

МИНИСТЕРСТВО НАУКИ И ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ

ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ АВТОНОМНОЕ
ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЕ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ
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(САМАРСКИЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ)

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WELCOME TO DEBATES: CULTURE, GUIDELINES AND PRACTICE

Рекомендовано редакционно-издательским советом федерального государственного автономного образовательного учреждения высшего образования «Самарский национальный исследовательский университет имени академика С.П. Королева» в качестве учебного пособия для обучающихся по основным образовательным программам высшего образования по направлениям подготовки 41.03.05 Международные отношения, 45.03.01 Филология, 45.03.02 Лингвистика

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Настоящее учебное пособие посвящено развитию навыков устной речи в формате дебатов на иностранном (английском) языке. Помимо этого, оно может быть использовано на занятиях, нацеленных на развитие навыков публичной речи.

Структура пособия и логика изложения материала способствуют последовательному овладению как теоретических, так и практических основ построения высказываний в дебатах различного типа. Обучающиеся получают сведения о том, как корректно выстраивать аргументы, применять вербальные и невербальные средства во время выступления, учатся выявлять ошибки в аргументах, что также способствует развитию навыков логического мышления. В пособии предусмотрены упражнения, которые позволяют применить полученные навыки на практике. Темы, предложенные для проведения дебатов, газетные статьи, с которыми также предполагается работа в рамках данного пособия, являются актуальными и затрагивают широкий спектр вопросов, входящих в учебные программы по иностранному языку («Образование», «Современная политика», «Культура и общество» и др.).

Предназначено для студентов старших курсов, обучающихся по направлениям подготовки 45.03.01 Филология, 45.03.02 Лингвистика, 41.03.05 Международные отношения.

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§1. WHY DEBATE

I. Pre-reading task. Look up the definitions of *debate* in different dictionaries. Which one do you find the most relevant?

According to Macmillan Dictionary of the English language, debate is “a discussion in which people or groups state different opinions about a subject” which can be lively, intense, heated or even fierce. It often occurs in public meetings, academic institutions, and legislative assemblies. But why should everyone know how to debate properly?

Debate is a tool for resolving disagreements and bringing us together as a society. It is an incredibly important skill that can help build confidence, train people to think quickly on their feet, and become strong advocates for what they believe. Debating is a competitive activity, but it is also a way of learning, exchanging ideas, and gaining an understanding of other people’s perspectives.

Undoubtedly, debate is a tool that significantly improves our skills of argumentation. Having your own opinion is great; however, possessing necessary skills for conveying your ideas and persuading the listeners, or even opponents, that these observations deserve being taken into account is equally important. Taking part in the debates makes it possible for us to study the art of building an argument and proving the case by using a variety of techniques.

Apart from developing our argumentation skills, debate is also a method of decision-making. Because of its structured nature, debate harnesses the best parts of the complex and sometimes overly emotional process of argumentation while striving to reduce the distractions. It emphasizes the skill of discerning the key questions of a controversy. Having a finite amount of time to argue a point, you are already more likely to spend that time on the central issues. That’s why debaters are able to single out the key questions and focus on the core of a controversy. The best debates happen when both sides have thoroughly

researched the entire controversy, and all the participants are aware not only of the strengths and weaknesses of all positions, but of where all are in agreement.

Moreover, debate teaches us to consider values. Resolving competing values requires an argument, an interaction of ideas. The more complicated the decision, the more important it is to understand the parties' underlying values and to study the interaction of their ideas.

Finally, debate is important not only for debaters themselves but also for the judges. It trains people — especially leaders in an organization — to make and articulate judgments. Informal arguments that happen in our everyday life rarely include an outside party who listens to the argument and explains who won and why. Debates, on the other hand, are especially effective as a method of arriving at a decision both because that decision is explained to all the participants and because the process vastly improves the participants' ability to make future decisions. Formal debate includes a concept called RFD—reason for decision. The RFD is what the judge delivers at the conclusion of the debate having listened intently to all sides of the controversy. A good judge listens closely and considers all sides equally. The difference is that the RFD requires judges to articulate why they made their choices in a way that assesses the relative strengths and weaknesses of each proposal.

Therefore, debating skills can come in handy in a variety of settings, from government and business to personal relationships. We all have to make difficult decisions and the tools of debate can enhance your confidence in handling the daily challenges. It is true that debaters are not afraid of arguing — but they are also not afraid to admit when they are wrong. The result is that their arguments are more productive because they happen more often and rarely involve the serious emotional swings that often come with arguing in a less structured environment. The more

debating skills you master, the better you will become at argumentation and decision making in just about any environment.

II. Answer the questions.

- 1) How does debating contribute to personal development?
- 2) What skills does debating develop?
- 3) What helps debaters to focus on the key questions?
- 4) Why is it important to take values into account?
- 5) Are debaters the only people who are involved in the debates or is there anyone else?
- 6) Describe the nature of RFD.
- 7) What is the benefit of debate in the long run?

§2. DEBATING FORMATS

I. Pre-reading task. Think of the possible debating formats. What do they depend on? How many people can be involved? Are there any time limits?

