state owes it to all victims that died during the war and commemorating them with setting up war memorials that recognise the casualties of both sides of the conflict is the least they can do.

This point alone already establishes how the state has a larger principal obligation to commemorate all casualties than to commemorate exclusively the ones that died under their flag.

Furthermore, why exclusively with commemoration of all sides, we achieve the purpose of war memorials: we believe that the war memorials should not glorify actions of one side or glorify the horrors of the war, and they should not be discriminatory among the victims.

All wars include and perpetuate violence that always necessarily goes against the nature of humans, it goes against what should be normalized. It is then fairly easy to claim that every soldier that was killed while fighting for their nation, every innocent civilian that was raped, every child that was sent in a fight and every mother that died as a result of the town being bombed, should be remembered and has the right to be commemorated.

This is something the side of opp fundamentally has to disagree with, as they claim that only victims of one side must be remembered.

They are then saying that violence from the side of their nation is justified, the leaders and soldiers that died should be glorified, yet the other side has to be ignored, because they are the bad guy in the war and because their violence is then the only bad violence (3). We find this immoral as we believe that every victim of the war is a person that deserved to live and deserves to be remembered.

What the state essentially does after war is that it tries to justify its own actions and establish war memorials that literally glorify their side (4), portraying them as the only moral actor, as the one that has done everything right and portraying its leaders and soldiers as the ones that didn't deserve the suffering and we see that as something that is on a principal level problematic because it glorifies the actions of those said leaders and soldiers.

This argument then tells you that on the principal level, the state is obliged to take that stance because it owes it to the victims of the war to commemorate them and to not glorify their suffering.

Importance: even if all of the practical benefits that we show you play a minimal role this is the essential argument as it proves the obligation of the state to actually take such a stance.

Second Argument - Changing the public opinion on war and victims of the war

Two things that uniquely happen at the point of which the state actively takes a stance that shows that victims of both sides of the conflict should be commemorated.

→ *War is portrayed as something exclusively bad because the state shows the millions that suffered and remembers and regrets every one of those casualties although it was responsible for at least a few of them. (5)*

→ *It sets a tone for further discussions - a monument has a lot of emotional potential and power and this goes specifically for the people that do not have a strong opinion on the war as it is and those people are crucial because they interact with war through a very narrow list of options as they have not been in war, are not studying IR, ... - that list of options includes very problematic things such as the video games that actively glorify war, etc. A monument in the discussion about the war then functions exactly as the music in the movie, because it sets the tone in a way of the emotions to talk about the war, so those people come in contact with a different set of ideas that can influence their mind. (6)*

→ *Reshapes the minds of people that have been actively involved in the war - those are the people that need reframing the most, because specifically because they participated on one side*

exclusively, they have most of the confirmation bias as they were thought to believe that “our side = good guys” and everyone else is bad. Those people need to be told that every victim is just human. (7)

Impacts

- *more presents the view on the war that all war is bad, all suffering is something that is problematic. (8)*
- *people feel more sympathetic towards the other side, which then likely means that the conflict won't be dragged on, but rather put behind. (9)*
- *the change of the stance from the side of the state means that the state is more likely to take action on other areas (10) that are viewed as problematic such as not portraying a bias view in history textbooks which have a much larger influence on all people.*

Importance

We want the war to be seen by everyone as bad to avoid its glorification and in turn discrimination of certain peoples.

See Answer key 5.4



Exercise 5 - Add POIs to an existing debate

Task

Watch this debate, pretend you're the opposition, and try coming up with as many questions, clarifications and disagreements you can come up with! Justify why you think your POIs would work, or why your negation should be raised in the POI not in the speech.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CxHFvX94AC0>

See Answer Key 5.5

6

Debate Strategy

6.1 Practical approach

The practical approach is aimed at:

- *foreseeing arguments coming from opposite team*
- *preparing counterarguments*
- *dividing arguments between speakers in an efficient manner*
- *establishing roles in the team to help during the competition*

Prepared motions provide the opportunity to research in depth both sides of the topic and have access to all the needed information.

During the preparation you should identify:

- *possible counter arguments of your team*
- *the points of clash of the argument*

Points of clash are the main topics the teams have debated on and identify the core principles of the problem.

They are foreseeable during preparation but more often than not they will come up during the debate.

These points are the core of final reply speeches.

6.2 How to do it

Analyze and draft the motion as advised in How to write arguments (infra §4).

See also video tutorial [Debate Strategy](#).





Exercise 1 - What are the main steps you should follow

Task

List the main steps you should follow in analyzing the motion and writing your arguments





Exercise 2 - Arguments and counter arguments

Objectives

This exercise will help you during impromptu preparation, given the limited time to know what to expect from the opposing team.

During prepared motions you and your team will have more time to prepare counterarguments that can come up and brilliantly take them down!

Task

For the following motion write down the arguments you have developed and come up with counter arguments.

THBT Social media has a negative impact on mental health

COUNTER ARGUMENT

MY ARGUMENT

See Answer Key 6.2.1

THW create quotas for women in high public offices

COUNTER ARGUMENT

MY ARGUMENT

See Answer Key 6.2.2

THBT refugees have a right to seek asylum in other countries

COUNTER ARGUMENT

MY ARGUMENT

See Answer Key 6.2.3



Exercise 3 - Speaker role

Task

Answer the following questions.

During debate training should you always experience the role of speaker 1?

- True
- False

See Answer Key 6.3.1

I'm at the tournament and I will stick to the speaker role I'm best at.

- Good idea
- Bad idea

See Answer Key 6.3.2



Exercise 4 - Team work

Task

Answer the following questions.

Teammates are not allowed to exchange information during the debate.

- True
- False

See Answer Key 6.4.1

I wasn't able to reply to a POI very well, I guess we lost.

- True
- False

See Answer Key 6.4.2

I'm curious about a certain topic, I should read more about it.

- True
- False

See Answer Key 6.4.3



Exercise 5 – Points of clash

Points of clash are:

- The presented arguments
- Core problems of the debate

See Answer Key 6.5.1

Task

Watch the Reply Speeches from this tournament and then answer the questions.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Cmp6mSgx-60>

Italian National Championship Final (The Debate begins at 03:01 minutes)

What are the main points of clash?

.....

.....

.....

See Answer Key 6.5.2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZovvUYuF2A&t=1402s>

Italian Debate Olympics Final (The Debate begins at 13:01 minutes)

What are the main points of clash?

.....

.....

.....

Compare your answers with the group and discuss. Some people might have different opinions on the clashes of the debate.

See Answer Key 6.5.3



Exercise 6 - Speaker roulette

Objectives

Practice all speaker roles in a relaxed setting. This activity can be done with funny topics or more serious ones, depending on the level of the class.

Task

For this activity students will practice surprise speaker roles.

In teams, prepare on one of the following topics without choosing speaker order. Write down all names, divide them for prop and opp and place them in a hat. When prep time is over students will draw from the hat one name at the time for each side.

Important

To keep everyone on their toes, draw one name and let the person give the speech, then move to the next. Anyone could be the next speaker!

