Speaking Across the Curriculum
Practical Ideas for Classroom Debate

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WHAT STUDENTS LEARN
FROM DEBATE AND DIALOGUE ACTIVITIES

CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY
• In a democracy, the key issue is that the majority rules, but minority rights are protected. Everyone has the right to speak and be heard.
• Everyone has equal rights and responsibilities for decision-making.
• All citizens must be equipped to deal in the “marketplace of ideas.”

CONCEPTS OF APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
• To effectively protect everyone’s right to speak and be heard, rules must be followed.
• To participate effectively in debate, students must restrain their impulses.
• The person who facilitates the debate or dialogue must remain neutral.
• To listen effectively, students must attend to the speaker, refraining from side conversations and commentary.

CONCEPTS OF ETHICAL ARGUMENTATION
• To argue ethically, students must support honest, reasonable claims with valid, relevant evidence from appropriate sources.

Classroom debate and dialogue activities meet the following California Language Arts Content Standards

LISTENING AND SPEAKING GRADES 9/10
1.0 LISTENING AND SPEAKING STRATEGIES: Students formulate adroit judgments about oral communication. They deliver focused and coherent presentations of their own that convey clear and distinct perspectives and solid reasoning. They incorporate gestures, tone, and vocabulary tailored to audience and purpose.
Comprehension:
1.1 formulate judgments about the ideas under discussion and support those judgments with convincing evidence

Organization and delivery of Oral Communication:
1.6 present and advance a clear thesis statement and choose appropriate types of proofs (e.g., statistics, testimony, specific instances) that meet standard tests for evidence, including credibility, validity, and relevance.
Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications:
1.12 evaluate the clarity, quality, effectiveness, and overall coherence of a speaker’s key points, arguments, evidence, organization of ideas, delivery, diction, and syntax.
1.13 analyze types of arguments used by the speaker, including argument by causation, analogy, authority, emotion, and logic

2.0 SPEAKING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS):
Students deliver polished formal and extemporaneous presentations that combine traditional rhetorical strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion and description. Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard English and the organization and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0.

2.4 deliver oral responses to literature that
(1) advance a judgment that demonstrates a comprehensive grasp of the significant ideas of works or passages (i.e., makes and supports warranted assertions about the text)
(2) support key ideas and viewpoints thorough accurate and detailed references to the text or to other works

2.5 deliver persuasive arguments, including evaluation and analysis of problems/solutions and causes/effects that
(1) structure ideas and arguments in a coherent, logical fashion
(2) use specific rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., by appeal to logic through reasoning
(3) clarify and defend positions with precise and relevant evidence, including facts, expert opinions, quotations, and/or expressions of commonly accepted beliefs and logical reasoning
(4) anticipate and address the listeners’ concerns and counter arguments

LISTENING AND SPEAKING GRADES 11/12

1.0 LISTENING AND SPEAKING STRATEGIES: Students formulate adroit judgments about oral communication. They deliver focused and coherent presentations of their own that convey clear and distinct perspectives and solid reasoning. They incorporate gesture, tone, and vocabulary tailored to audience and purpose.

Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications:
1.12. identify logical fallacies used in oral addresses (e.g., attack ad hominem, false causality, red herring, over generalization, bandwagon)

2.0 SPEAKING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS):
Students deliver polished formal and extemporaneous presentations that combine traditional rhetorical strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion and description. Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard English and the organization and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0.

2.3 deliver oral responses to literature that
(3) support key ideas and viewpoints through accurate and detailed references to the text or to other works
“YES, BUT...YES, AND”

This exercise is an efficient way to get ALL students discussing current events, historical events, or literary concepts.

TOPICS:
This activity can be used in several curricular areas
Examples...
current events:
• gun ownership is guaranteed by the constitution
• abortion clinics should be illegal
• drug laws are equitably enforced
• as commander-in-chief, the president should have sole power to declare war
historical events:
• dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was justified
• Manifest Destiny was a resonable expectation for the time
literary concepts
• the theme of Huck Finn is man’s inhumanity to man
• censorship of literature is justified
• Romeo and Juliet are victims of fate

PROCEDURE:
“Yes, BUT...”
• First appoint or ask for a volunteer to present a controversial current event or issue. The subject would be the choice of the speaker. The person goes to the front of the room and says, for example: “An abortion doctor was shot in front of a clinic last night. All protesters should be banned from picketing clinics.” This person is then in charge of calling on the people who want to respond.
• A respondent from the audience will raise his or her hand and after being called upon, will reply...”Yes, but...” and present his or her opposing view. The person usually stands by his/her desk.
• The next student responds to the previous students, and so on until it seems that all points have been brought out.
• Once an issue has been exhausted, the first student reclaims his or her seat, and another student takes over the activity by introducing his or her subject.
• This can go on for as long as you wish. It usually works best, however, if kept to a limited amount of time (15-20 min.) It works well for either on Mondays to get the week going or on Fridays for a wrap up
• Students can be required to bring in newspapers or magazine articles—which allows more current, viable information to be brought into the discussion.

“Yes, AND...”
• Eventually, someone in the class will realize that all of the opposing arguments have been given and he/she wants to add something to emphasize one side or the other. When they ask how to do this, suggest that they say: “yes, and...” and then continue to give information which will reinforce the argument.
• ”Yes, and...” is also a good tool to use when the topic is informational.

Examples...
current events:
• the effects child abuse
historical events:
• the causes of the Civil War
literary concepts
• Holden Caulfield contemplates suicide for a variety of reasons.
EVALUATION
- You can assign as many participation points as you like for each speaker's efforts
- You may want to consider the following criteria for awarding credit:
  - contributed a pertinent comment
  - added something new to the discussion
  - clashed with opponent(s) in “Yes, but...”

TIPS FOR THE TASK MASTER
- This works best when explained to the class and then the teacher carefully models the first example.
- You may have to regulate how many times a person can respond to a question, to avoid having one person do all of the talking.
DIALOGUE

This exercise will improve students’ conversation skills encourage clear communication by use of historical, current and literary references, and promote the power of discourse when coupled with a working knowledge of a subject.

Two students hold their dialogue in front of the class. Neither student is competing with the other. This is NOT a debate! Students may have disagreements, but they do not argue an issue or concept. This is a cooperative activity—a sharing of ideas and knowledge for the benefit of the two speakers and the members of the audience.

TOPICS:

This activity can be used in several curricular areas. In all areas, however, it is predicated on specific information, an issue, a concept, or a literary theme. The topics should be worded as exploratory questions.

• specific information: To what extent can the media be held responsible for violence in America?
• an issue: Should society’s fear of the use of certain research prevent that research from being pursued?
• a concept: Can Socialism or Capitalism better meet the economic needs of a country?
• literary theme: In the works Frankenstein, Heart of Darkness, East of Eden, Lord of the Flies, and Bless Me, Ultima, the concept of evil dominates. Is evil relative or absolute?