The number of debate formats across the world is quite impressive. So is the number of speakers, the length and order of speeches, the role of the audience and opportunities for interruption and questioning. On the one side, some formats place so much emphasis on content and strategy that the debaters speak faster than most people can follow. On the other side, persuasive rhetoric and witty repartee can be valued more than logical analysis and examples. Most debate formats sit in the middle of this divide and give credit for content, style and strategy.

Here are a few debate formats used in the English-Speaking Union programmes:

Mace format

In this format, two teams are involved with two speakers on each side. Each speaker delivers a seven-minute speech and there is then a floor debate, where members of the audience make brief points, before one speaker on each team delivers a four-minute summary speech with the opposition team speaking first. The order is as follows:

First Proposition Speaker
First Opposition Speaker
Second Proposition Speaker
Second Opposition Speaker
Floor Debate
Opposition Summary Speaker
Proposition Summary Speaker

The first Proposition Speaker should define the debate. This means explaining the terms so that everybody is clear exactly what the debate is about.

The first Opposition speaker should clarify the Opposition position in the debate. They should then outline their side's case, rebut the arguments put forward by the first Proposition Speaker and explain their team's first few arguments. The second speakers on both sides should rebut the arguments, which have come from the other team, support the points put forward by their first speakers, if they have been attacked, and then add at least one completely new point to the debate. It is not enough simply to expand on the arguments of the first speaker.

The summary speakers must remind the audience of the key points in the debate and try to convince them that they have been more persuasive in these areas than their opponents. The summary speakers should respond to points from the floor debate (and in the case of the Proposition team, to the second Opposition speech), but they should not add any new arguments to the debate at this stage.

Important points to remember in a summary speech

1. Summary speakers should always ensure that they support the extension speech delivered by their partner. They must explicitly rebut the arguments the opposing team have made against the extension and if no such response has been made, point this out.

2. Summary speakers should not contribute new material to the debate but can provide new analysis or new ways of conceptualizing things already discussed. Explicit new material is discouraged and will be looked down upon. However, new material in response to material already on the table is not damaging and is encouraged.

3. Both summary speakers (but Government especially) must remember to do rebuttal and deconstruct the material just presented by the extension speaker on the opposite side. Often, these extensions can

be debate winning and responding to them can be the most important thing a summary speaker does in the debate.

Points of information (POI)

A point of information is a question or comment made by a debater to a speaker on the other side of motion. A debater may offer a POI by rising while a speaker on the other side is speaking. In this format, points of information are allowed during the first four speeches but not in the summary speeches. The first and last minute of speeches are protected from these and a timekeeper should make an audible signal (e.g. a bell ringing) after one minute and at six minutes, as well as two at the end of the speech to indicate that the time is up. To offer point of information to the other team, a speaker should stand up and say ‘on a point of information’ or ‘on that point’. They must then wait to see if the speaker who is delivering their speech will say ‘accepted’ or ‘declined’. If declined, the offerer must sit down and try again later. If accepted, they make a short point and then must sit down again and allow the main speaker to answer the point and carry on with their speech. All speakers should offer points of information, but should be sensitive not to offer so many that they are seen as barracking the speaker who has the floor. A speaker is recommended to take two points of information during a seven-minute speech and will be rewarded for accepting and answering these points.

Rebuttal

Apart from the very first speech in the debate, all speakers are expected to rebut the points, which have come before them from the opposing team. This means listening to what the speaker has said and then explaining in your speech why their points are wrong, irrelevant, insignificant, dangerous, immoral, contradictory, or adducing any other grounds on which they can be undermined. It is not simply putting

forward arguments against the motion – this is the constructive material – it is countering the specific arguments, which have been put forward. As a speaker, you can think before the debate about what points may come up and prepare rebuttals to them, but be careful not to pre-empt arguments (the other side may not have thought of them) and make sure you listen carefully and rebut what the speaker actually says, not what you thought they would. However much you prepare, you will have to think on your feet. The mace format awards points equally in four categories: reasoning and evidence, listening and responding, expression and delivery, and organisation and prioritisation.

LDC format

The LDC format was devised for the London Debate Challenge and is now widely used with younger students and for classroom, debating at all levels. It has two teams of three speakers each of whom speaks for five minutes (or three or four with younger or novice debaters). For the order of speeches, the rules on points of information and the judging criteria please see the section on the mace format'. The only differences are the shorter (and equal) length of speeches and the fact that the summary speech is delivered by a third speaker rather than by a speaker who has already delivered a main speech. This allows more speakers to be involved.

World Schools Debating Championships (WSDC) format

This format is used at the World Schools Debating Championships and is also commonly used in the domestic circuits of many countries around the world. It consists of two teams of three speakers all of whom deliver a main eight-minute speech. One speaker also delivers a four-minute reply speech. There is no floor debate. The order is as follows:

First Proposition Speaker

First Opposition Speaker

Second Proposition Speaker
Second Opposition Speaker
Third Proposition Speaker
Third Opposition Speaker
Opposition Reply Speech
Proposition Reply Speech

For the roles of the first two speakers on each side, see the section on ‘the mace format’, above. Third speakers on both sides need to address the arguments and the rebuttals put forward by the opposing team. Their aim should be to strengthen the arguments their teammates have put forward, weaken the Opposition and show why their case is still standing at the end of the debate. The rules allow the third Proposition, but not the third Opposition speaker to add a small point of their own, but in practice, many teams prefer to spend the time on rebuttal. Both speakers will certainly want to add new analysis and possibly new examples to reinforce their case.