Some topics may be:

- THB the Internet is a public good
- THW ban make up in middle schools
- ...



Exercise 7 - Dream Team

Objectives

Students assess their strengths and weaknesses and identify fields of interest.

Participants

Group activity. Depending on the size of the group, choose at least two team leaders.

Tasks

For this activity all students will fill in a card with their field of expertise, strengths and weaknesses but using a pseudonym. Team leaders will put together their dream team and call out the names of the participants.

Only after putting together the teams choose a topic and start prep time.

Here is an example of the table to complete

Name: Vixen 

Field(s): animal rights, sports

Strengths: master of POIs

Weaknesses: always overtime

Name: Penguin 

Field(s): crypto, social media

Strengths: tidy speech

Weaknesses: too many examples



How to use preparation time

7.1 Don't panic steps

For impromptu debates you have 60 minutes to prepare. This is plenty of time to do so. What we want you to remember is the following: DON'T PANIC.

Brainstorming - 5-8 minutes

- **Description:** Everyone writes down argument and strategy ideas.
- **Important:** Individual, write every idea down (even if stupid).
- **Goal:** Gather as many different ideas and possible approaches.

Idea selection - 10-15 minutes

- **Description:** Quickly read the ideas, and select the best ones.
- **Important:** Let everyone speak and be efficient. Group ideas together.
- **Goal:** You have the outlines of our arguments and strategy. Speakers should know what arguments they will be presenting.



Writing - 10-15 minutes

- **Description:** *Speakers individually write out their assigned arguments or refutation.*
- **Important:** *Leave everyone alone to develop their points, only talk if someone does not understand something.*
- **Goal:** *Have most of the arguments written out and developed.*

Review - 10-20 minutes

- **Description:** *Speakers describe or present their points and the rest critiques. The team discusses strategy and potential opposition points.*
- **Important:** *Be as critical as possible, try to preempt the critique from the opposing team.*
- **Goal:** *Have the case written out and developed. The case has been tested for weak points and issues.*

Task of the speakers - 10-12 minutes

- **1st Speaker:** *Focus on content, ask if you don't understand something, spend lots of time developing your points.*
- **2nd Speaker:** *Focus on content, ask if you don't understand something, spend lots of time developing your points.*
- **3rd Speaker:** *Focus on most likely opposition points, think about likely clashes, probe content of first speakers for improvement.*
- **4th and others:** *Help other speakers, if no help is required think of alternative ideas, new content, opposition strategies and probe content of the speakers.*

Remember, while time is limited, it's important to maintain clarity, focus, and persuasive delivery. Adapt this game plan to fit your specific topic and style, allowing yourself flexibility and confidence in delivering your argumentative speech.

If you are wondering how to come up with arguments under pressure, check out some motion analysis ideas.



Refutation/Rebuttal

8.1 The meaning of Refutation and Rebuttal

Refutation and rebuttal are two important elements in the process of argumentation and debate.

While they are related, they have distinct meanings and functions. Let's define and differentiate them.

Refutation

Refutation refers to the act of disproving or challenging an argument or claim made by the opposing side. It involves presenting evidence, reasoning, or counterarguments to demonstrate that the opponent's position is flawed, incorrect, or lacks sufficient support. The goal of refutation is to weaken the opposing argument and persuade the audience that your position is stronger.

Rebuttal

Rebuttal, on the other hand, is the act of directly responding to the arguments presented by the opposing side. It involves addressing and countering specific points, claims, or evidence put forward by the opponent. Rebuttal aims to show the weaknesses or inconsistencies in the opposing arguments and strengthen your own position. It is an opportunity to provide counterarguments, alternative explanations, or additional evidence to undermine the opponent's case.



Exercise 1 - Address issues on refutation

Objectives

Evaluating a debate (what are the criteria that have to be met, what is an average and under/over average speech; which aspect of the speech are points awarded to)

Task

In this class exercise, you will be given a statement and a refutation made in response to the statement. Your task is to evaluate the refutation and identify any issues or weaknesses in it. You will then need to provide a suitable response to address these issues.

Statement - THW ban plastic bags in supermarkets

Refutation

Banning plastic bags in supermarkets will not solve the problem of plastic pollution. People will simply switch to using paper bags, which are just as harmful to the environment.

Evaluate

Response to address the issue

See Answer Key 8.1.1

Statement - Social media influencers bring more harm than good

Refutation

Social media influencers are not all bad. Many of them use their platforms to raise awareness for important causes, such as mental health, environmental sustainability, and social justice issues. Additionally, they can provide valuable entertainment and inspiration to their followers

Evaluate

.....

.....

.....

.....

Response to address the issue

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.....

See Answer Key 8.1.2



Exercise 2 - The why and rebuttal chain

Objectives

To understand how to build a strong and logical argument.

Task

This exercise involves an interactive activity where students engage in a question-and-answer session, followed by a phase of rebuttal and response.

By using a ball, a playful approach is created to encourage active participation and effective communication.

The exercise begins when one student throws the ball to another student and asks a question, such as “What is your favorite animal and why?” The receiving student answers the question by sharing their favorite animal and providing a justification or explanation for their choice.

Once the answer has been given, another student with a different ball has the opportunity to present a rebuttal or counter-argument against the initial statement. For example, they could say, “I disagree with you; I believe that dogs are the best animals because of their loyalty and companionship.” The student who made the initial statement can respond to this rebuttal, defending their position and offering counter-arguments if necessary.

See Answer Key 8.2



Exercise 3 - Why Not and Refutation Chain

Objectives

Encourage to think critically and present logical arguments during both the supporting and rebuttal stages.

Participants

Group activity

Task

- Gather a group of participants and form a circle.
- Start with a statement or claim related to a specific topic or motion. For example: “The use of smartphones should be banned in schools.”
- Pass a ball or any object to one participant in the circle, who will provide a reason supporting the statement.
- Instead of asking “Why?” as in the original exercise, the next participant who receives the ball should provide a counter-argument or a rebuttal, starting with “Why not.”
- After presenting the rebuttal, this participant passes the ball to the next person, who then supports the initial statement with a new reason.
- The exercise continues, alternating between reasons supporting the statement and rebuttals challenging it, forming a “rebuttal chain.”

See Answer Key 8.3

See also video tutorial [The Why and Rebuttal Chain of and Argument.](#)



Exercise 4 - Preventive Refutation

Task

Pick a motion and assume the proposition side. Take 15 minutes to prepare your arguments but first start asking yourself: What would I say if I was against it?

Write down all the reasons.

Then start making your argumentation from that. You can start your argument saying even if, moreover or considering.

Motion: This house believes that standardized testing should be abolished in schools.

Opposing Arguments (Ask yourself: What would I say if I were against the motion?)

See Answer Key 8.4

Argumentation (Based on the exercise, start your arguments by saying “even if”):

Even if we consider the arguments against standardized testing, it becomes clear that the negative impact outweighs any potential benefits. While some may argue that standardized testing promotes a “one-size-fits-all” approach to education, we must acknowledge that students have unique learning styles and abilities that cannot be accurately measured through a standardized exam. By relying solely on test scores, we risk neglecting the holistic development of students, which includes essential skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.





