

ENGLISH B

WRITTEN PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

TEXT TYPE: DEBATE SPEECH

A debate is an organized clash of good ideas. Each side employs worthwhile evidence to promote their viewpoint and to rebut the "flawed" evidence advanced by the other side. Debating is a formal intellectual contest and there are endless ways it can be played. However, a good debate is like a tennis match where each side, following the rules set down, bats ideas back and forth to defeat the other team. As in any other subjective sport, debaters have to persuade the judges that they have won.

FORMAT

- start by addressing/including your audience *'We will prove to you and our confused opponents --'*
- then make clear your position in an attention gaining way *' we will strongly argue that ---'*
- use rhetorical language: repetition, parallel structures, questions, colourful metaphors, humour see
- argument is organized with strong supporting evidence *(see notes below)*
- *opposition argument is rebutted " our opponents have falsely claimed, but ---- "*

Why Debate?

- To develop argumentation skills that can be used in speaking and writing
- To develop an ability to express and defend ideas
- To develop fluency in spoken English

Basic Terms:

Debate

A contest in which two opposing teams make speeches to support their arguments and disagree with the arguments of the other team

Resolution

The statement that the teams argue about because there can be valid arguments on both sides

Affirmative team

The team that agrees with the resolution

Negative team

The team that disagrees with the resolution

Rebuttal

Statements made to show arguments made by the opposition are not true

Opinions and Reasons

Use opinion indicators e.g

I think/believe ----- I strongly suggest ----- I have no doubt that ----- e.t.c.

Use reason indicators e.g.

because/since/so/consequently/as a result ---- e.t.c

Strong Reasons v Weak Reasons

According to LeBeau, Harrington and Lubetsky (2000) , a strong reason has the following qualities:

- it logically supports the opinion
- it is specific and states the idea clearly
- it is convincing to the majority of listeners

Supporting Reasons

There are 4 common ways to support reasons. Evidence provided by:

- personal experiences and anecdotes e.g. For example/Let me give an example/For instance--
- common sense e.g. We all know that ---- We all agree that --- e.t.c.
- expert opinion e.g. According to/To quote X/ X states in ----- e.t.c.
- statistics e.g There are X number of ---

Useful Language Patterns for Debates

Comparison	X is _____ than Y X is more _____ than Y
Cause and effect	X causes Y therefore ----- If you do X, then Y will happen

Preparing Your Arguments

1. **Analyze** the resolution- What does it mean? Do you understand the key vocabulary?
2. Use a T diagram to list both the **arguments for and against** the resolution . You need to prepare to **rebut** your opponents ideas.
3. **Research** the arguments you are going to use , looking for evidence
4. Decide which arguments each team member will present
5. Each team member prepares their debate speeches (2 minutes) Remember to have an introduction that “grabs” your audience's attention, develop strong arguments in the body of your speech and end with a thought provoking conclusion.
6. As a team write some rebuttal statements based on the kinds of arguments that you think your opponents will use. E.g. They say ---- The other team said ----”. “We disagree because ---- “ e.t.c

Delivery

Consider how to make your presentation **clear and easily understood**:

- accurate **pronunciation and effective intonation**
- **voice projection** so you can be heard
- a suitable speed of delivery – slow your speaking for a larger audience
- pause to let your audience think about an argument or take in a joke or example
- use **eye contact** so your audience thinks you are talking to each one of them

Consider how to make your **speech interesting**:

- eye contact/rhetorical questions (Do you think that ---- ?)/varied tone/gesture/humour/original ideas