

Impromptu Debate Procedure

Pre-Debate

1. The class is divided in half, and each half will be assigned a role: Affirmative or Opposing.
2. The two groups will present the reading distributed in class and share related experience and knowledge.
3. Team members work together to determine both
 - The three or four best arguments for their position and
 - The two or three best arguments for the opposition.
4. Some team members brainstorm to create the best arguments and evidence for arguments, while other team members anticipate strong responses to the opposition's best points.
5. Decide who will be the 1st speaker.
6. Decide who will be the "facilitator" in case your group "runs into trouble."

The Debate Itself

1. During the debate, everyone speaks. A speaker for the Affirmative and for the Opposing sides alternate speaking, beginning with the Affirmative side.
2. 1st Affirmative speaker reads the proposition, states the Affirmative team supports the proposition for "X" number of reasons, explains any key terms that need explaining and then gives the 1st point and the evidence or reasons why that point is valid.
3. 1st Opposing speaker reads the Opposing position, says that their team supports this position for "X" number of reasons, agrees with or objects to (and offers alternatives to) the definition of the key terms that the Affirmative provides and then gives the 1st reason and the evidence or reasons why that point is valid.
4. From this point on, each individual speaker decides whether s/he will add a new point or refutes the latest argument made by the opposite side. E.g., the 2nd Affirmative speaker makes a 2nd point and the evidence or reasons for the Affirmative Position.
5. The debate continues as different speakers argue different points.
6. Once everyone has spoken once, the floor is open to anyone who has an additional point to make or additional support for a point already made.

Tasks for All Debaters During the Debate

1. Keep track of what members of your own team and the opposition team says.
2. Think of defenses of your own position.
3. Think of weaknesses in the opposition's position.