Reply speakers

The reply speeches are a chance to reflect on the debate, albeit in a biased way. The speaker should package what has happened in the debate in such a way as to convince the audience, and the judges, that in the three main speeches, their side of the debate came through as the more persuasive. It should not contain new material, with the exception that the Proposition reply speech may need some new rebuttal after the third Opposition speech. Points of information are allowed in this format in the three main speeches, but not in the reply speeches. The first and last minute of the main speeches are protected.

The judging criteria for the WSDC format is 40 per cent content, 40 per cent style and 20 per cent strategy.

The main features of the format as practised at the World Schools Debating Championships are:

- The debate should be approached from a global perspective. The definition should be global with only necessary exceptions. The examples should be global. The arguments should consider how the debate may be different in countries that are, for example, more or less economically developed or more or less democratic.

- The motions should be debated at the level of generality in which they have been worded. In some formats, it is acceptable to narrow down a motion to one example of the principle, but at WSDC, you are expected to give multiple examples of a wide topic if it is phrased widely.

- The WSDC format gives 40 per cent of its marks to style, which is more than many domestic circuits. This means that speakers should slow down (if they are used to racing), think about their language choice and make an effort to be engaging in their delivery.

Karl Popper Format of Debate

The Karl Popper Debate format focuses on relevant and often deeply divisive propositions, emphasizing the development of critical thinking skills, and tolerance for differing viewpoints. To facilitate these goals, debaters work together in teams of three, and must research both sides of each issue. Each team is given the opportunity to offer arguments and direct questions to the opposing team. Judges then offer constructive feedback, commenting on logical flaws, insufficient evidence, or arguments that debaters may have overlooked.

1. The debate begins with a moderator who will give a welcoming speech and announce their solution. His/her role is to control the time and make sure that debaters follow the discipline.

2. The debate is composed of ten parts. Six of these consist of speeches – that is, uninterrupted presentations by a designated speaker. The remaining four consist of cross-examination –that is, a series of questions and answers involving one speaker from each side. The order is depicted in Table 1.

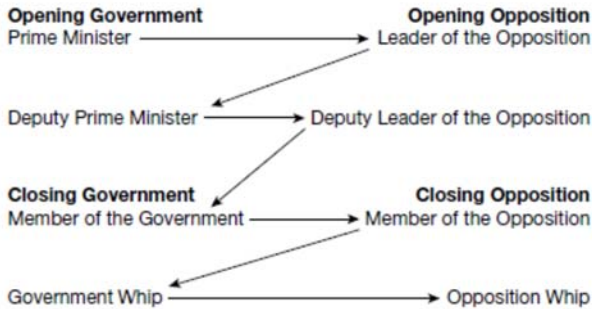
Table 1. Karl Popper format of debate

SPEAKER	TIME
Affirmative Speaker 1	6 minutes
Negative Speaker 3 & Affirm. Speaker 1	3 minutes (rebuttal/cross-questioning)
Negative Speaker 1	6 minutes
Affirmative Speaker 3 & Neg. Speaker 1	3 minutes (rebuttal/cross-questioning)
Affirmative Speaker 2	6 minutes
Negative Speaker 1 & Affirm. Speaker 2	3 minutes (rebuttal/cross questioning)
Negative Speaker 2	6 minutes
Affirmative Speaker 1 & Neg. Speaker 2	3 minutes (rebuttal/cross questioning)
Affirmative Speaker 3	5 minutes
Negative Speaker 3	5 minutes

World Universities/British Parliamentary style

This format is quite different to the described so far. It is one of the most commonly used formats at university level (the World Universities Debating Championships use it), and it is widely used in schools' competitions hosted by universities in the UK.

It consists of four teams of two: two teams on each side of the motion. The teams on the same side must agree with each other, but debate better than the other teams on the same side in order to win. The teams do not prepare together. At university level, speeches are usually seven minutes long, whereas at school level, they are commonly five minutes. Points of information are allowed in *all* eight speeches and the first and last minute of each speech is protected from them.



The speaking order in the World Universities or British Parliamentary debate format.

Picture 1. Speech order for World Universities style

Members of the government (third speakers on each side)

The third speaker should do substantial rebuttal to what has come before them in the debate if needed. They are also required to move the debate forward with at least one new argument, which is sometimes called an ‘extension’. The closing team should not contradict the opening team, but neither can they simply repeat their arguments, having had more time to think about how to put them persuasively.

Whips (fourth speakers on each side)

The whips deliver summary speeches. They should not offer new arguments, but they can (and should) offer new rebuttal and analysis as they synthesise the debate. They should summarise all the key points on their team and try to emphasise why their partner’s contribution has been particularly significant.

II. Answer the questions:

1. Which of the formats appeals to you most?
2. Why, to your mind, points of information are not allowed in the summary speeches?

3. In what categories does the mace format award points?
4. What kind of format is now widely used with younger students?

How does it differ from the mace format?

5. Which format does not consist floor debate?
6. What is peculiar about *World Universities/British Parliamentary style format*?

