

**AE** Academic  
UK English UK

# An Introduction to Debates

EXAMPLE



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## Debates EXAMPLE

### What is a debate?

A debate is, basically, a for or against argument. You have to debate why your position is correct and [redacted]. You are allocated a time to present your arguments and add rebuttals to the opposing points. You need to support your [redacted] stats and sources.

### The topic

[redacted] ('Climate change should be taken more seriously') or about general philosophies or ideas ('beauty is better than brains'). [redacted] disagrees with the topic is called the NEGATIVE (or the opposition).

### The set up

Usually, the debate consists of two teams of three speakers. [redacted] [redacted]. Each presenter has a specific time (4 minutes) to present ideas and their rebuttals and after each presenter has [redacted] on the [redacted] of speeches.

### **A Basic Debate**

[4 minutes per person]

#### **First Speaker Affirmative**

Definition / keywords.

[redacted]  
[time keeper rings bell once at 3 minutes & twice at 4 minutes = time up]

#### **Second Speaker Negative**

[redacted]  
Introduces team's argument.

Rebuttal.

[redacted]  
['rebuttal' means choose a point [redacted]]

#### **Third Speaker Affirmative / Fourth Speaker Negative**

[redacted]  
[redacted] **Affirmative**  
Rebut opposition's debate & summarise their key points.

#### **The adjudicators / judges**

[redacted]  
**The teams**  
Thank each other.

## Debate Tips

### Video: Top Debate Tips from Wellesley College

\_\_\_\_\_ a helpful list of the top tips you want to utilize in a debate.  
Watch this video to learn the best ways to prepare for, \_\_\_\_\_



Video: \_\_\_\_\_

Listen to the video and take notes:

## Questions: Top Debate Tips from Wellesley College

Use your notes to fill in the table below. Some sections have been filled in.

<b>1. Before the debate:</b>	
i)	
ii)	
iii)	
iv)	
v)	
<b>Claim</b>	
<b>Warrant</b>	<i>Backing up what you're saying with facts and statistics. Explaining what you're</i>
<b>3. Opponent is</b>	
i)	
ii)	<i>Think</i>
iii)	
<b>4. During</b>	
i)	
ii)	<i>Be concise, prioritise and concede ground strategically.</i>
i)	
ii)	<i>Don't dismiss your opponent's arguments.</i>
<b>6. Final tips</b>	
i)	<i>Be</i>
ii)	
iii)	
iv)	<i>Be aware of</i>
<b>7. After</b>	
i)	
ii)	<i>Don't forget to review your performance.</i>

Total Score \_\_ / 12

\*Answers on the last page.

## Debating language

### Opening the debate:

[a nice opening is using a quote]

*Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to this debate.*

*The motion for debate today is: ... defining the motion...*

*Let us first define some important terms in this debate...*

*... is... / that ... are ... When we say ... should ... we mean that ..*

### Presenting the team-line:

*... have structured our case as follows:*

*I, as the first speaker, will be talking about ...*

*... fact that ...*

*And our third speaker, ..., will do the rebuttal.*

### Rebutting arguments, rebuilding your case:

*But before I come to my own arguments, let us first have a look at what has been said.*

*There are some things about the... speech that need to be addressed.*

*The first proposition/opposition speaker has told us ...; on the contrary ...*

*S/he was claiming that ... but as my first speaker already told you, ...*

### Introducing arguments:

*My first argument is...*

### Giving examples:

*There are many examples for this ... for instance...*

*... this in real life. Just think of...*

*And there are similar cases, such as..., ...*

*So, in this simple example we can clearly see the effect of ...*

*... support this motion.*

### Summarising & ending your speech:

*Firstly ..., Secondly... [some nice closing words]*

*... motion must stand/fall.*

### Making / rejecting / accepting / answering points of information

*On that point.*

*Doesn't what you're saying contradict with ...? What about the ...?*

### Giving summarising speeches

*It is now my pleasure to summarize this debate...*

*... see what the outcome of this debate actually is.*

*A first/second major clash was: ...*

*And for all these reasons, I beg you to...*

## Mini-debates

### Practice

In small groups, you have 30 minutes [redacted] on a simple general subject. Spend 15 minutes researching and 15 minutes discussing and pooling the [redacted]

### Topics

You teacher will choose one of these topics to debate and whether you will be affirmative or negative.

1. Dogs make better pets than cats.
2. [redacted]
3. Living in a city is better than living in the country.
4. Winters are better than summers.
5. [redacted]
6. The important thing about a job is the money.
7. Smoking should be banned.
8. [redacted]
9. Social media has changed our lives for the better.

### Preparation

- [redacted]
- Nominate a leader.
- [redacted]
- Share and pool your information in your group.
- The leader decides who will focus on which areas.

### The debate

You will be paired with an [redacted] and begin with first speaker affirmative: definition, keywords and introduces team's argument (4 minutes) etc...

[redacted] arguments and won the debate.

### Self-evaluation

Fill this in after the debate. How did you do in the debates?

		Yes	No
i)	I managed to speak for 4 minutes.		
ii)	[redacted]		
iii)	I gave examples to support my ideas.		
iv)	I [redacted]		
v)	I cited the source of research (author's names).		
vi)	[redacted]		
vii)	I used debating language.		
viii)	[redacted]		
ix)	What I need to do to improve is...		

## Debate Topics

### Public importance (2023)

1. Can terrorism be prevented?
2. [REDACTED]
3. Should developed countries provide aid to developing countries devastated by hurricanes?
4. [REDACTED]
5. Is Facebook too big to prevent grooming?
6. Is nuclear energy the best investment for power in the UK?
7. [REDACTED]
8. Are university vice-principals over paid?
9. [REDACTED]
10. Should use-once plastics be banned?

### General

1. Does life exist on other planets?
2. [REDACTED]
3. Does the death penalty prevent crime?
4. [REDACTED]
5. Is cloning ethical?
6. [REDACTED]
7. Does technology make us more alone?
8. [REDACTED]
9. Can money buy happiness?
10. [REDACTED]
11. Is it ethical to eat meat?
12. Can politicians be trusted?
13. [REDACTED]
14. Is CCTV an invasion of privacy?
15. [REDACTED] unbiased news reporting?
16. Are we becoming too dependent on Google?
17. Is gender inequality still prevalent?
18. [REDACTED] Mars?

## Top Debate Tips from Wellesley College **ANSWERS**

<b>1. Before the debate:</b>	
i)	<i>Be prepared.</i>
ii)	<i>Know your facts, stats and sources.</i>
iii)	<i>Bring water and cough drops.</i>

**ALL ANSWERS INCLUDED IN THE PAID VERSION**