Exercise 5 - Fallacious rebuttal

Objectives

Improve the ability to spot the fallacies

Task

Your task is to identify the fallacy used in the refutation and provide a suitable response to address the fallacy.

In this exercise, you will be presented with a statement that contains a fallacy.

Follow these steps:

- Read and understand the given statement.
- Identify the fallacy used in the refutation.
- Clearly state the fallacy and explain why it is present in the refutation.
- Provide a suitable response that addresses the fallacy and presents a logical argument or counterargument.
- Support your response with evidence, reasoning, or counterarguments to demonstrate the flaw in the original refutation.
- Ensure your response is clear, concise, and effectively challenges the fallacy presented.
- Remember to focus on the fallacy used in the refutation and address it specifically in your response.

Some of the fallacies you can consider for this exercise are on this link: <https://yourlogicalfallacyis.com/>

Thou shalt not commit logical fallacies (yourlogicalfallacyis.com)

Some examples of statements that contain logical fallacies to do this exercise are:

- “Since everyone is using smartphones these days, it must mean that smartphones are the best form of communication.”
- “If you don’t support this policy, then you must be against progress and innovation.”
- “The majority of scientists agree that climate change is real, so it must be true.”
- “I have never seen a UFO, so I conclude that they don’t exist.”
- “If you support this policy, you must hate the environment.”



Evaluating a debate

9.1 What are the criteria that have to be met



Content

- What the claims are and how they are backed.
- Topics are true and presented for the average rational person to understand.
- Speeches meet the Assertion-Reasoning-Evidence main structure and include rebuttal, points of clash, point of information.
- Rebuttal is effective, provides counter arguments and further analysis.
- The team takes on the burden and debates on big clashes not giving in to compromise.
- Evaluation is carried out on the whole team, the responsibility of a good debate is shared.



Style

- The message has been delivered in a clear and tidy manner.
- The speech is well organized and guides the judge and listeners to logical development.
- Regional or national accents are not taken into account as long as the delivery is clear for the audience.
- Debaters are respectful of the setting, passion is welcome, aggressive and rude speech is strongly frowned upon.



Strategy

- Effective time allocation of arguments in the speech and within the team: most important arguments are presented sooner, POIs are kept under control by the speaker as for time placement and useful answers.
- Team dynamics and engagement in the debate.
- The debate focuses on the big clash and doesn't drag secondary points that have been overruled.

9.2 What is an average and under/over average speech

9.2.1 Average speech

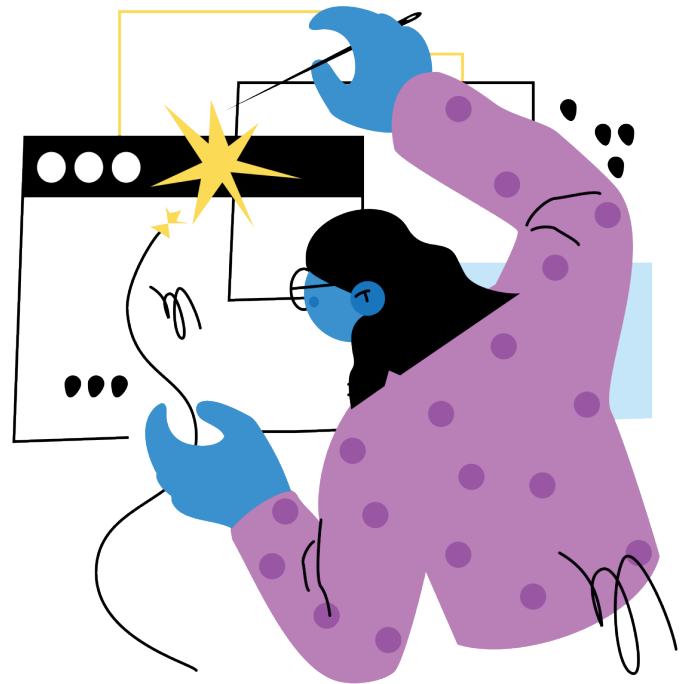
- Clear points logically developed in assertion, reasoning and evidence. Depending on speaker roles, speeches fulfill the burden of presenting topics and rebuttal with further analysis.
- The language is clear and terminology is adequate to the discussed topic
- Arguments have an underlying value, are true and relevant.
- Speakers accept POIs during the speech and offer some during the debate. They work synergically with the team.

9.2.2 Above average speech

- The topics presented are original, unique and surpass the basic understanding of the topic
- The speech proves the arguments are essential and the lack of them would have set repercussions.
- The analysis hits the core values of the debate, the line of reasoning stays consistent
- Examples prove the assertion but aren't the core of the speech
- The speaker is very active in the debate and can offer or respond to POIs effectively

9.2.3 Below average speech

- Speaker roles aren't fulfilled
- The structure of the speech is disorganized and unclear
- The speaker can't assess POIs properly
- Arguments that have been disproved or overruled keep getting made relevant
- Speakers work individually and not as a team or undermine each other's points



9.3 Which aspect of the speech are points awarded to

The total points range from 60 to 80 and are awarded as follows:

9.3.1 Constructive speeches

→ CONTENT 24-32

→ STYLE 24-32

→ STRATEGY 12-16

Content and style are the most important parts of the speech

See also video tutorial [Debate Evaluation](#).



Exercise 1 - Evaluate a speech

Task

Watch the speech and try to evaluate following this checklist:

- *burdens of the speaker role*
- *logical development*
- *reply to POI*
- *clear delivery*
- *structured speech*
- *time management*

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uH-5KZpsYcXM>

Proposition first speech of the Prague Spring Debate 2018 final (minute 1.30-10.15)

What score would you give to the speech?

- average 70
- above average 71-73
- below average 67-69

Motivate your answer

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Note: It's extremely important for a judge to provide reasoning for the evaluation of a speech and the overall debate.

See Answer Key 9.1

9.3.2 Reply speeches

→ CONTENT 12-16

→ STYLE 12-16

→ STRATEGY 6-8

Reply speeches last half the time of constructive speeches and are awarded a reduced range of points.



Exercise 2 - Evaluate a Reply speech

Task

Watch the speech and try to evaluate following this checklist:

- *points of clash are clearly presented*
- *opposite world views presented*
- *logical development*
- *no further argumentation of topics*

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uH-5KZpsYcXM>

Opposition reply speech Prague Spring Debate 2018 final (Minute 53.25- 57.30)

What score would you give to the speech?

- average 35
- above average 36-39
- below average 31-34

Motivate your answer

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See Answer Key 9.2

9.4 Self-evaluation and peer assessment

Self-evaluation and peer assessment are very important parts of understanding how debates are analyzed during evaluation. During a debate it could be difficult for students to understand the unfolding of events as seen by a third party

as the judge. Being aware of the criteria and strengths and weaknesses of the structure and the team will provide a more clear understanding of the result.



