

Skill	Acquisition
Research Competence	Students research constantly throughout the debate season. Because topics change and are announced in advance, special impetus is created for students to learn about current events. Changing topics encourage students to constantly research through the season. Topics are designed to be interesting and accessible for students, creating additional incentives. Students research in a variety of accessible media and learn to share their research with other teammates through <b>synthesis</b> and <b>summary</b> , thereby exercising writing skills as well.
Media Literacy	Because students must consult and evaluate information from a variety of media, they develop media literacy skills as part of research. The debate process amplifies this learning, as students must find evidence and arguments to support multiple sides of given topics. Media literacy is developed in tandem with its companion skills: <b>reading comprehension</b> and <b>argument literacy</b> . Students learn to analyze arguments for their validity and the strength of evidence, thereby developing the leverage to critically analyze sources of information.
Reading Comprehension	Through debate participation, many students confront sources of information that they would never otherwise consume. Debate provides a series of incentives that challenge students to read materials that are often considerably above their customary reading levels. As students develop <b>argument literacy</b> , they gain tools to increase their reading comprehension because they can analyze difficult texts in terms of their more recognizable component parts. Reading comprehension is also aided by the development of <b>summarization</b> and <b>outlining</b> skills.
Argument Literacy	Students gain argument literacy as they learn to identify the constituent parts of arguments (including assertions, reasoning, and evidence). Argument literacy is a key skill for building <b>reading comprehension</b> and <b>media literacy</b> . Students learn to identify and compare arguments for their relative validity, using understanding of logical fallacies and other failures of reasoning. These skills apply across the curriculum, as students learn to evaluate systems of proof, critically engage difficult texts, and construct persuasive essays – often significantly above the expected abilities for their grade levels.
Evidence Evaluation	Associated with argument literacy development, debate helps students learn to critically evaluate many types of evidence, including historical and contemporary examples. Debate fosters sensitivity to bias (student bias as well as author bias), assisting students in developing critical thinking skills.
Summarization and Outlining	Students <b>summarize</b> and <b>synthesize</b> their research. This summarization, necessitated by the extemporaneous demands of debating, helps students refine recall and reading comprehension skills.
Public Speaking	Debate helps students to develop an optimal mix of impromptu and extemporaneous speaking skills. Oral literacy is developed through informed practice and repetition. Students gain confidence in otherwise intimidating speaking situations by preparing in advance by learning speaking techniques and conducting research on issues.
Floor Management and Civility	Students engage each other throughout debate using points of information. This teaches skills associated with civil engagement. Students also learn a skill unique to parliamentary debate formats: <b>floor management</b> . Through extended practice, students learn to manage engaged discussions when multiple parties are seeking to enter the discussion. This management skill translates into multiple educational and professional settings.