PROCEDURE:

• There are two approaches to the dialogue:
  1. It may be used spontaneously which will produce dialogue that contains more generalization and personal opinion, but may have more honest, immediate responses (gut-reaction).

OR

  2. It may be based on a “pre-think” which may encourage more analysis and reflective thinking, but may prompt more “artificial” responses. A dialogue based on a “pre-think” can require the use of quoted material from references or works studied or read.

• Select two students at random to form a “team.”
• Have one team at a time DRAW a question.
• Give each team a maximum of two minutes to THINK about the question before speaking; no discussion is allowed during this time. This time should allow the students to brainstorm for ideas on the question.
• Give each team 5 minutes for a DIALOGUE. The team is responsible for making sure that the dialogue is balanced—featuring both speakers.

Tips for the Taskmaster:

How do you keep the other 32 students engaged while the pair of students are dialoguing? Try one of the following strategies:

• Put the students into small groups for the activity and have them control prep time and speaking time, and allow them to score each other using the evaluation sheets. (they may be more critical than you would be)
• Each time a dialogue is finished, randomly select a student from the class to briefly outline the key points made in the course of the conversation. This could be done from memory or notes.
Employ this listening rubric to grade the audience. This rubric is a helpful “threat” anytime you need a cooperative audience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Bad</th>
<th>Ugly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-verbal Feedback</td>
<td>• sits attentively</td>
<td>• slouches</td>
<td>• turns or walks away from speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• makes eye-contact with speaker</td>
<td>• avoids eye-contact with speaker</td>
<td>• engages in another activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• takes notes if appropriate</td>
<td>• looks bored or busy w/ something else</td>
<td>• makes distracting noises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Feedback</td>
<td>• asks appropriate questions</td>
<td>• asks questions which are off topic or which have already been asked</td>
<td>• talks while the speaker is speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• gives speaker a reply (e.g. “thank you.”)</td>
<td>• gives a flippant reply (e.g. “No, duh!”)</td>
<td>• may blurt out comments (e.g. “No way!”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EVALUATION

The dialogue team can be judged by peers or the teacher on the following:

**Dialoguers:** __________________ & __________________

**Question:** ____________________________________________________

**thoughtful reflection:** 5 4 3 2 1
The deeper you go into the complexity of the topic, the better.

**use of specific examples:** 5 4 3 2 1
tag the text! The more examples you use from the novel, the articles read, current events and even personal anecdotes—the better!

**avoid sweeping generalizations** e.g. “Athletes have all the advantages in school.”

**cooperation:** 5 4 3 2 1
courage each other! Students may disagree, but shouldn’t reject the other person’s opinion. Students lose points for being antagonistic or critical. (a.k.a. nasty)

**Students** should strive to share the time equally.

**usage and grammar** 5 4 3 2 1
behave of informal usage. Try to avoid the words “you” and “thing.” Speak in complete sentences.

**total points possible--** /20

Comments:
SAMPLE “PRE-THINK” FOR LITERATURE DIALOGUES

Here is an example of an inventory discussing the theme of “evil” in literature. Other inventories focusing on pertinent themes can be used. The following questions could be drawn by dialogue teams as topics.

Evil Inventory

Before we begin [name of novel or literary work], it’s important for you to take inventory on where you stand in relationship to the concept of evil. Please answer the following questions thoughtfully. You will be using this sheet in conjunction with other materials in a few weeks to write a position paper.

1. What does the word evil mean? (You may want to skip this question, and answer it after you’ve considered the other ones.)

2. Is there absolute evil, or does evil depend on circumstances?

3. Do you agree or disagree that most people are fascinated with evil? Support your answer with an example; then speculate as to why or why not.

4. Should society be protected from evil people? Why or why not?

5. Are there ever any circumstances which warrant an evil person to be protected from society? Explain.

6. Can an entire society be evil to the extent that the violation of human rights is accepted as moral and just?

7. Does evil exist independently of good—or can evil only be defined on the basis of what it is not?

8. Are all people capable of evil? Explain.

9. What role does personal restraint play in acts of evil?
FOUR-STEP REFUTATION

Subject Matter Application:
This can be used with any subject matter in which argument can be a part of the curriculum especially English and social studies.

Procedure:
• Teach students the four-step refutation.
• Use “review and practice” of four-step refutation

Tips to the Task Master:

Variations
• This game can also be done by passing around the “argument hat,” a receptacle filled with small slips of paper upon which a teacher or students have written simple claims about a variety of topics. Students draw an argument, read it aloud, and then refute it out loud, using the four-step method.
• Have students write a separate response for each of the “therefore examples” described under step 4.

Evaluation: (for practice with Argumentation “Lay-ups”)
• Students at the back of the line orally critique the pair at the front of the line. Did the pair follow the four-step method? Was the argument logical? Etc.
• All students write a self-evaluation of the exercise and determine goals for future argumentation.
What is four-step refutation?

Debates require clash. Clash happens in a debate when one speaker directly answers, or refutes an argument that has been advanced by another speaker. Debates can’t just be composed of unrelated claims, like this example:

**Speaker 1:** Bananas are better than apples because they contain more potassium.

**Speaker 2:** Circles are better than squares because their shape is more pleasing to the eye.

In this example, both speakers are making arguments, but there is no actual debate happening. Debate requires refutation. There are many ways to answer an argument that has been advanced. The first and, unfortunately, most common method of refuting an argument is simply to make a counter-claim:

**Speaker 1:** Bananas are better than oranges because they contain more potassium.

**Speaker 2:** Speaker 1 says that bananas are better than oranges, but I disagree. Oranges are better than bananas.

Speaker 2 has simply provided an assertion to counter the argument of the first speaker, but has not actually answered the argument. In this “debate,” Speaker 1 has the edge because she is the only debater to actually provide reasoning for her claim (“because they contain more potassium”).

**Good reasoning always trumps no reasoning at all.** A more advanced method of refutation is to provide reasoning for your counter-assertion:

**Speaker 1:** Bananas are better than oranges because they contain more potassium.

**Speaker 2:** Speaker 1 says that bananas are better than oranges, but I disagree. Oranges are better than bananas because they contain more vitamin C.

What makes this better than Speaker 2’s previous attempt is that she is providing reasoning for her claim: “because they contain more vitamin C.” Imagine that you are asked to judge this debate. How will you decide who wins? Speaker 1 has proven that bananas have more potassium than oranges. Speaker 2 has proven that oranges contain more vitamin C than bananas. Neither debater has the edge here. Notice that while the assertion clashes with the counter-assertion, there is no direct clash between the reasoning for the two arguments. This means that Speaker 2 has not yet succeeded in completely refuting her opponent’s argument.
Complete refutation is important to win decisively when arguments clash against each other in debates. You must include a “therefore” component. The “therefore” part of refutation is the part where you explain why your argument trumps the argument of your opponent:

**Speaker 1:** Bananas are better than oranges because they contain more potassium.

**Speaker 2:** Speaker 1 says that bananas are better than oranges, but I disagree. Oranges are better than bananas because they contain more vitamin C. Therefore, you should prefer oranges because while many foods in an ordinary diet contain potassium, few contain an appreciable amount of vitamin C. It is more important to eat oranges whenever possible than it is to eat bananas.