Exercise 3 - Simulate a debate

Task

In pairs prepare a first proposition and opposition speech on a topic of your choice, set a time limit. Record yourself when you give the speech.

- *Student 1: give Prop speech and then take notes of student 2's Opp speech.*
- *Student 2: take notes of first Prop speech and then give your speech*
- *Student 3: act as the judge, you won't have a speech. Take notes and at the end award points and motivate your feedback.*

Follow this table

Assertion
Reasoning
Evidence
Rebuttal

Award points

Content

Style

Strategy

- *At the end of the exercise all three students should have notes and evaluate the speeches.*
- *Work independently and when you have finished, compare notes with the other students. Motivate the choices you made and share them with the group.*
- *Since you recorded your speech, you can take time to view it again and self evaluate your performance.*
- *You can do this exercise for all speaker roles rotating with the group.*

For larger groups

- *Have a full impromptu debate, choose a topic and set preparation time.*
- *Six students will give speeches, the rest of the group is going to act as a judge evaluating the debate.*
- *At the end have a show of hand for who the group thinks won the debate and why.*



Ethics in Debate

10.1 The Code of the Debater by Alfred C. Snider

I attempt to be worthy of this title by striving to observe the code of the debater.

For Myself

- I will research my topic and know what I am talking about.
- I will respect the subject matter of my debates.
- I will choose persuasion over coercion and violence.
- I will learn from victory and especially from defeat.
- I will be a generous winner and a gracious loser.
- I will remember and respect where I came from, even though I am now a citizen of the world.
- I will apply my criticism of others to myself.
- I will strive to see myself in others.
- I will, in a debate, use the best arguments I can to support the side I am on.
- I will, in life, use the best arguments I can to determine which side I am on.

For others

- I will respect their rights to freedom of speech and expression, even though we may disagree.
- I will respect my partners, opponents, judges, coaches, and tournament officials.
- I will be honest about my arguments and evidence and those of others.
- I will help those with less experience, because I am both student and teacher.
- I will be an advocate in life, siding with those in need and willing to speak truth to power.

Alfred Snider (1950 – 2015)
Professor of Forensics at the University of Vermont



Glossary of Key Debate Terms

Analysis

A chain of logical reasons which support an argument

Ballot

A form that the judge fills out, usually containing the information on which team won the debate as well as individual speaker points for each speaker

Burden of proof

What a team has to prove in order to win the debate

Case

The entirety of arguments and framing that a team presents to support their side

Clash

A major point of disagreement in the debate

Comparative

Strategy that debaters use to show why they won the debate. They weigh different points and prove their importance

Draw

Side allocations for the debate

Flowing the debate

Following the debate and taking notes

Framing

A section of the first speech, at the beginning, in which debaters define the words which need defining, characterize the status quo and the problem and offer model/criteria if necessary

Impromptu motion

A motion that teams get traditionally an hour before they debate. They have an hour to prepare and have to do it by themselves (without the help of anyone and without using their phones)

Model

Explanation as to how a policy in a motion would look like

Motion

Statement which is being debated

Negation/refutation/rebuttal

Reasons why the other teams arguments are wrong

Opposition/opp/negative

Team that is against the motion

POI/point of information

A question or a statement that the member of the opposite team may offer to a speaker during their speech

Preparation time/prep time

Time in which debaters prepare for an impromptu debate

Prepared motion

A motion which debaters get before the tournament, they may use any resources necessary to prepare

Proposition/affirmation/government

Team that is supporting the motion, that is for the motion

Protected time

Time during a speech where debaters are not allowed to give Pols (First and last minute)

Squirrel/squirreling the motion

When a proposition team defines a motion in a way in which it makes it unfair for the other team, against the spirit of the motion

Stakeholder

A person, a group of people or an entity affected by the motion

Status quo

current state of things

Wash

When content from both teams end up being irrelevant in the debate because the impacts are equal on both sides



Further resources

Board games to spice up debate practice

- *The best 8 Debating games to engage students* <https://www.esu.org/news-and-views/debating-games-primary-secondary-school-students/>
- *Everyone's an Expert - Fun card game*
- *Trial by Trolley - A Party game of moral dilemmas and trolley murder*

Movies about debating

- <https://mnudl.augsburg.edu/the-great-debate-movie-watch-list/> - Movie list organized by year
- *Le Brio*

Youtube channels of recorded tournaments

- <https://www.youtube.com/@DebatovaniCZ>
- <https://www.youtube.com/@debateitalia5883/featured>
- <https://home.worldschoolsdebatingleague.com/videos>
- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCreGaWZL6hQ5ffFTytXIMow>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytA7V3wXux0>

Debating as New Approach to Learning videos

- [Debate Format by Reja Debevc](#)
- [Refutation by Matija Pušnik](#)
- [Principled Arguments by Reja Debevc](#)
- [Constructive Case by Reja Debevc](#)
- [Clashes and Strategy by Aniket Godbole](#)
- [Case building by Teja Sapač](#)
- [Argumentation by Sara Brdnik](#)
- [Speeches by Lucija Ivanuša](#)
- [Types of Motions by Vito Gesia](#)
- [Basic Motion Analysis by Vito Gesia](#)
- [Debate Strategy by Giuliana Vento](#)
- [Debate Evaluation by Giuliana Vento](#)

- *The Why and Rebuttal Chain of and Argument by Ana Maria Diez de Fex*
- *Debate Lesson - Over the Moon by Elena Tornaghi*
- *Debate Lesson - The World of Tomorrow by Andrea Radice*

Other resources

- <https://www.kialo-edu.com/>
- <https://www.kialo.com/>
- <https://quizlet.com/it>



Debate Motion Archive

A selection of Debate Motions on the themes of: **Migration, European Union, Environment, Political participation.**

You can find more on:

→ <https://bestfoundation.bg/debate-motions-archive>

→ <http://heart-of-europe.org/tag/motions/>

→ <https://debatingmatters.com/topic-guides-archive/>

→ <https://idebate.net/resources/debatabase>

→ <https://www.kialo-edu.com/>

- THW direct environmental policy towards mitigation of climate change rather than prevention
- THBT environmental activists should advocate for nuclear power
- THR the idea that individual action will help climate change.
- THBT the state should make efforts to reintroduce endangered species to habitats where they have been eliminated through poaching
- THW support efforts to fund the creation of self-driving cars.
- THW impose taxes on countries based on their waste
- TH will demand international corporations operating in any developing country to uphold the same environmental standards required in their home country
- THB that using waste-to-energy incinerators is the most responsible method of handling waste management
- THB that the government should impose higher taxes on individuals with a higher carbon footprint
- THBT developed countries have a greater responsibility to combat climate change than developing countries
- THBT the dependence on Russian gas must be overcome enhancing the use of renewable sources