7. Have you heard about Karl Popper? Google some information about him.

III. Watch the video. Make your comments on the organization of the event, its format, questions under discussion, participants.

The Full NBC News/MSNBC Democratic Debate in Las Vegas.

Channel: NBC News. URL:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZkVOISxcQY&t=706s>

§3. REFUTATION AND REBUTTAL

§3.1. The peculiarities of refutation

Responding to arguments is the core element of **debate** and is broadly divided into two categories: **refutation** and **rebuttal**.

Refutation is the process of answering an opponent's argument.

The 3 “D”s of refutation

1. DENY the argument:

- deny the truth of the argument;
- provide evidence, proof or analysis for the counter claim;
- provide a reason why your support should be preferred over your opponent's support.

2. DIMINISH the argument:

- use a turn-around argument (take an opponent's argument and use it support your position);
- show the argument is irrelevant to the resolution;
- mitigate argument (bring in facts that can weaken the argument);
- point out contradictions (and ask your opponent to resolve them);
- demonstrate a lack of impact (Is there a reason to care?);
- demonstrate no links (look for weak cause-to-effect reasoning).

3. DISBAR the argument:

- question the connection between the claim and the evidence;
- question authority;
- question the recency of evidence;
- question opponent's logic.

Examples of Refutation

A defense attorney would refute the prosecutor's statement that his client is guilty by providing evidence or logical statements that refute the claim. For example, in the O.J. Simpson murder trial, the prosecutor tried

to argue that the bloody gloves found were Simpson's. His attorney refuted this claim by showing that the gloves were not big enough for Simpson's hand.

You would like to refute a statement by the principal that you skipped class yesterday. To refute his claim, you offer evidence of notes you took during the class, and the logical argument that he could call witnesses from the class to see if you were there.

Examples of Refutation in Literature and Speech

While in jail in Birmingham, AL, Martin Luther King, Jr. received a letter from fellow clergymen, basically, asking him to stop his protest movement. In his response (Letter from a Birmingham Jail, 1963), he refutes their arguments:

You deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham. However, your statement, I am sorry to say, fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations. I am sure that none of you would want to rest content with the superficial kind of social analysis that deals merely with effects and does not grapple with underlying causes. It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative. In any nonviolent campaign, there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self-purification; and direct action. We have gone through all these steps in Birmingham. There can be no gainsaying the fact that racial injustice engulfs this community. Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of brutality is widely known. Negroes have experienced grossly unjust treatment in the courts. There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any other city in the nation. These are the hard, brutal facts of the case. Based on these

conditions, Negro leaders sought to negotiate with the city fathers. However, the latter consistently refused to engage in good faith negotiation.

Four-Step Refutation:

- **Step 1: Restate (“Theysay...”);**
- **Step 2: Refute (“But...”);**
- **Step 3: Support (“Because...”);**
- **Step 4: Conclude (“Therefore...”).**

Step 1: Restate.

The first part of refutation is for a student to restate the argument being challenged. Students should concisely and fairly summarize the opposing argument; the cue “They say...” (or “Some say...” or “Mary said...”) is helpful. Discourage students from using the second person, (“You say...”) when restating arguments to avoid becoming too personal. Explain also that students do not need to restate in detail the argument they would like to refute; a summary is fine. This has the added benefit of helping students practice summarization, a skill that is at the heart of critical thinking.

- Speaker 1: “School should be year round.”
- Speaker 2: “Speaker one says that school should be year round.”

Step 2: Refute.

Here, students state their objection to a point in a simple sentence. It is helpful to encourage students to use the verbal cue “but...” For younger students, it is sometimes helpful to use the cue “But I disagree...” for simple disagreement. This second step functions as a kind of thesis statement for the counter argument, as shown by this example:

- Speaker 1: “School should be year round.”
- Speaker 2: “Speaker one says that school should be year round, but school should last for only nine months.”

Step 3: Support.

This part of refutation parallels the “RE” (reasoning and evidence) in ARE. Using the verbal cue “because,” students will try to provide examples to support their reasoning:

- Speaker 1: “School should be year round.”
- Speaker 2: “Speaker one says that school should be year round, but school should last for only nine months, because students need time off to do other things like play sports and go on family vacations.”

Step 4: Conclude.

Students should attempt to wrap up their refutations with a comparison, a contrast or some kind of statement that demonstrates their ability to resolve two opposing ideas. The verbal cue “therefore” in this part of the process helps students approach the argument logically. Beginners at this process are likely to simply restate their main point; that is very similar to the approach we see in young writers trying to learn how to write effective conclusions to short essays or paragraphs. As students become more adept, they learn how to use “therefore” more effectively in disagreements.

- Speaker 1: “School should be year round.”
- Speaker 2: “Speaker one says that school should be year round, but school should last for only nine months, because students need time off to do other things like play sports and go on family vacations. Therefore, year-round school is bad for students.”

§3.2. The essentials of a rebuttal

A **rebuttal** is a contradiction to someone else's argument. In a **rebuttal**, one attempts to present reasons and evidence for why the argument is not true. In a literary sense, a **rebuttal** is when a writer presents reasons or evidence that disprove or contradict the opposing argument.