Speaker 2 wins. She has completed the process of refutation by including a “therefore” component in her answer. Notice how this last part of her argument works. She compares her reasoning to Speaker 1’s reasoning to show why her argument is better than her opponent’s. Almost all refutation can follow the basic four-step method demonstrated above.

The same argument is labeled below to show the progression of this method of argument construction:

**Speaker 1:** Bananas are better than oranges because they contain more potassium.

**Speaker 2:** Speaker 1 says that bananas are better than oranges, **but I disagree.** Oranges are better than bananas because they contain more vitamin C. **Therefore,** you should prefer oranges because while many foods in an ordinary diet contain potassium, few contain an appreciable amount of vitamin C. It is more important to eat oranges whenever possible than it is to eat bananas.

**Hint** - Investigate which is more important to the long-term strength and health of the body – Vitamin C or potassium. This could be just the information you need to set the hook!
FOUR-STEP REFUTATION – Review and Practice

STEP 1: “They say....”

It is important to reference the argument you are about to refute so that your audience and judges can easily follow your line of thought. Unlike the bananas/oranges example, debates contain many different arguments. Unless you directly reference which of these arguments you are dealing with, you risk confusing the audience. Good note-taking skills will help you track individual arguments and how they have been refuted.

One important thing to remember is that when you refer to your opponent’s argument, you should do so in shorthand. If you were to repeat all of your opponent’s arguments, you wouldn’t have any speech time to advance arguments of your own. Additionally, you risk reinforcing your opponent’s argument by better explaining it. So try to rephrase the argument that you’re about to refute in just three to seven words: “They say Batman is better than Superman, but...”

STEP 2: “But I disagree...”

In this part of your refutation, you state the basics of your counter-argument. This can be, in the case of the banana-orange controversy, simply the opposite of your opponent’s claim. It can also be an attack on the reasoning or evidence offered for your opponent’s claim. The important thing is to state clearly and concisely the counter-argument you want the judge to endorse.

STEP 3: “Because...”

Having advanced your counter-argument, you need to proceed to offer reasoning. Your reasoning can be independent support for your counter-claim, as in the case above. It can also be a reasoned criticism of the opponent’s argument.

STEP 4: “Therefore...”

Finally, you need to draw a conclusion that compares your refutation to your opponent’s argument and shows why yours effectively defeats theirs. This conclusion is usually done by means of comparison, either of reasons or evidence or both. What you need to accomplish here is to show that your argument is better than their argument because it is:

- **Better reasoned.** Perhaps their argument makes some kind of error in logic or reasoning, of the kind discussed in the unit on logical fallacies.
- **Better evidenced.** Maybe your argument makes use of more or better evidence. Perhaps your sources are better qualified than theirs, or your evidence is more recent than theirs.
- **Empirical.** When we say that an argument is *empirically proven*, we mean that it is demonstrated by past examples. Perhaps your argument relies on empirics, while theirs relies on speculation.
- **Takes theirs into account.** Sometimes your argument may take theirs into account and go a step further. “Even if they’re right about the recreational benefits of crossbows, they’re still too dangerous for elementary school physical education classes.”
- **Has a greater expressed significance.** You can state that your argument has more significance than your opponent’s argument because (for example) it matters more to any given individual or applies more to a larger number of individuals.
- **Consistent with experience.** Perhaps your argument is consistent with experience over time, in a different place, or in different circumstances.
Practice - **ARGUMENTATION “LAY-UPS”**

**“I disagree”**

1. Students form two single-file lines, facing the front of the classroom. The student at the front of the left line should begin the game by making a claim – any claim, such as “Schools should not serve junk food,” or “Jazz is the best kind of music.”
2. Student at the front of the right line must refute the argument, using the four-step method.
3. When finished, those two students go to the back of the opposite line. The exercise repeats, until all students have made a claim and refuted a claim.
LOGICAL FALLACIES

Watch for these tricks of argumentation!

Subject Matter Application:
This can be used with any subject matter in which argument can be a part of the curriculum, especially English and social studies.

Procedure:
• Teach students how to recognize logical fallacies.
• Use “practice with fallacies.”

Tips for the Task Master:
• This same procedure can be used for analyzing any number of argumentative materials such as: advertising, political speeches, editorials, opinion pieces, political debates, or promotional materials.
• Students could work in groups to analyze the argumentative material and present their findings to the class.

Evaluation:
Students hand in written analysis of the magazine advertisement, their rewritten arguments (“fix-it”) or other analysis of fallacious arguments.
Listening for Faulty Reasoning/Logical Fallacies

One of the most important skills you must learn in debate is how to listen. A good listener analyzes what he hears. Listeners who believe everything they are told can get into a lot of trouble. Be especially alert when listening to messages that are meant to persuade you. Be prepared to catch the speaker who has not constructed an argument using sound reasoning but depends, instead, on misleading you. One person’s reasoning is another person’s fallacy. Logical fallacies are forms of arguments that are not acceptable because they contain a flaw in reasoning. Recognize these!

I. FALLACIES OF WHOLES AND PARTS:
A. Fallacy of composition: What is true of the parts is also true of the whole. “My grandmother is a horrible driver so I don’t trust riding with any old person. They are very dangerous and should have their licenses take away!”
B. Fallacy of division: What is true of the whole is true of each part. “All birds have wings. Wings serve the function of flight. So all birds fly.”

II. FALLACIES OF CAUSATION:
A. Fallacy of mistaken causation: Mistaking a symptom or sign for a cause. “All week I have been so thirsty! I know I must have diabetes!”
B. Post hoc ergo propter hoc: After the fact, therefore because of the fact. “History tells us that Jimmy Carter, a previous democratic president, was not a strong president. Past-president and democrat Bill Clinton’s presidency was fraught with controversy. Future democratic presidents will surely be weak leaders.”
C. Slippery Slope: Claims that an event will set off an uncontrollable chain reaction when there is no real reason to expect that reaction to occur. “If we start regulating carbon dioxide, the next thing you know politicians will be telling you what to eat for breakfast.”