- THBT the ecological transition must be subordinated to the social costs it causes
- THBT behavior change is the best route to sustainability
- THBT it is better to buy a gas car than an electric car
- THBT household recycling is a waste of time
- THBT it is in the interest of the European Union to not accept countries from the Western Balkans - Info slide
- Western Balkans are defined as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Serbia
- THBT that the European Union should give priority to the realization the United States of Europe
- THBT the European Union should establish a Common European Army
- THBT the European Union should have a unified set of labor market regulations (for example, on the minimum wage, on safety in the workplace)
- THBT cultural property publicly owned by member states should become the property of the European Union
- THBT the EU should have a common foreign policy to counter its growing geopolitical marginality
- THBT migratory flows are more of an advantage than a disadvantage for the future of the EU
- THBT the EU should have priority in closing the digital divide among young people in the EU
- TH, in order to guarantee the effective participation of young people in building the future of the EU, believes that at least 30% of seats in the European Parliament should be reserved for under 30s
- TH considers it necessary to introduce a compulsory course on the history and institutions of the EU in all European secondary schools, in order to strengthen the process of building the EU identity
- THBT EU member countries must ensure a minimum percentage of GDP for investment in the public education system
- THS the mandatory participation of students, as part of civic education projects, in at least one local project on environmental sustainability
- THBT a "European Youth Council" should be introduced, made up of democratically elected European citizens between the ages of 16 and 20, as the driving force behind European policies on the environment and social cohesion policies
- THBT an upper age limit for participating in elections should be introduced in the EU

- THWS the promotion of success stories of immigrants rather than their struggle
- THB that counter-immigration measures are regrettable
- THB that refugees of war should only seek refuge from neighboring countries
- THW ban individuals credibly accused of corruption from running for public office
- THS governments significantly increase their use of automated decision making in public policy decisions (e.g. criminal justice policy, allocation of healthcare resources, housing development, etc.)
- THR the rise of teenagers at the forefront of social movements (e.g. Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, the Parkland students)
- TH opposes the use of referenda for major policy decisions
- THBT leaders of police forces should be elected by the local communities they serve
- TH would make voting mandatory
- THBT prominent social media platforms (e. g. Twitter, Facebook) should not allow politicians or political parties to make public accounts
- THS countries offering citizenship based on sporting ability
- THBT compulsory voting does more harm than good
- THB that social media has a negative impact on democracy
- THW eliminate diplomatic immunity
- THS restrictions on free speech to combat the rise of right-wing populism
- THS two-party political systems over multi-party political systems
- THB that major political decisions should be made by a public referendum rather than Parliament
- THB that votes of younger voters should have more weight in all national elections or referendums
- THB that corrupt democracy is better than dictatorship
- THBT western states should take a high number of refugees even when faced with domestic popular opposition

Answer Keys

Chapter 3

Answer Key 3.1

Use the following checklist to make sure the motion is well structured:

Verify vocabulary references and context meanings

Make sure the grammar is correct; don't use dialect; stick to the common language instead

Analyze the motion to assess the case's equity from both perspectives by conducting research to confirm the existence of arguments and evidence in favor and against the motion.

Make sure to use inclusive language and culturally sensitive issues.

Answer Key 3.2

- This House believes violence in media causes violence in society - FACT
- THBT Deng Xiao Ping was a greater Chinese leader than Mao Ze Dong - VALUE
- This house would ban child marriage - POLICY
- This House believes video games make more harm than good - VALUE
- This house would not allow children to take part in talent shows - POLICY
- This house believes that online activism is counterproductive - VALUE
- This house would not punish those who live below the poverty line for economic crimes (e.g. theft) - POLICY
- This house would require individuals to pass a political knowledge test in order to vote - POLICY
- This house believes happiness is the meaning of life - VALUE
- This House would ban make up in middle schools - POLICY

- This house believes that mixed sex schools are better than unisex schools - VALUE
- This house believes that marriage is an outdated institution - VALUE
- This house believes the Internet is a public good - FACT
- This house would create quotas for women in high public offices. - POLICY
- This house believes that Artificial intelligence will surpass human intelligence within the next 20 years. - FACT
- This house believes that veganism is the best way to live. - VALUE
- This house believes that the colonization of Mars is achievable within the next 30 years. - FACT
- This house believes Shakespeare is the world's greatest writer - VALUE
- This house would ban pre-election polls - POLICY
- This house regrets the rise of consumerism - VALUE
- This house believes it is in the interest of the Indian people for India to align with the West. - FACT
- This house believes that the discovery of extraterrestrial life is more likely than not within the next century. - FACT
- This house believes that the EU should create a standing army - POLICY
- This house prefers a world where all children are randomly reassigned to a new parent at birth. - VALUE

Answer Key 3.4.1

The keywords are:

- Remote employment
- Traditional work spaces

Answer Key 3.4.2

Remote employment - Remote employment (also known as work from home [WFH] or telecommuting) is a type of flexible working arrangement that allows an employee to work from a remote location outside of corporate offices.

Or

Working outside of a traditional office setting, typically utilizing technology for communication and collaboration.

Traditional work spaces - Traditional Work Spaces refer to the physical and private offices of businesses and companies where the employees work on a schedule and continue the business operations.

Or

Conventional workplaces where employees physically gather in a

designated workplace, such as offices, factories, or other specific locations.

Answer key 3.4.3

Remote employment (Proposition) - Remote employment is a modern work concept that goes beyond the limitations of traditional office settings. It allows individuals to perform their professional duties from various geographical locations. This approach harnesses technological advancements like virtual communication tools and digital collaboration platforms, facilitating seamless connectivity and active participation in work responsibilities. By embracing remote employment, workers enjoy a flexible arrangement that promotes better balance between work and personal life, reduces commuting time, and boosts productivity. Additionally, remote employment contributes to a sustainable future by minimizing carbon emissions associated with daily commuting.

Traditional work space (Proposition) - Traditional work spaces, in their conventional form, encompass physical environments where employees gather to perform their professional tasks. This setup carries inherent limitations and drawbacks. Such work spaces often restrict flexibility and autonomy, confining individuals to a specific location and rigid schedules. They rely on face-to-face interactions, which may hinder effective communication and collaboration, leading to potential delays and inefficiencies. Moreover, traditional work spaces contribute to increased commuting time, traffic congestion, and environmental pollution. These spaces may foster a sense of monotony and constrain creativity due to their standardized design and hierarchical structures.

Answer key 3.4.4

- *Remote employment (Opposition) - Remote employment, while presenting certain advantages, represents a departure from the conventional workplace structure. It involves individuals carrying out their professional obligations remotely, away from a central physical location. However, this separation from traditional work environments poses challenges to effective communication, collaboration, and team dynamics. Face-to-face interactions, which foster strong professional relationships and synergistic problem-solving, are often compromised in remote employment scenarios. Additionally, remote employment can blur the boundaries between personal and professional life, leading to potential issues with work-life balance and accountability.*
- *Traditional work space (Opposition) - Traditional work spaces encompass dedicated physical spaces where employees gather*

to engage in professional activities. These environments facilitate face-to-face interactions, enabling seamless communication, immediate feedback, and enhanced team collaboration. The physical presence of colleagues fosters a sense of belonging, encourages mentorship opportunities, and promotes a supportive work culture. Furthermore, traditional work environments provide employees with structured routines, minimizing distractions and ensuring focused productivity. The collective energy within the workplace enhances motivation and facilitates effective problem-solving through real-time collaboration.