Prepare the rebuttal

First, THINK ABOUT YOUR SIDE. Compare your position to your opponent's position.

Second, FIND THE ARGUMENTS THAT SUPPORT YOUR SIDE. Identify three or four key arguments that support your position.

Third, IDENTIFY ANY OPPOSING ARGUMENTS THAT MIGHT DEFEAT YOU. Look at your flow; think about what the opposing team appears to be winning. NOW, THINK HOW YOUR ARGUMENTS DEFEAT THIS ARGUMENT.

Present the rebuttal

Begin by IDENTIFYING THE CHOICE FOR THE JUDGE. Then, LIST OUT EACH OF MAIN REASONS TO SUPPORT YOUR SIDE. Present your reasons; follow it with an explanation and supporting arguments. After this, respond to any opposing arguments that might undermine your argument. Then, sum up and explain why this reason is a voting issue for you. Conclude the speech, requesting that the judge vote for your side.

There are several characteristics of a strong **rebuttal**:

1. The opposing viewpoint has to be presented accurately and clearly.
2. The reasons and evidence used to undermine the opposing viewpoint must be accurate and logical.
3. The rebuttal must be presented without personal attack or malice and in a courteous manner.

Examples of Rebuttal

Those who argue that school uniforms would create more school unity and pride have a compelling argument. However, school uniforms also undermine personal creativity and individuality for students.

My opponent makes a strong argument that senior citizens should not have to pay taxes. Yet, he does not address the fact that some senior citizens are more capable of sharing the tax burden than young, working families. He makes no provision in his plan for a needs-based exemption from paying taxes.

Examples from Literature and Media

Benjamin Franklin wrote this rebuttal to a newspaper correspondent who had criticized corn:

A writer in your paper comforts himself, and the India Company, with the fancy that the Americans, should they resolve to drink no more tea, can by no means keep that resolution, their Indian corn not affording 'an agreeable, or easy digestible breakfast.' Pray let me, an American, inform the gentleman, who seems quite ignorant of the matter, that Indian corn, take it for all in all, is one of the most agreeable and wholesome grains in the world; that its green ears roasted are a delicacy beyond expression; that samp, hominy, succotash, and nokehock, made of it, are so many pleasing varieties; and that a johnny, or hoe-cae, hot from the fire, is better than a Yorkshire muffin."

Martin Luther King, Jr. also used rebuttals in many speeches and writings, such as this one from his "I Have a Dream" speech:

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality.

Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird* delivers a powerful rebuttal during his defense of Tom, a black man accused of attacking a white woman:

What did her father do? We don't know, but there is circumstantial evidence to indicate that Mayella Ewell was beaten savagely by someone who led most exclusively with his left. We do know in part what Mr. Ewell did: he did what any Go-fearing, preserving, respectable white

man would do under circumstances-he swore a warrant, no doubt signing with his left hand, and Tom Robinson now sits before you, having taken the oath with the only good hand he possesses-his right hand.

Types and Occurrences of Rebuttals

Rebuttals can come into play during any kind of argument or occurrence where someone has to defend a position contradictory to another opinion presented. Evidence backing up the rebuttal position is key.

Academics

Formally, students use rebuttal in debate competitions. In this arena, rebuttals do not make new arguments, just battle the positions already presented in a specific, timed format. For example, a rebuttal may get four minutes after an argument is presented in eight.

Publishing

In academic publishing, an author presents an argument in a paper, such as on a work of literature, stating why it should be seen in a particular light. A rebuttal letter about the paper can find the flaws in the argument and evidence cited, and present contradictory evidence. If a writer of a paper has the paper rejected for publishing by the journal, a well-crafted rebuttal letter can give further evidence of the quality of the work and the due diligence taken to come up with the thesis or hypothesis.

Law

In law, an attorney can present a rebuttal witness to show that a witness on the other side is in error. For example, after the defense has presented its case, the prosecution can present rebuttal witnesses. This is new evidence only and witnesses that contradict defense witness

testimony. An effective rebuttal to a closing argument in a trial can leave enough doubt in the jury's minds to have a defendant found not guilty.

Politics

In public affairs and politics, people can argue points in front of the local city council or even speak in front of their state government. Our representatives in Washington present diverging points of view on bills up for debate. Citizens can argue policy and present rebuttals in the opinion pages of the newspaper.

Work

On the job, if a person has a complaint brought against him to the human resources department, that employee has a right to respond and tell his or her side of the story in a formal procedure, such as a rebuttal letter.

Business

In business, if a customer leaves a poor review of service or products on a website, the company's owner or a manager will, at minimum, need to diffuse the situation by apologizing and offering a concession for goodwill. But in some cases, a business needs to be defended. Maybe the irate customer left out of the complaint the fact that she was inebriated and screaming at the top of her lungs when she was asked to leave the shop. Rebuttals in these types of instances need to be delicately and objectively phrased.

Characteristics of an Effective Rebuttal

"If you disagree with a comment, explain the reason," says Tim Gillespie in "Doing Literary Criticism." He notes that "mocking, scoffing, hooting, or put-downs reflect poorly on your character and on

your point of view. The most effective rebuttal to an opinion with which you strongly disagree is an articulate counterargument."