III. FALLACIES IN USING NUMBERS:
A. Fallacy of significance: Citing statistics without the necessary context or clarification. “Abortion should be illegal because 99% are done for convenience. Only 1% are performed because of incest or rape.” How many abortions are done each year? How many abortions constitute 1% of the 1.2 million abortions each year? Have you done the math? Is this really an insignificant number?
B. Argumentum ad populum: (Band wagon) Appeal to popular opinion when the speaker asks the listener to become part of a supposedly overwhelming group in favor of some person, product, or idea. “Prior to the Civil War, slavery was just and necessary in the south because the majority of the people wanted it.” Is something moral just because the majority votes for it?

IV. FALSE DILEMMA: Suggesting a limited number of choices. “Deciding the issue of capital punishment is simple; either we have it or we don’t.” There are actually many choices we can make in the way we deal with serious crimes, permanently. What about life in prison, work/restitution, torture, rehabilitation, etc.

V. LOADED LANGUAGE (Fallacy of Psychological Language):
A. Labels: Using a label to arouse the audience’s emotions. “Racist comments, ‘Read my Lips’, KKK, Nazi Germany, Hitler. . .”
B. Stereotypes: Suggesting that one example holds true for all cases. “The most violent gangs are Asian gangs.”
C. **Loaded question or statement:** Asking an unfair question where any answer will condemn the speaker. “Do you think you are smarter than most of your friends?” A “yes”, even if it is true, may make you feel egotistical. A “no” may make you appear untruthful, when you get the best grades.

D. **Grandstanding:** Appealing to popular sentiment or prejudice. Changing a position for the purpose of gaining votes or favor.

V. **IGNORING THE ISSUE:**

A. **Red herring:** Raising an irrelevant issue. “When Former-President Bush got physically ill at the table at the summit with Japan he ruined any chances of successful negotiations.”

B. **Smokescreen:** Clouding the issue. “I have just described every detail of my Aunt Gladys’ terminal illness. She suffered tremendously. These heartbreaking events should convince you to allow others to attain physician-assisted mercy killing.”

C. **Tu quoque:** Defending one’s actions by charging the opponent with the same behavior. “I wasn’t the only one who took campaign contributions from lobbyists. My opponent did the same.”

D. **Straw man:** Refuting only the weaker arguments of the opposition. “Yes we can discuss the economy, education, and foreign policy. Let’s begin by questioning my opponent’s use of a limousine to get here today.”

E. **Ad hominem:** Attacks on the opposing speaker’s character, rather than the ideas presented. “You notice that my opponent’s answer to that reporter’s question about the Japanese Trade Agreement was rude and insulting. Can we believe a candidate who shows such rudeness to the free press?”

VI. **FALLACIES IN USING EVIDENCE:**

A. **Quoting out of context:** Misrepresenting the author’s opinion. Using only part of a quote or changing words for the purpose of leading the listener to believe certain things.

B. **Hasty generalizations:** Basing a generalization on cases that are unrepresentative or insufficient in number. “The states of Montana, Ohio, Oklahoma, North Dakota, South Dakota and Kansas are free of pollution. Why does the United States need a federal smog emission law?”

C. **Weak analogy:** An argument’s conclusion rests on a nonexistent similarity between two examples. “Well, if it worked in a college term paper, it’ll work in American foreign policy.”

VII. **SCARE TACTICS:** Using the threat of harm to advance the conclusion. “Who knows what hidden dangers still lie in the storage areas of the Rancho Seco Nuclear Power Plant, closed in the 1980’s. Nuclear waste presents a danger to you and your family! That is why I urge you to have it remain closed. Do you want to die?”

VIII. **APPEAL TO IGNORANCE:** Suggesting that the opponent’s inability to disprove a conclusion actually proves the conclusion correct. “I haven’t heard my opponent prove his points very well, so you have no choice but to implement mine.”
Practice with Fallacies!

Magazine Manipulation

- Magazines hold a wealth of examples of fallacious claims in the form of advertisements. Examine a popular magazine.
- Find advertisements that use one or more logical fallacies.
- Cut them out and create a visual to present to the class.
- Explain how each advertisement uses faulty reasoning.

Fix-it

Each of the following arguments uses at least one logical fallacy. On a separate piece of paper, identify why each argument is fallacious and improve it by re-wording.

- Every atom in my body is invisible. Therefore, I am invisible.
- If you want to grow up to be like Wonder Woman, you’d better eat those carrots.
- Where did you hide the cookies you stole?
- Pianist Ray Charles says Sinclair Paints are the best. So be sure to use Sinclair Paints when you redecorate your home.
- Philosophers are highly intelligent individuals, because if they weren’t highly intelligent, they wouldn’t be philosophers.
- Ronald Reagan met with space aliens in 1987, and that cannot be disproved.
- Sodium and chlorine, the atomic components of salt, are deadly poisons. Therefore, salt is a deadly poison.
LEARNING GOALS
1. To apply listening skills.
2. To effectively take notes in a debate.
3. To utilize debate notes as a tool for evaluating argumentation during a debate.
4. To utilize debate notes as a tool for evaluating argumentation after a debate.

INTRODUCTION
Debate is about the give and take of arguments. As arguments are made, they relate to each other in a variety of ways. Good note-taking abilities are essential for success in debate. If you are able to track how arguments relate to each other, you will be able to compare and contrast the balance of arguments.

The system used to take notes in a debate is called “flowing.” It’s called “flowing” because arguments flow across the page as they relate to each other. Taking notes in this format provides a map of the debate and shows what was said and by whom. Flowing also allows you to plan specific attacks on your opponent’s arguments, and organizes your thoughts for your speeches. You make a flow by taking notes of each speech in a column.

Do not try to write down every word your opponent says. Try to capture only the major ideas and arguments of your opponent. It will be important to use symbols and abbreviations to help you take more efficient notes.

Normally, there are two sides in a debate. One side makes a case for the motion for debate (they propose the motion, for example), while the other side argues against that case (they oppose the motion). The two sides alternate speeches as the debate progresses. This process is graphically represented in a debater’s notes. Here’s an example of a bad debate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposing side</th>
<th>Opposing Side</th>
<th>Proposing side</th>
<th>Opposing Side</th>
<th>Proposing Side</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>——&gt; NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>——&gt; NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why is this an example of a bad debate? The example “debaters” are not making arguments, and just saying “Yes” and “No.” In this sample of note-taking, you can see that arrows are used to show how arguments relate to each other in a debate.