Answer Key 3.6.1

Individuals - General public, drug users, parents, healthcare professionals, law enforcement officers, drug dealers.

Groups - Drug policy reform organizations, addiction treatment centers, pharmaceutical companies.

Social Movements - Anti-drug organizations, harm reduction movements, grassroots advocacy groups.

Corporations - Pharmaceutical companies, private prison companies, drug testing laboratories.

Governments - Local, state, and federal authorities responsible for drug enforcement and legislation.

Institutions - Schools, universities, hospitals, law enforcement agencies.

Answer Key 3.6.2

- *Individuals - Drug users may have a personal incentive to support drug legalization, while parents may be concerned about potential harms. Healthcare professionals may have varying opinions based on their experiences. Law enforcement officers may have concerns about increased drug-related crimes or workload. Drug dealers may have an incentive to support legalization to remove legal barriers.*
- *Groups - Drug policy reform organizations have an incentive to advocate for a change in drug legislation. Addiction treatment centers may have concerns about potential impacts on substance abuse rates and their services. Pharmaceutical companies may see opportunities for research and development of legalized drugs. Civil liberties organizations may advocate for individual freedom and reduced criminalization.*
- *Social Movements - Anti-drug organizations may strongly oppose the motion due to concerns about public health and safety. Harm reduction movements may support the motion to reduce drug-*

related harms and promote safer drug use. Grassroots advocacy groups may align with different perspectives depending on their values and priorities.

- *Corporations - Pharmaceutical companies may be interested in potential market opportunities and the development of legalized drugs. Private prison companies may have concerns about potential impacts on their business if drug-related offenses decrease. Drug testing laboratories may see changes in demand for their services.*
- *Governments - Local, state, and federal authorities may have varying perspectives on drug legalization, considering factors like public opinion, public health concerns, crime rates, and international drug control agreements. Their incentives may include promoting public safety, addressing addiction, and balancing individual liberties with societal well-being.*
- *Institutions - Schools, universities, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies may have specific policies and protocols related to drug use and enforcement. They may be concerned about the potential impact of drug legalization on their operations and duty of care.*

Answer Key 3.6.3

- *Individuals - Responses will vary. Drug users may support legalization for personal reasons, while concerned parents may oppose it. Healthcare professionals may have a range of opinions based on their expertise and experiences. Law enforcement officers may express concerns about potential negative consequences. Drug dealers may generally support legalization to remove legal barriers to their activities.*
- *Groups - Drug policy reform organizations are likely to support the motion. Addiction treatment centers may have concerns about increased substance abuse rates. Pharmaceutical companies may see potential business opportunities. Civil liberties organizations may support the motion based on principles of individual freedom.*
- *Social Movements - Anti-drug organizations will likely strongly oppose the motion. Harm reduction movements may support it to minimize harm and promote safety. Grassroots advocacy groups may align with different perspectives depending on their values and priorities.*
- *Corporations - Pharmaceutical companies may support the motion for potential market expansion. Private prison companies may oppose it due to potential impacts on their business. Drug testing laboratories may see changes in demand for their services.*

- Governments - Responses will vary depending on political, social, and economic factors. Some authorities may oppose the motion due to concerns about public health and safety, while others may support it based on principles of personal freedom or potential benefits.
- Institutions - Schools, universities, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies may have internal policies and protocols that influence their stance on drug legalization. Their responses may be guided by the duty of care.

Answer Key 3.7.1

- The sensationalist media coverage of mass shootings often leads to copycat crimes, as potential perpetrators may seek notoriety and attention.
- Excessive media coverage can perpetuate fear and anxiety among the general public, creating a sense of insecurity and negatively impacting mental health.

Answer Key 3.7.2

- Current trends show an increase in polarization and the spread of misinformation through the media. Limiting coverage of massacres could reduce the amplification effect of these negative trends.
- In the future, we may witness a greater awareness of the psychological harm caused by excessive media coverage, prompting people to support coverage limitations to protect societal mental health.

Answer Key 3.7.3

In the past, a restrictive media approach to sensitive topics such as suicide has shown significant benefits. When the media began treating suicide with greater caution, a decrease in suicide cases was observed, suggesting that a similar limitation could positively impact the frequency of mass shootings.

Answer Key 3.7.4

- The underlying principle is the media's responsibility in balancing freedom of information with social responsibility. Limiting coverage of massacres aims to reduce the negative effects resulting from the promotion of violence, protecting public safety and mental health.
- Additionally, historical parallels demonstrate that a restrictive approach to sensitive topics can lead to positive outcomes, supporting the argument for a similar limitation in the coverage of mass shootings.

Chapter 4

Answer Key 4.2

- *Introduction - Imagine standing at the edge of a cliff, feeling the adrenaline rush through your veins. Today, I want to share a story that will inspire you to conquer your fears and embrace challenges.*
- *Rising Action - Meet Emma, a talented pianist held back by her fear of performing in public. She longs to share her music but remains trapped in her practice room.*
- *Climax - Against her fears, Emma takes the stage at a talent competition. With trembling hands, she begins to play, pouring her heart into the music.*
- *Falling Action - The audience is captivated by Emma's performance. Her fear melts away as she finds joy in sharing her gift. Confidence soars, and she discovers her purpose.*
- *Resolution/Conclusion - Emma's journey reminds us to face our fears and unlock our potential. Embrace challenges, step out of your comfort zone, and make a lasting impact on the world.*

Answer Key 4.3

- *Assertion - The implementation of universal basic income (UBI) would alleviate poverty*
- *Reasoning - Universal basic income would provide a safety net for individuals and families living in poverty. It would ensure a minimum level of income for everyone, reducing the financial hardships and addressing income inequality. This would enable individuals to meet their basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare, leading to an overall improvement in living standards.*
- *Evidence - According to a study conducted in 2017 by the Roosevelt Institute, implementing UBI in the United States could significantly reduce poverty rates, with an estimated decline of over 10%. This study analyzed the impact of UBI on different income groups and concluded that it would have a substantial positive effect on poverty reduction.*

Answer Key 4.5

Example - "This house believes smartphones should be banned in schools."

- *Assertion - Smartphones should be banned in schools to minimize distractions and promote focused learning.*
- *Reasoning - Studies show that smartphone use in classrooms leads to reduced attention spans, decreased academic performance, and increased instances of cyberbullying. By eliminating smartphones, students can concentrate better and*

engage more effectively with their education.

- *Evidence - Cite research studies, statistics, and real-life examples that support the negative impact of smartphones on learning environments.*
- *Counter Arguments - Address potential counterarguments, such as the educational benefits of smartphone use or the need for digital literacy skills, and provide counterpoints to refute them.*

Answer Key 4.6.1

Because social media platforms create unrealistic expectations of beauty and success, leading to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem.

Answer Key 4.6.2

Because they are curated and often highlight only the best moments of people's lives, creating a distorted view of reality.