Rebuttals that rely on facts are also more ethical than those that rely solely on emotion or diversion from the topic through personal attacks on the opponent. That is the arena where politics, for example, can stray from trying to communicate a message into becoming a reality show.

With evidence as the central focal point, a good rebuttal relies on several elements to win an argument, including a clear presentation of the counterclaim, recognizing the inherent barrier standing in the way of the listener accepting the statement as truth, and presenting evidence clearly and concisely while remaining courteous and highly rational.

The evidence, as a result, must do the bulk work of proving the argument while the speaker should also preemptively defend certain erroneous attacks the opponent might make against it.

That is not to say that a rebuttal cannot have an emotional element, as long as it works with evidence. A statistic about the number of people filing for bankruptcy per year due to medical debt can pair with a story of one such family as an example to support the topic of health care reform. It is both illustrative — a more personal way to talk about dry statistics — and an appeal to emotions.

I. Name the main features of successful refutation and rebuttal. What should you bear in mind while preparing for them?

II. Watch and discuss the video:

Debate Lesson: Refutation and Rebuttal. Channel: Reading Pioneers Academy.URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6_6i-OJ_e4

§4. PREPARING ARGUMENTS

§4.1. The anatomy of an argument

The IAE model is the most flexible form of argumentation. It contains 3 (three) constituents: an Idea, Analysis and Evidence. By using these three elements in a clear fashion, one will be presenting a clear and cogent speech.

IDEA: it refers to the concept or proposition that an individual has set out to prove (a simple assertion that a given idea is good or an evaluative statement).

ANALYSIS: it is the mechanism whereby one can explain why the central proposition is correct or logical or reasonable to the ordinary and intelligible listener. In the vast majority of contexts it will be relevant to ask yourself WHY this proposition should be considered relevant, why it is better than the idea presented by your opponent.

EVIDENCE: Having built a reasonable level of analysis, one can turn to knowledge-based criteria (i.e. through observation and examples) to prove your point. It is important to bear in mind that examples are not free standing entities which embody an argument itself, but, rather, they are an extremely useful tool which should be used to validate one's reasoning: it would be insufficient to claim that "X is good because it works"; a more effective method would be to briefly explain a situation in which X did work. This is where some reading can be helpful – the debating circuit often employs various newspapers and their online editions.

Examples should validate your reasoning. For this reason, it is natural that they ought to follow your analysis rather than precede it. This is not an absolute rule and there may be occasions where it is more appropriate to start with an example.

Examples, evidence and observations must be relevant. Relevant examples may be either directly relevant or indirectly relevant. For

directly relevant examples, a speaker should not have to explain the connection between the relevance of the example and the analysis, which surrounds it. For indirectly relevant examples, a speaker should spend time explaining the connection between the relevance of the example and the analysis. Often it is done by drawing an analogy and explanation of context.

Do not overburden your speech with examples. For instance, a speech, which contains lists of statistics, will never be persuasive and often cause the judge and the audience to disengage.

Prioritise the use of examples. There may be many different examples, which support your reasoning and point of view. In choosing, the “best” examples consider the following:

It is important to remember that examples from recent history are generally more relevant than examples from the past as well as the fact that hypothetical examples are generally the least relevant and least persuasive. Similarly useless are personal anecdotes.

I. Choose the topic and write a coherent argument following the structure of an argument.

- 1) *School examinations should be abolished.*
- 2) *People should lose their jobs if it helps environment.*
- 3) *Space exploration money is not worth the money governments spend on it.*

§4.2. Types of arguments

1. Testimony argument

An argument from testimony is an argument that uses as its support the authority of another person. If someone were to say, “Mr. Jones said that it will rain tomorrow,” the support for that argument is Mr. Jones’ authority. Testimony argument is by nature secondary. A person other

than the primary source is using a quotation or paraphrase as grounds for a particular claim.

The tests for testimony argument are as follows:

1. Is the source an expert?
2. Is the expertise relevant on the subject being discussed?
3. Is the source unbiased?
4. Is support available or is that just an assertion?

2. Example Argument

Example argument provides the patterning process that is inductive argument (one showing that conclusion is possible given the premises). Perfect induction comprises looking at all of the examples within a given classification or population in order to find the patterns or similarities within the grouping. Often, however, perfect induction is not possible or it does not guarantee a conclusion. For instance, if a person has won five chess tournaments, he has been involved in; it does not guarantee that he or she will win the next one. In those cases, certain rules must be applied to the data to determine if they are acceptable. The tests for example argument are as follows:

1. Are examples relevant to the claim?
2. Are there a sufficient number of examples?
3. Are the examples typical?
4. Are counter examples insignificant?
5. Is the claim qualified?

3. Statistics

Statistics involve the use of numbers: conclusions to studies, results of opinion, or total number of people or objects within a certain qualification. Debate advocates often ought to know the methodology of

any study or poll that they use. Whenever possible, look for the primary source (not just study's conclusion in a magazine or in some other secondary source), so that if you are challenged, you may defend a particular methodology.