PRACTICAL HINTS FOR FLOWING
1. Shorten each word to 1-2 syllables.
2. Eliminate vowels when abbreviating.
3. Use the minimum number of notations, but make sure you can understand what you have written.
4. Use lines and arrows to connect arguments for both debaters.
ACTIVITY: FUN WITH LISTS

Procedure:
Have students prepare to take notes. Explain that you will read a series of lists to them and that they should try to write down as many of the list items as they can. Begin with the simpler lists, on the left, and proceed to the more complex lists on the right. After each list, stop and ask students to repeat back the items on the list in order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List 1</th>
<th>List 2</th>
<th>List 3</th>
<th>List 4</th>
<th>List 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Toyota</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Tom Brokaw</td>
<td>George Bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Honda</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Diane Sawyer</td>
<td>Volvo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>578</td>
<td>Kia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Dan Rather</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ferrari</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Peter Jennings</td>
<td>Cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Mitsubishi</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>Regis Philbin</td>
<td>Halloween</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,023</td>
<td>Chevrolet</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Bill O’Reilly</td>
<td>Cheerios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Mercedes-Benz</td>
<td>Acura</td>
<td>Leslie Stahl</td>
<td>882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,598</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Wolf Blitzer</td>
<td>Rottweiler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cadillac</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wolf Blitzer</td>
<td>Rottweiler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tips for the Taskmaster:
Gradually increase your speed as you progress from list to list. Develop lists of your own, with more diverse and longer content. One suggestion is to prepare lists of assertions on a given topic and have students write down all of the assertions in order. This will help them prepare for taking notes in a debate. For example, you might read the following list to students, saying the numbers out loud:

1. Education policy should be reformed.
2. There are no problems in our schools today.
3. Students have too much homework.
4. Teachers really care about students.
5. Schools should require students to learn a foreign language.

These sorts of lists are helpful as teaching tools because you can ask students to show which of the statements contradict each other and how the statements could be revised to make them consistent. You can also ask students to make each assertion into a complete argument.
**ACTIVITY: NOW YOU’RE COOKING**

*Materials:*
One or more cookbooks, preferably books that contain recipes using ingredients with which the students will not be familiar. Scan the books ahead of time to identify a few recipes that you will read to the students.

*Procedure:*
- Have students prepare to take notes. Explain to students that you will be reading them a recipe and that they should try to write down all of the ingredients.
- Read the students a recipe without repeating any of the ingredients. You will not have to read the baking or cooking instructions, although you can if you wish. Here’s an ingredient list for Aloo Gosht, which is a good list because it uses metric measurements and some ingredients with which students may not be familiar:

---

**Aloo-Gosht**

*Ingredients*

1 kilo lamb/goat/beef meat  
500 gm. small potatoes  
1 big onion thinly sliced  
1 big onion  
75 gm. natural yoghurt  
2 tea spoon coriander powder  
1 tea spoon cumin  
1 1/2 teaspoon chilli powder  
150 gm. ghee or oil  
2 teaspoon ginger paste  
2 teaspoon garlic paste  
1 bay leaf  
1 teaspoon turmeric  
garam masala made of 3 black cardamom, 1 inch Cinnamon, 4 cloves, 5 green cardamom, 12 black pepper corns  
salt 1 or 2 teaspoon

---

*Tips for the Taskmaster:*
After you read the recipe, have each student read their list aloud. Keep track of their mistakes without correcting their presentation. After all students have presented their list, read the correct list. You might want to announce the name of the student whose list was closest to the original list.
ACTIVITY: PLAYING CARDS

Materials:
- A deck of standard playing cards
- Prepared flow sheets for the students (or have students make their own)
- One experienced student to serve as scribe (or serve as your own scribe as you read)

Procedure:
This exercise teaches students how to flow in debates using playing cards rather than actual arguments. Students will need to have a prepared flow sheet divided into columns. The sheet could look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Proposing</th>
<th>First Opposing</th>
<th>Second Proposing</th>
<th>Second Opposing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shuffle the cards. Explain to the students that you will begin with the arguments made by an imaginary first speaker for the proposing side. The students should write down each argument, which will be represented by a playing card. Emphasize to the students that they must **space out** the individual arguments on their page, leaving space between each argument so they can effectively track the responses.

Begin with the first speaker’s arguments. Pull four cards from the deck and number them, i.e., “My first argument is the Jack of Hearts. My second argument is the four of spades. My third argument is the seven of diamonds. My fourth argument is the King of Diamonds.” Many students will not use appropriate abbreviations for these first cards, so you might want to go over the flowsheet to make sure students are using an effective abbreviation system.

Next, you should deliver the first opposing speaker’s arguments. You should be creative, and make sure you use relational references to illustrate the clash of arguments. As students get more advanced, you can increase your use of terms used in formal debates. Here’s an example speech and the corresponding flow sheet:

“They say ‘Jack of Hearts.’ First, that’s not true because of the eight of clubs. Second, Queen of Diamonds. Now, they say ‘four of spades.’ My first answer is two of hearts. Second, the Ace of Spades disproves that
argument. Their third argument is the seven of diamonds. However, this seven of diamonds argument proves our side. Also, nine of hearts. Their final argument is the King of Diamonds. But I’ve already answered this with the Queen of Diamonds. Second, five of diamonds. Third, two of spades.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Proposing</th>
<th>First Opposing</th>
<th>Second Proposing</th>
<th>Second Opposing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. JH</td>
<td>1. Not true: 8C 2. QD</td>
<td>1. Ans. By QD 2. 5D 3. 2S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 4S</td>
<td>1. 2H 2. AS disproves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 7D</td>
<td>1. 7D proves our side 2. 9H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. KD</td>
<td>1. Ans. By QD 2. 5D 3. 2S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the students will be lost at this point, so you should have your scribe (or you) read over the master flow sheet so students can make corrections to their flowsheets. Then you can deliver the third speech to demonstrate how argument extension works. Here’s another sample speech and the corresponding flowsheet:

“Extend our first argument, the Jack of Hearts. First, the eight of clubs contradicts the Queen of Diamonds. Second, four of clubs. Now, on our second argument. We said four of spades. They say two of hearts and ace of spades, but the four of spades is more recent than the two of hearts. Also, there’s no evidence for the ace of spades. On our third point. We said seven of diamonds. They said this proves their side, but they’re wrong – it proves our side because Ace of Diamonds. Finally, extend our
argument about the King of Diamonds. This is more important than their point. Also, the five of diamonds and the two of spades are empirically wrong. The seven of clubs proves this.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Proposing</th>
<th>First Opposing</th>
<th>Second Proposing</th>
<th>Second Opposing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. JH</td>
<td>1. Not true: 8C</td>
<td>Extend JH.</td>
<td>1. Ans. By QD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 4S</td>
<td>2. QD</td>
<td>1.8C contradicts QD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 7D</td>
<td>1. 2H</td>
<td>2. 4C</td>
<td>1. Extend KD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. AS disproves</td>
<td>1.4S is more recent than 2H</td>
<td>Outweighs theirs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. KD</td>
<td>1. 7D proves our side</td>
<td>2. no ev for AS</td>
<td>2. 5D and 2S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. 9H</td>
<td>7D actually proves our side: AD.</td>
<td>empirically wrong: 7C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can continue the exercise, but this is usually enough for beginning students. Explain to students that this process shows how arguments are made and relate to each other in debates. Tell them that the cards only stand in for arguments, and in debates they will have to track real arguments and how they relate to each other.
Spontaneous Argumentation

Spontaneous Argumentation is a “mini-debate.” The classroom teacher can use SpAr to have the students discuss propositions derived from the curriculum.