Answer Key 4.6.3

Because people often compare their own lives to the carefully curated content on social media and feel like they are not measuring up to others.

Answer Key 4.6.4

Because it can lead to depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues.

Answer Key 4.7

- *Deductive Reasoning - Premise 1: Exercise increases energy expenditure and burns calories. Premise 2: Weight loss occurs when the number of calories burned exceeds the number of calories consumed. Conclusion: Therefore, regular exercise contributes to weight loss.*
- *Inductive Reasoning - Observation 1: Numerous studies have shown a consistent correlation between regular exercise and weight loss. Observation 2: People who engage in regular exercise tend to have lower body weights compared to those who lead sedentary lifestyles. Observation 3: Longitudinal studies have demonstrated that individuals who consistently exercise are more likely to experience weight loss over time. Conclusion: Based on the consistent correlation and observed patterns, it is likely that regular exercise contributes to weight loss.*
- *Analogy - Regular exercise and weight loss can be compared to maintaining a clean house. Explanation: Just as cleaning your house regularly helps reduce clutter and maintain a tidy living environment, regular exercise helps reduce excess weight and maintain a healthier body. When you clean your house*

frequently, you actively remove dirt, dust, and unwanted items, making your living space cleaner and more organized. Similarly, when you engage in regular exercise, you actively burn calories, increase metabolism, and shed excess body fat, leading to weight loss and a healthier physique. Just as cleaning is essential for a clean house, exercise is crucial for weight loss.

Answer Key 4.8

Find an illustrative Argumentation mind map on this online resource: [Argument Mapping | Advancement Courses](#)

And consider using online tools to develop your mind maps like:

[Mind Map Maker | Lucidspark](#)

[Create a Free Mind Map Online | Mural](#)

[Create your Mind Maps online and on any device | MindMeiste](#)

Answer Key 4.9.1

No

The evidence is suitable to the topic and taken from a reliable source.

The report though is outdated and represents a source of misleading information for the topic.

As of 2021 the US re-joined in the Paris Agreement and is working alongside the other countries to act on climate change.

Answer Key 4.9.2

Yes

The quoted websites are indeed attested platforms for learning and provide an easy example of education resources available.

The example is easy to understand for the audience and most likely many people are familiar with the topic.

Answer Key 4.10.1

outcome of similar issues

Taking as an example where statue removal took place would be a better way to prove the outcome and adjust the argument for prop or opp.

In this motion values become the line of reasoning not evidence, data about the cost and time needed to make such changes would be topics for further argumentation.

Answer Key 4.10.2

values and principles

Given the nature of the topic about a group of young students in a sensitive time of change and self discovery, using values to side with use or ban of makeup would be an easy way to conclude a line of reasoning appealing to the listeners' principles.

Answer key 4.10.3

facts and data

Facts are clear evidence of current internet use. The other options would refer to the ethical side of the arguments or the policies to implement in this issue.

Answer Key 4.10.4

values and principles

On top of providing some data on the filters imposed by online platforms and websites it's important to prove what is the principle that is defined relating to freedom of speech.

Winning an argument goes beyond pulling out the best figures but proving the underlying value of freedom.

Chapter 5

Answer Key 5.3.1

Posing POIs to 1st proposition:

- (2.21) - *The reason they hire you is because you've attained a certain set of knowledge, skill working for that degree rather than the prestige it can provide.*
- (2.48) - *The narrative is true; because we see that most successful people in today's world and have stable jobs and incomes are people with higher education; the vast majority of cases like Bill Gates, Mark Zucenberg barely succeeded in life and had family support to build on this lifestyle.*
- (2.56) - *Uniquely the idea of higher education offers an alternative that might not exist beforehand as in to say if you're not a successful handyman you can still opt-into higher education if you wish.*
- (3.19) - *Wouldn't having a narrative of success via diploma uniquely enable these institutions to feel a responsibility to offer better education?*
- (4.19) - *Even if it removes to a certain extent free choice; proposition still needs to explain why giving or offering an accessible way to success is bad.*

- (5.08) - *Why would the idea of higher education offering more opportunities necessarily mean you need to get 4 or 5 PhDs?*
- (6.00) - *Higher education doesn't mean that everyone will go and try getting a doctorate, this could also probably look like getting a diploma or a masters.*
- (7.56) - *Wouldn't more enrollment and more money necessitate hiring better workers and expanding the pre-existing academic path?*
- (8.17) - *Why would any standard be lowered?*
- (8.20) - *Even if the standard would be lowered this doesn't necessarily mean that all of this means the higher education will be worse off - couldn't it mean they become more accessible?*

Answer Key 5.3.2

- (10.50 *protected time is over*) - *just because it's versatile and you have educational fields open; why would this help anyone who's not academically skilled but is better at hard labor?*
- *Why is financial security only facilitated with higher education? Isn't that narrative gatekeeper?*
- *Why is scientific development necessarily symmetric across the globe just because of this narrative?*
- *If it requires specialization; doesn't that mean an average individual would be losing their most precious years of work?*

Answer Key 5.3.3

23.08 - *Why do women necessarily have to buy-in / opt-in on the idea of higher education = success; structurally women have been and will be structurally limited from entering such institutions regardless of what the narrative is; hence causing even more harm to women at the end of the day and structurally disabling them from advancing in an oppressive society.*

Answer Key 5.3.3

23.08 - *Why do or how do women progress through academia structurally the same as men if we see this already not happening within the status quo, especially when we still see dogmatic and up-tight behavior coming exactly from higher academia against women.*

Answer key 5.4

1. *Doesn't that uniquely remove the context of why the war was fought in?*
2. *Why does the state have an obligation to the entire world and not just their own community?*
3. *POI 3: We have memorials for workers, leaders - does that also*

then exclusively say that only our workers and leaders were good?

4. How do war memorials necessarily glorify the actions and doings of soldiers and not their sacrifice?

5. Wouldn't this further boost hatred within the community for those who would think they were on the "right" side of the war?

6. Wouldn't you have a predisposition or belief already about the war, regardless of the memorial?

7. Notice that memorials still never fully explain the idea of how people were just "human"; by the same logic then wouldn't personalized memorials still present a suffering human?

8. Personalized memorials do not disable the idea that people suffered.

9. Flip this against them; it would probably build more negative opinions because they feel like they need to commemorate the victor / the enemy

10. Notice how this was probably a past government, the stance necessarily probably shifted already you don't need a memorial for that - you need policies, PR, ...

Answer Key 5.5

1. POI - Do you genuinely believe that a struggling artist can follow their passion and still provide for a family?

Justification - I ask this because proposition values passion over income. In a non-western society, the majority of people actually do have children at the ages 20-30. Therefore, does proposition's model apply to situations all around the globe or just the USA or Canada.

2. POI - Proposition directly says if you get robbed while working a job you don't like you still lost a lot of money. However, if you are working a job that doesn't pay more but you are passionate, wouldn't the money you end up losing be worth much more since you don't have a stable income to your name.

