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***Academic debate***

**What is debate?**

A debate is a contest, or, perhaps, like a game, where two or more speakers present their arguments intent on persuading one another. Men have been debating with one another since the beginning of time when the serpent first debated with Eve the benefits of eating certain fruits in the Garden.

**Why debate?**

1. He [the student debater] learns to use a library, and to find the exact information he needs in the shortest possible time.
2. He learns to be thorough and accurate.
3. He learns to analyze; to distinguish between the vital and the unimportant.
4. He learns the need of proving his statements; of supporting every statement with valid evidence and sound reasoning—and he learns to demand the same sort of proof for the statements of others.
5. He learns to present ideas in a clear and effective manner, and in a way which wins others to his way of thinking.
6. He learns to think under pressure, to "use his head" in a time of need, to make decisions quickly and accurately

**Four types of debate:**

1- Parliamentary Debate. This is the debating that goes on in colleges and universities.

2- Lincoln-Douglas Debate (also called value debate) is modeled after the namesake for the activity. In an Illinois election of the mid-1800s, Abe Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas debated the slavery issue before audiences in different towns around the state.

3- Cross Examination Debate (also called policy debate or team debate). In this type of debate two teams (two students each), one representing the affirmative position and one representing the negative position, will debate topics of public or government policy.

4- Academic Debate. These are debates of a purely academic nature. An example of this type of debate would be creation/evolution debates.

**Suggest that you follow these four steps:**

1. Read for background information about the subject.
2. Prepare a comprehensive bibliography.
3. Collect as much material as you can find.
4. Read and study the material discovered.

**Academic Style Debating featuring Worlds Style Points of Information:**

**Heckling**

Heckling is sometimes allowed in Academic style debate.

**The Judging Ballot**

* At the National Seminar and in most provincial competitions, debaters will be judged using a score sheet similar to that used for other styles of debate.
* The Judging Ballot has a separate category in which to evaluate “Debate Skills” - one’s knowledge of the debate rules, courtesy, rebuttal and listening skills, and the ability to use humor and rhetorical devices appropriately.
* Judges are instructed to penalize the raising of excessive Points of Information (team members raising Points simultaneously to disrupt or intimidate their opponent) is not encouraged.
* Judges are also instructed to penalize debaters severely for failing to rise, or for refusing to accept, Points of Information.

**A chairman** moderates the debate, introduces each debater at the beginning of his or her remarks, and thanks the debater at the conclusion of his or her remarks.

Speaking times will normally be similar, with all debaters receiving an equal amount of speaking time (except for the complaints session at the end).

**Rules for Academic Debate:**

1. Academic style debating is sometimes referred to as "Classical" or "Platform" style debating. In this style, each debater is expected to deliver a constructive speech and to rebut.
2. The moderator grants the right to speak by introducing a debater. Once he or she has the floor, a debater is obliged to surrender it only when ordered to do so by the moderator. Usually this occurs only after a serious breach of the rules or when the debater has exceeded his or her allotted time.
3. Debaters should always preface their remarks by addressing the moderator ("Mr. [or Madam] Moderator"); they may also acknowledge the presence of "Worthy Opponents, Ladies and Gentlemen", though this is not mandatory.

All references to other debaters should be made in the third person.

1. Moderators should be quick to call debaters to order for any breaches of the rules.

Judges should not hesitate to penalize debaters for remarks made in bad taste or any violations of the rules.

1. Since there are no Points of Order or Privilege, at the conclusion of each debate the moderator will give each debater an opportunity to point out any infraction of the rules or misrepresentation of his or her position by his or her opponents. When alleging such an infraction, a debater must identify the specific debate rule that has been broken or his or her remark that has been misconstrued. Debater accused of the violation or misrepresentation should be given an opportunity to defend himself or herself. The Moderator shall not rule on any such objections.
2. Unless the Director otherwise prescribes, heckling of a speaking debater is permitted except for Debates where World’s Points of Information are being used. When allowed, heckling should be Pertinent, humorous, brief and infrequent, and it should not be used just to disrupt the delivery of an opponent. Judges will severely penalize debaters who lower the level of debate through excessive or thoughtless interruptions.
3. Where permitted, Points of Information shall be entertained. Such a Point of Information may be in the form of either a question to the debater making a speech or a remark addressed through the moderator.

All debaters are required to rise at least one such point with each opponent during each contest.

While the debater who is interrupted is required to accept at least one point raised by each opponent, he or she has sole discretion whether and when to accept them and how long to let them go on.

Points of Information must be brief and may not be raised during the first or final minute of a constructive Speech or during a rebuttal-defense summary speech.

To raise a Point of Information, a debater shall stand and say “Point of Information”;

The interrupted debater may decline to take the point and cut off or ask the interrupter to sit down, accept the point immediately, or defer it until later in the speech.

If several debaters raise such points simultaneously, the speaker with the floor may refuse to accept any of them or may entertain one.

A debater whose point is not accepted shall immediately sit down.

Excessive rising of such points shall be penalized. The time taken to raise and reply to such Points shall be included in the speaking time of the debater with the floor.

If a debater speaks for more than a minute less than his or her allotted time, any upraised Point of Information may be asked at the conclusion of the speech.