FORMAT
Two students are selected. They speak from the front of the room.

One

Affirmative Closing       One Minute student will debate the Affirmative, supporting the topic and the other student will debate the Negative, opposing the topic. The sides are assigned in a random manner. The students are given the topic and both look at it for one minute. The debate progresses using the following format:

Affirmative Opening......................... One Minute
Negative Opening .......................... One Minute
*Unstructured Argumentation............. Three Minutes
Negative Closing......................... One Minute

*In “Unstructured Argumentation” each student should be polite, but firm in asserting his/her right to speak, while allowing his/her opponent a chance to speak.

SPEAKER DUTIES
One minute speeches may not lend themselves to highly structured organizational schemes. Nevertheless, they should still give a sense of having a beginning, a middle and an end. There should be an introductory remark or two, a brief presentation of arguments supporting their assigned position, and some concluding remarks. All speeches other than the first affirmative should make some reference to what was said before. During speeches, the students do not address each other. They address the audience. During the unstructured argumentation, students may address each other, but they still face the audience, not each other.

TOPICS
Topics should be drawn from classroom instruction. They should be statements that reasonable people may agree or disagree with. Topics should NOT be questions.
Examples:
Math (Integrated): Resolved: Tables convey better information than graphs.
Math (Algebra): Resolved: Solving quadratic equations using the quadratic formula is easier than factoring.
Biology: Resolved: Who a person is can be determined by his genetic makeup.

Example SPAR Topics continued...
Physics: Resolved: The theory of relativity is a special case of some other more advanced theory that hasn’t yet been discovered.

U.S. History: Resolved: The writers of the Constitution should have outlawed slavery.

European History: Resolved: WW II was caused by WW I.

English: Resolved: Owen Meany should have avoided his destiny, not embraced it.

Physical Education: Resolved: Perfecting skills that you are best at is more effective than improving those you are weak at.

Art History: Resolved: There is an objective way do determine what is art.

Visual Art: Resolved: Water colors are more expressive than oil.

Computer Science: Resolved: Ease of use is more important than sheer computing power.

Music: Resolved: Atonal music has inherently less value than tonal music.

EVALUATION:
Each student is judged individually on his or her performance. This is NOT a win-lose debate. Students can be evaluated on the following:

Use of information:
Although this is an “unprepared” activity, the student is expected to be able to use course content to support his position. This criterion can involve demonstrating a certain required amount of knowledge, and also the ability to adapt information to advance his position.

Analysis:
Students need to use logic and reasoning, critical thinking and clear argumentation.

Clash:
Students are expected to respond to each other’s arguments. The activity is not simply “impromptu for two”—two ships that pass in the night. Each volley of argument should advance the debate. The closing speeches should reflect some progress in treating the topic, not just a repetition of the opening statement.
**Etiquette:**
The speakers should listen attentively while their opponent is speaking. During “Unstructured argumentation,” students should be polite, allowing their opponent to speak, but they need to assert their right to speak. Students should be aggressive, but a free-for-all simultaneous argument should be discouraged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names (aff)</th>
<th>V. (neg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knock Out</td>
<td>Won on Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>Sucker Punch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SpAr**

**Affirmative:**
- Use of information: 4 3 2 1
- Analysis: 4 3 2 1
- Clash: 4 3 2 1
- Etiquette: 4 3 2 1

**Negative:**
- Use of information: 4 3 2 1
- Analysis: 4 3 2 1
- Clash: 4 3 2 1
- Etiquette: 4 3 2 1
Silly *SPAR TOPICS*

*Designed to Create a “Debatable” Atmosphere*

- Barbie is a more appropriate role model than GI Joe
- Cows are better than horses.
- Softball is easier to play than hardball.
- Disneyland represents all that is best about America.
- Halloween is a better holiday than Valentine’s Day.
- Santa is better than the Easter Bunny.
- Buttons are better than zippers.
- Football is the most violent sport.
- Sunday is the worst day for watching TV.
- Belts are preferable to suspenders.
- Cats are better pets than dogs.
- Backpacks are better than lockers.
- Sleep is for wimps.
- Bowling should be the national sport of the United Sports.
- Animals are appropriate mascots for high schools.
- Children watch too much TV.
- There should be a single presidential term of six years.
- Doritos are better than Pringles.
- Penmanship should be a required subject in high school.
- Dark chocolate is better than white chocolate.
- Rock is better than Rap.
- Blondes have more fun.
- Make up should be banned from high schools.
- Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.
- Showers are better than baths.
Panel Debate

Students will participate in a panel debate on a controversial issue and interact with the class during question/answer segments.

FORMAT

Determine who will be moderator; who will present the affirmative arguments; and who will present the negative arguments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderator Intro</td>
<td>2-3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Affirmative Speaker</td>
<td>2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Negative Speaker</td>
<td>2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Affirmative Speaker</td>
<td>2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Negative Speaker</td>
<td>2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Affirmative Speaker</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator Summary</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOPICS

Select a topic and present it in a resolution format (see appendix handout #1) Topics should be controversial, balanced, a statement made in positive form (avoiding “not”). The wording should be kept simple and clear.

Let the research begin!

Each member of the panel should be responsible for three sources (only one of which may be a source exclusively from the internet) of information on the topic.

Each piece of research needs to be clearly labeled with the following source information: author, title of source, date of publication, and page numbers.

Each member needs to be prepared to share his/her research with his/her panel members on both the affirmative and the negative.

It’s helpful if each student highlights or brackets key arguments and evidence in the information they’ve researched.

For tips on constructing speeches, see appendix handout #3

SPEAKER DUTIES

The Moderator

At the beginning of the debate... the moderator: introduces the topic, defines the terms, and gives background information.

For example: if the topic were capital punishment, the moderator might give a brief history of capital punishment in the United States; define capital punishment; and summarize current law.

The debaters need to know the content of this introduction prior to the presentation.
During the debate... the moderator: introduces the debaters and keeps track of time

At the conclusion of each debater's speech... the moderator: will call on opposing debaters and/or class members to ask questions of the speakers (if needed, the moderator may ask questions)

At the conclusion of the debate... the moderator will present a 1-3 minute summary of the main issues presented by each side in the debate

The Debaters
The presentation of the arguments and evidence should be equally divided between the two team members. Each debater will be expected to ask questions (see appendix handout #2) of the opposition.