Justification - I would say this because it's a simple analysis flaw in their argument. If someone has a smaller amount of money than that income would automatically be worth more. Therefore, in this situation that they are proposing, opposition would be most beneficial.

3. POI - Having a job you're not passionate about doesn't necessarily lead to working long hours and not having time for your children. In most situations having a job you're passionate about leads to long work hours and strained relationships.

Justification - I would say this because I believe that when someone

has a passion for something, they devote all their time and energy to it. However, people with less passion for their occupation will often try to finish work as soon as they can.

4. POI - Another reach was "you won't be able to make connections in high stakes jobs due to not having similar interests." In most situations coworkers make connections with interests outside of work. So on our side of the motion we actually promote more connection building.

Justification: I would say this because their statement was simply incorrect.

5. POI: What are your opinions on sending stay at home parents stimulus checks on a monthly basis?

Justification - I would ask this because there are parents with a passion to be stay at home parents/housewives etc. I ask this because if side proposition is supporting a world where everyone has the right to their passion then they should also be prepared to financially support passions that provide zero income.

Chapter 6

Answer Key 6.2.1

Arguments: - existing regulations to filter sensitive content - responsible use of social media since known side effects.

Counter Arguments: - a lot of new content and delay in filtering system - enforcement of responsible use of social media.

Answer Key 6.2.2

Arguments: - high public offices have more power to promote change - promote gender equality through public offices.

Counter Arguments: - begin change from early education instead of high offices - promote gender equality through all aspects of society.

Answer Key 6.2.3

Arguments: - guarantee access to this right to all refugees - global deteriorating situation calls for necessary asylum seeking and made easier.

Counter Arguments - asylum cannot realistically be guaranteed, national/international laws still stand - political conservative trend presents problem to refugee mobility.

Answer Key 6.3.1

False

During the year as you train for debating you should experiment with all speaker roles. Part of debate is stepping out of your comfort zone, so embrace the challenges. You might be surprised about the results! You will naturally understand which speech you prefer and it's a great idea to keep that role during a tournament. However during training, rotate between all speakers, you'll never know when you'll be called to ironman!

Answer Key 6.3.2

Good idea

Do not be afraid to ask your coach for advice, they have seen your skills and direct you. At tournaments you might want to be consistent in the role you cover and not improvise, especially during impromptu prep where every minute counts. If you know which speech you will cover it will be easier to focus on the argument you've been assigned and the role you're called to fulfill.

Answer Key 6.4.1

False

You can exchange small notes, have a word after the speech, strategize during another person's speech, draft points to cover better or dismiss. As long as you are focused on the debate, you are expected to work synergically to make the debate interesting and lively.

Answer Key 6.4.2

False

Just because there was a hiccup in your speech doesn't mean your whole speech was bad or your team has lost. Debaters work as a team during the competition, if the point made is pivotal, let your next speaker know with a short note.

Answer Key 6.4.3

True

Keep yourself hungry with curiosity. Everyone loves a teammate that remembers specific and unusual information on a topic. Reading about different topics during the year will help you to broaden your research bank but if you can read more about one you are passionate about. Not all topics can be covered in detail. You might also arrange to divide up hot topics to be more prepared with updated information.

Answer Key 6.5.1

Core problems of the debate

Points of clash are the main topics the teams have debated on and identify the core principles of the problem.

They are foreseeable during preparation but more often than not they will come up during the debate.

These points are the core of final reply speeches.

Answer Key 6.5.2

- *Impact of carbon tax on consumers*
- *Reduction of emissions*
- *Impact on global economy*

Answer Key 6.5.3

- *Impact on workers conditions*
- *Impact on climate change*
- *Competition on the market*

Chapter 8

Answer Key 8.1.1

- *Evaluate - The refutation uses a strawman argument by suggesting that the proposed ban is solely intended to solve the problem of plastic pollution. It fails to address the other reasons why a plastic bag ban could be beneficial, such as reducing resource consumption and encouraging the use of reusable bags. The refutation also makes the assumption that paper bags are just as harmful to the environment as plastic bags, without providing evidence to support this claim.*
- *Response - While it is true that a plastic bag ban may not completely solve the problem of plastic pollution, it can still have several benefits. For example, it can reduce the amount of waste generated by supermarkets and encourage consumers to bring their reusable bags. Additionally, paper bags are often made from renewable resources and are biodegradable, making them a better alternative to plastic bags. However, it is important to note that paper bags are not a perfect solution either, as they still require resources to produce and transport. Therefore, a better approach would be to promote the use of reusable bags or other sustainable alternatives to single-use bags, rather than simply switching from plastic to paper.*

Answer Key 8.1.2

- *Evaluate - The refutation suggests that all social media influencers are bad, while the statement only claims that they bring more harm than good. This refutation fails to address the negative impact that some influencers can have on their followers, such as promoting unhealthy body image or encouraging materialism. The refutation*

also makes the assumption that the positive aspects of social media influencers outweigh the negative ones, without providing evidence to support this claim

→ *Response – While it is true that some social media influencers use their platforms for good, it cannot be denied that there are also many negative aspects associated with influencer culture. For example, many influencers promote unrealistic beauty standards, which can have a harmful impact on young people’s self-esteem. Additionally, many influencers promote materialistic values, which can encourage overconsumption and contribute to environmental issues. While it is possible for influencers to raise awareness for important causes, it is important to recognize that the negative impact they can have on their followers outweighs the positive. Therefore, it is important to regulate influencer content and ensure that they are held accountable for the messages they promote.*

Answer Key 8.2

Watch the video to better understand the game - [The Why and Rebuttal Chain of an Argument](#)

Train with your teammates by choosing different themes from time to time

Answer Key 8.3

Example

Participant A (holding the ball): “The use of smartphones should be banned in schools because they distract students from their studies.”

Participant B (receiving the ball): “Why not allow the use of smartphones in schools, as they can be educational tools that enhance learning?”

Participant B (passes the ball): “The use of smartphones should be banned in schools because they can be used for cyberbullying.”

Participant C (receiving the ball): “Why not educate students about responsible smartphone usage and address cyberbullying issues separately, rather than banning smartphones altogether?”

Participant C (passes the ball): “The use of smartphones should be banned in schools because they can disrupt classroom dynamics.”

Participant D (receiving the ball): “Why not establish clear guidelines and policies to ensure smartphones are used responsibly, minimizing disruptions while still harnessing their potential benefits?”

(The exercise continues, alternating between reasons supporting and rebuttals challenging the initial statement.)

Answer Key 8.4

Standardized testing promotes a “one-size-fits-all” approach to education.

It places excessive emphasis on test scores rather than holistic learning.

Standardized tests create immense pressure on students, leading to stress and anxiety.

The focus on test preparation limits teachers’ ability to provide a well-rounded education.

Standardized testing narrows the curriculum by prioritizing subjects covered in the test.

It fails to account for different learning styles and diverse student abilities.

Chapter 9**Answer Key 9.1**

Above average - the speech follows the model and provides a precise analysis of the topic.

Answer Key 9.2

Above average - The points of clash are clear and the speech highlights the different outcomes of the topic.