There are two basic types of statistics. Descriptive statistics are numeric representations of an entire class of something. For instance, the percentage of people who voted in the last election, the total number of cars sold during a given months are all attempts to describe an entire category. It is not always possible to account for every instance in a category; in such cases, a method known as inferential statistics can be applied. Inferential statistics are numeric representations of some, but not all of the instances of a category, from which the generalization of the entire category can be made. For example, election polls are attempts to determine how an entire category of people voted by questioning only some of them.

Debaters raise four common issues with regard to inferential statistics:

1. The degree of cogency assigned by the study's author(s).
2. The sampling technique used in the study.
3. The means employed to find central tendency.
4. Whether the conclusions are compared to other figures.

4. Argument by Analogy

An analogy is a comparison of two things to make descriptive or argumentative point. A figurative analogy is used to make a descriptive point. It may not be used as an argumentative tool because the instances compared are too different to establish a high level of probability. The two items compared here are items from different classifications. Figurative analogies are effective tools for explaining a difficult point. In fact, some of the greatest public speakers throughout history have used

figurative analogies to convey complex concepts. However, the first rule in determining valid analogy reasoning is to exclude all figurative analogies from consideration.

Literal analogies, on the other hand, may be used to establish a high level of probability. They compare items from the same classification that provide the same framework: two countries, two campaigns, two courses and so on. To guarantee a sound argument the analogies must also be similar in significant detail and no critical differences that deny the comparison should be present.

The tests for analogy reasoning are as follows:

1. Are only literal analogies used?
2. Are the instances similar in significant detail?
3. Are the differences non-critical?

An example: The X city program to reduce rat infestation should also work in the city of Y. The X city program reduced rat sightings by 50 percent.

5. Causal Argument

Causal argument suggests that some instance or event forces, gives rise to, or helps produce a particular effect. The root-word in this type of argument is “cause” (though some careless readers may accidentally substitute “casual”).

There are two types of causal argument. Cause-to-effect argument occurs when the advocate knows the cause and is projecting what the effect will be. Usually, this is a present-to-future argument. For instance, the debate focuses on what the effects of the policy change would be.

Effect-to-cause arguments are the exact opposite of a cause-to-effect argument. Here, you look at a present effect, which is known, and you project into the past to try to determine an unknown, but suspected, cause. If there were something global and life changing to happen

unexpectedly, after that everyone would be trying to determine how such an event could have occurred.

Regardless of which type of casual argument is employed, the tests for both are the same:

1. Does the alleged cause precede the effect?
2. Is the cause relevant to the effect?
3. Is the cause an inherent factor in producing the effect?
4. Can other possible causal explanations be ruled out?
5. Are there any counter causes that may prevent the effect?

6. Sign Argument

Sign argument serves as the basis of the medical profession. When doctors diagnose a patient with some virus, they do not see the virus itself, they run a test for antibodies; see the symptoms or signs of the virus. The same happens when police officers stop and question people because of the “suspicious behaviour”.

In a debate round, sign argument plays an important role as well. A sign argument is an argument in which two variables are linked, so that if one is present, the other is also likely to be present; if one is missing, the other is also likely to be missing. Many events or circumstances serve as signs that some other event or circumstance exists. Conversely, the absence of such serves as a sign that some other event or circumstance is absent. For example, if it is raining, there will probably be a rainbow after.

The tests for sign argument are as follows:

1. Is the known variable relevant to the unknown variable?
2. Is the sign relationship inherent?
3. Are other signs, which reinforce the initial sign present?

II. Make up arguments of all kinds described for one of the topics in exercise I. Then, in groups verify the arguments according to the test questions given.

§4.3. Strong and weak arguments

To determine whether an inductive argument is strong or weak, ask yourself a hypothetical question: *If the premises were true, then would they provide enough information to make it likely that the conclusion is true?* If “Yes,” then the argument is strong. If “No,” then the argument is weak.

Strong arguments:

** In all of recorded history, it has never snowed in Los Angeles in the month of July. Therefore, it probably will not snow next July in Los Angeles.*

** No human being has ever run a one-minute mile. Edward has never done anything athletic. Thus, it is unlikely Edward will run a one-minute mile today when he goes to the track for the first time.*

Weak arguments:

** Charles is from Minnesota. Bob Dylan grew up in Minnesota. Therefore, Charles probably likes Bob Dylan’s music.*

** It has been raining for two days in a row. Therefore, it will probably be raining every day next month.*

I. For each of the following arguments, state whether it is strong or weak.

1. Serious biologists will tell you that cats are mammals. Thus, cats are mammals.

2. It has rained a lot every year in Cherrapunji for the past twenty-five years. Thus, it will probably rain in Cherrapunji this year too.

3. People try on shoes before buying them. People drive cars before signing up for a three-year lease. People take a close look at travel

information before committing to an expensive vacation. Thus, people should live in a house for free before buying it.

4. Different cultures have different beliefs about morality. Thus, there is no objective basis outside of cultural norms for any moral claim.

5. Kim's math teacher says that God exists. Thus, God probably exists.

6. Two teenagers were found writing graffiti on the school walls yesterday. Thus, all teenagers are delinquents.

7. A reliable study showed that 90 percent of College's students want better food in the school cafeteria. Monica is a student at the College. It follows that Monica probably wants better food at the cafeteria.