The First Affirmative Speaker's 2-5 minute speech will include:
• at least two arguments in favor of the resolution
• evidence from the research which supports the arguments

The First Negative Speaker's 2-5 minute speech will include:
• at least two arguments against the resolution
• evidence from the research which supports the arguments
• refutation (see appendix for handout) of the affirmative speaker's arguments

The Second Affirmative Speaker's 2-5 minute speech will include:
• at least one new argument in favor of the resolution
• evidence from the research which supports the arguments
• refutation (see appendix for handout) of the negative speaker's arguments

The Second Negative Speaker’s 2-5 minute speech will include:
• at least one new argument against the resolution
• evidence from the research which supports the arguments
• refutation (see appendix for handout) of the affirmative speakers’ arguments
• a final statement of the negative position

The First Affirmative Speaker’s 1-2 minute speech will include:
• refutation (see appendix for handout) of the negative speakers’ arguments
• a final statement of the affirmative position

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
Class members are expected to take notes
ask pertinent questions of the debaters during allotted questioning

Class members may be asked to write a brief comment on their personal attitude toward the topic prior to the debate; following the debate they may be asked to indicate any change in their opinion, and why be asked to write an evaluation of the debate.

EVALUATION:
## Panel Debate Critiques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderator</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>5 - beyond the call of duty</th>
<th>4 - impressive!</th>
<th>3 - good</th>
<th>2 - so-so...</th>
<th>1 - huh?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opening Speech

- balance of presentation
- organization
- research (min. 3 sources)

### Moderation of Panel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderation of Panel</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Summary Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary Statement</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Comments:

\[\text{Comments:}\]

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panelist</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>5 - beyond the call of duty</th>
<th>4 - impressive!</th>
<th>3 - good</th>
<th>2 - so-so...</th>
<th>1 - huh?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intro/Conclusion

- Clash w/ opposition
- rebuttal and or questions
- Clear reasoning in contentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence (min. 3 sources)</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Comments:

\[\text{Comments:}\]
CLASSROOM CONGRESS

The purpose of classroom congress is to develop students' reading, writing, listening and speaking skills through the process of group deliberative decision-making. Congressional sessions and preparation provide a format for discussion of current events, historical implications, literary dilemmas, and the legislative process. Sessions take place in the classroom within the structured environment of parliamentary procedure and formal research.

Subject Matter Application:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Studies</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should the U.S. enter WWI?</td>
<td>Evolution should be taught in schools.</td>
<td>Farewell to Manzanar - A country is responsible for the protection of its citizens against any perceived threat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should Henry VIII separate from the Catholic Church?</td>
<td>Cloning should be banned.</td>
<td>The Jungle - An employer has the right to set his/her own standards for employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should the U.S. use troops in ________?</td>
<td>Nuclear weapons should be destroyed.</td>
<td>The Crucible - An individual is not worthy of respect without personal integrity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Materials:
- Seating Charts for Presiding Officer and teacher

Procedure:
Classroom Congress can be a weekly activity, serving to reinforce material covered during the week or offering students a chance to discuss contemporary issues. Sessions encourage critical thinking and a tolerance of different viewpoints by offering a forum for discussion, evaluation, and argumentation. The subject matter of the class serves to support arguments that naturally flow from the class content. This is an effective way to simultaneously involve all of the students in the classroom in an evaluation process.

- Decide who will preside and how speakers will present speeches

Presiding Officer (may be teacher or student)
This individual serves as a moderator, recognizing speakers and questioners and maintaining order through parliamentary procedure. The “PO” gives appropriate time signals, establishes a tone of formality, and prevents flippant, off-hand remarks or personal attacks.

Student Speakers
1-3 minute speeches: Select two students to support the resolution and two students to oppose the resolution each week. Each member of the class should have a chance to present a formal argument for or against a particular piece of legislation during a 9 week period. Additional speeches may be offered in support or opposition by any other members of the class at any time.
2 minute cross-examination: All students are encouraged to ask questions they deem relevant. Questions are limited to one sentence and are recognized by the PO.
Students who wish to question the speakers must stand to be recognized and may ask only one question at a time.

- Set up and conduct the session
### SETTING UP THE SESSION

1. Explain the characteristics of a bill and a resolution.  
   (See "Bills and Resolutions" in this packet)

2. Provide students with specific legislation or divide students into committees to brainstorm topics and write their own bills and resolutions.

3. Provide an opportunity for peer editing and small-group revision.

4. Type, duplicate and distribute bills and resolutions.

5. Have the group set the order in which the legislation will be discussed.

6. (Optional) Select designated student speakers for the week.

7. Brief the legislation.  
   - Terms to define  
   - Research options  
   - Pertinent historical information  
   - Anticipated arguments

8. Assign research for each group, giving students time to build arguments and select support materials.

9. Review basic parliamentary procedure.

10. Present requirements of the session:  
    - Deliver arguments from the front of the room;  
    - Begin with a salutation "Members of the House. . .";  
    - Take notes to support the eventual written vote;  
    - Direct all comments toward the speaker or presiding officer;  
    - Speak only when called upon by the presiding officer;

### CONDUCTING THE SESSION

1. Call session to order, reinforcing the basic rules of conduct and courtesy.

2. Read or ask that the legislation be read.

3. Call on one of the assigned affirmative speakers or ask for an affirmative volunteer.

4. Open cross-examination period when the speaker concludes.  
   (See "Asking Questions in Debate" in this packet)

5. Call on one of the assigned negative speakers or ask for a negative volunteer.

6. Open cross-examination period when speaker concludes.

7. Alternate in the same manner, until argumentation becomes repetitive.

8. Call for a vote that will end the debate.


10. Adjourn.

- Develop a seating chart for the Presiding Officer and one for the teacher for grading purposes.
- Agree on a method for the Presiding Officer to indicate who has spoken and who has asked questions
- Format suggestion  (This may be modified, but is a suggestion for a one hour session)
Tips for the Taskmaster:

• **Change times to meet class needs**
• **You will need at least three bills to allow all students to speak without too much repetition**
• **Allow students to do some evaluation of their peers**
• **Presiding Officer evaluation may include:**
  
  - Ability to maintain control
  - Equity of time
  - Accurate timing of speeches and cross-examination
  - Knowledge of parliamentary procedure
• **Evaluate and grade the speaker's best speech**
• **Explore a holistic-based evaluation**
• **Student speaker evaluation attached**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main motion, opening debate</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read bill</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative Speaker</td>
<td>1-3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Speaker</td>
<td>1-3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(alternate in the same manner until debate becomes repetitive)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to end debate</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote on legislation</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjourn</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation:**

• **Allow students time to provide a written justification for their vote**
• **Collect notes and written justifications and share with students**
BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

The following examples highlight the differences in style and format between a bill and a resolution and show how a variety of solutions might be offered when dealing with a particular current issue. A Bill or Resolution MUST call for a change in current policy.

A Resolution presents a philosophical statement with three or four reasons for the stand. A resolution does not require a specific course of action.

EXAMPLE OF A RESOLUTION
Desecration of the American Flag

1 Whereas, the American flag is the most noticeable symbol of
2 the United States, and
3 Whereas, thousands of Americans have died in defense of that
4 symbol, and
5 Whereas, the burning of the American flag has historically
6 represented a disrespect for American ideals and policies;
7 Therefore, be it resolved by this assembly that a constitutional
8 amendment should be passed making desecration of the American
9 flag illegal.

A Bill creates a specific plan to solve a problem. A bill requires identification of an agency to carry out the plan, funding provisions, timelines for enactment, and enforcement procedures.

EXAMPLE OF A BILL
Classroom Cheating

1 Be it enacted by this assembly that:
2 Section 1. Every student caught cheating on standardized tests,
3 classroom tests or assignments will have a permanent disciplinary
4 notice attached to the student transcript.
5 Section 2. Every time a student is required to provide a
6 transcript for college application, scholarship application or job
7 application, the “notice of cheating” is to be forwarded as well.
8 Section 3. Said student is permanently suspended from all
9 extracurricular activities for the duration of his/her high school
10 career.

Evaluation:
## Student Congress Critique

### Representative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shall we call you senator?</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Tepid</th>
<th>What were you thinking!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>structure/organization</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate content and language</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical expression</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocal expression</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persuasive appeals</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>clash</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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### Comments:

**Evaluation:**

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### Comments:
Congress Conventions

Beginning Discussion
Chair: The Chair is open to new business.
Member A: [Mister/Madam] Chairman.
Chair: The Chair recognizes [identifies Member A]
Member A: I move that the first period at Stagg begin at 8:00 a.m.
Chair: Is there a second?
Member B: I second it.

Chair: It has been moved and seconded that the first period at Stagg begin at 8:00 a.m., Is there any discussion?

Conducting Discussion
EACH MEMBER WHO WISHES TO SPEAK FOR OR AGAINST THE MOTION MAY STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED TO SPEAK

At the End of Discussion

Chair: All those in favor of the motion that the first period at Stagg begin at 8:00 a.m. signify by saying aye; (pause) all those opposed say nay.

Chair: All those in favor of the motion that the first period at Stagg begin at 8:00 a.m. signify by raising your hand, (count the votes.) All opposed raise your hand. (count the votes)

All those in favor of the motion that the first period at Stagg begin at 8:00 a.m. signify by responding aye and all of those opposed signify by responding nay to a roll call. The secretary will call the roll. (if there is no secretary the Chair should call the roll.)

After the vote has been completed
Chair: The ayes have it and the motion is carried.

OR

The nays have it and the motion is defeated.

Chair The Chair is not open for further business.
How to Select a Topic
and
Present it in a Resolution Format

Students should be encouraged to write and choose topics for the debate. Topics should be controversial, balanced, a statement made in positive form (avoiding “not”). The wording should be kept simple and clear.

Make sure your topic is...

controversial
• good controversial topic:
Resolved that uniforms should be required in public high schools
• poor controversial topic:
Resolved that we should have less crime in the United States.

balanced
• well-balanced topic:
Resolved that the death penalty should be abolished in the United States.
• poorly-balanced (one-sided) topic:
Resolved that sports should be abolished in the high school.

Make sure your resolution is worded...
as a value or policy NOT a fact
There are three types of RESOLUTIONS:

Value: Resolved that individuals have the right to smoke.
• a value-based resolution uses a qualifying word and places one value over another

Policy: Resolved that cigarette smoking should be abolished in all public facilities in the United States.
• a policy-based resolution advocates a change in current policy

Fact: Resolved that cigarette smoking is hazardous to human health.
• a fact-based resolution can be proven true or false based on evidence

Value and Policy topics work best in the classroom.
in a positive form (avoiding “not”)
• positive form
Resolved that academics are more important than extra curricular activities.
• negative form
Resolved that all students should not be required to participate in extra-curricular activities.
How to Ask & Answer Questions in a Debate

Some debate formats incorporate time for question and answer periods. These can be the best part of a debate, as question time is interactive and can be very entertaining and informative. However, it is not the case that you will automatically be able to sparkle in question and answer time. The skills for asking and answering questions must be learned and practiced, just like any other skill.

STRIVE TO ASK QUESTIONS THAT REQUIRE ...

clarification
“What do you mean by the term ‘racial bias’?”

interpretation
“What’s in the evidence to show that capital punishment had anything to do with the murder rate in California?”

speculation
“If capital punishment were replaced with life-sentences, how would the criminal justice system be affected?”

application
“How would you feel if one of your family member’s were murdered?”

analysis
“How do you explain the fact that the murder rate drops following an execution?”

AVOID:

questions that can be answered yes/no
“Does California currently have a death penalty?”

friendly questions
“Do you agree that the death penalty is wrong?”

Tips on Cross-Examination

1. Remember that the longer you ask for an argument restatement, the more you give your opponent a chance to repeat his/her arguments.
2. Do not back down too soon
3. Keep the exchange even. Don’t permit the respondent to talk the time away. If you must interrupt, do so gracefully...e.g. “Thanks, I understand.”
4. Tell the truth when you know it. Never deny the obvious or lie.
5. Stay calm. Stay in control of your emotions and you will appear confident.
CONSTRUCTING A SPEECH FOR A DEBATE

In a debate, a speaker presents arguments and supporting evidence for or against a resolution, and refutes the arguments of the opposing side.

**AN ARGUMENT:** answers the question: **why** you favor or oppose the resolution.

**EVIDENCE** defends and or explains your argument. Evidence may include the following:
- quotations
- statistics/ facts
- examples / anecdotes

(be sure to include sources for these)

**A REFUTATION:** identifies an opponent’s argument then uses evidence or logic in an attempt to disprove it. (Yes, that’s why debaters must be taking notes while others speak)

**a refutation may point out:**
- misuse of evidence
- outdated evidence
- contradicting evidence
- quoting an inappropriate authority
- leaps in logic:

**over generalization**
“All tall people are good basketball players.”

**no correlation** between cause/effect
“When I wear my green shirt, my team wins; therefore, my green shirt causes the team to win.”

**band-wagoning**
“Mom, everyone is going to the party, so you should let me go too.”

**ad hominem**
(Don’t attack the character of your opponent)
“My opponent is a man of severely limited intelligence.”

**red-herring**
(changing the subject of the argument)
“Do you believe school uniforms are important?”
“Yes, but the quality of school lunches is really bad.”

**SAMPLE/EXAMPLE of Refutation**
resolution: Resolved that the death penalty should be abolished in the United States.
argument: The death penalty does not deter crime.
evidence: According to Shirley Keller, author of Murder Most Foul, in 1998 there were fewer murders per capita in England which does not have capital punishment than there were in California which does (893).

**refutation:** It may be true that England had fewer murders per capita in 1998 than California (**acknowledges argument**), but there’s nothing in the evidence to show that capital punishment or the absence of the death penalty had anything to do with the murder rate (**notes a leap in logic—no correlation**)