8. Harry has eaten at Mary's Café every day for two weeks, and has liked the food each time. Harry plans to go to Mary's Café tonight for dinner, and on the basis of his past experiences concludes that he will likely enjoy this meal, too.

9. Peter has eaten at Mary's Café once before for breakfast, and liked the food. On that basis, Peter concludes that he will love the food at Mary's Café tonight when he goes there for dinner.

10. Upon landing at the Airport, plane passengers saw broken buildings, large cracks in the runway, fire engines running about, and paramedics assisting injured people. The passengers concluded that an earthquake just occurred.

11. A box contains 1000 U.S. coins. Two selected at random were one-cent pennies. Thus, the entire box probably contains nothing but pennies.

12. It is 34 degrees outside and the temperature is rising. Ice cream melts when it is hot. Therefore, if I leave my ice cream cone directly out in the hot Sun right now, it will probably melt in less than an hour.

§4.4. The Missing Premises problem

In far too many cases, people leave a key premise out. It is important to see if the explicitly stated premises by themselves provide good reason to believe the conclusion, and if they do not due to a missing premise, we should determine what the missing premise must be. Once the misguided missing premises are brought into the open, the weakness of the arguments becomes apparent. However, people arguing for such conclusions often do not want the weakness of their inferences being noticed. Critical thinkers ought to recognize when important premises are missing, and to consider them in determining if an argument is successful.

II. What substantive premise is missing in each of the following arguments? Note: the missing premise may be stated in more than one way.

1. *No cats are dogs. Thus, Garfield is not a dog.*
2. *Sue says that Mars is larger than Venus. Thus, Mars is larger than Venus.*
3. *If Barry is a mouse, then Barry is a mammal. Thus, Barry is not a mouse.*
4. *If Megan is a logician, then Megan is a philosopher. Hence, Megan is a philosopher.*
5. *The sign outside our school is authoritative and informative. Thus we can believe that this school is St Mary's College.*
6. *Zoey goes to class every day and studies regularly, and she gets pretty good grades. Thus, Angelica probably gets pretty good grades, too.*
7. *A strong windstorm is coming to our town tomorrow morning. Thus, the rowing regatta scheduled for tomorrow on our town's lake will probably be canceled.*

8. *Julio is not from Argentina. Thus, he is from Peru.*
9. *If Julia is from Rabat, then she is from Morocco. Thus, if Julia is from Rabat, then she is from North Africa.*
10. *I did not receive what I asked for in my letter to Santa. Thus, Santa does not exist.*
11. *Pastor Berkley is a social conservative. Thus, he is a Republican.*
12. *Senator Jackson does not like uniform. Thus, she is liberal.*
13. *All teachers want to get higher salary. Thus, Bruce wants to get higher salary.*
14. *Senator Jackson is willing to break a law to promote publically her family's lifestyle. Thus, Jackson is an anarchist and has no respect for social order.*

§5. FALLACIES

A *fallacy* (or a *fallacious argument*) is an argument that is logically invalid but often psychologically persuasive.

There are two types of fallacies: formal and informal. A *formal fallacy* is a psychologically persuasive but logically bad argument whose problem reveals itself to the keen eye of logic students through its form, or structure. The logical problem with an *informal fallacy* lies in its content, that is, in what the premise is claiming.

§5.1. Formal fallacies

1. Modus Ponens (Latin: “the affirming mode”)

If A, then B

A

Thus, B

If Fluffy is a cat, then Fluffy is an animal.

Fluffy is an animal.

Thus, Fluffy is a cat.

This argument is invalid because it is possible for the premises to be true and the conclusion false. The premises (and conclusion) happen to be true, but the information in the two premises does not by itself guarantee the conclusion: for all we know from the premises, Fluffy may be a bird or a dog, so the conclusion fails to be guaranteed.

2. Affirming the Consequent

The name comes from the vocabulary of “if, then” statements: the “if” part is called the *antecedent*; the “then” part is called the *consequent*. In Affirming the Consequent, one premise is a conditional statement of the form “If..., then...” A second premise (provided beforehand or afterwards) affirms the consequent of the conditional. The arguer

improperly concludes with the affirmation of the antecedent. All arguments of this pattern are invalid, and are said to be formally fallacious.

If Andrew likes oranges, then Andrew likes fruit. Andrew likes fruit. Thus, Andrew likes oranges.

3. Denying the Antecedent

If A, then B

Not-A

Thus, not-B

If it's raining outside, then the ground is wet.

It's not raining outside.

Thus, the ground is not wet.

Surely the two premises do not guarantee the conclusion, as it's quite possible for it to have been raining heavily five minutes ago (or sprinklers are on, or a pack of territory-marking dogs had recently walked by) and the ground still be wet.

4. Modus Tollens (Latin: "the denying mode")

If A, then B

Not-B

Thus, not-A

If it's raining outside, then the ground is wet.

The ground is not wet.

Thus, it is false that it's raining outside.

This is also wrong reasoning, as dry ground does not by necessity infer that it is not raining, there might be plenty of reasons for it.

I. Determine whether the following arguments are examples of Modus Ponens, Modus Tollens, Affirming the Consequent or Denying the Antecedent.

1. If Josie likes fruit, Josie likes pears. Josie does indeed like fruit. Thus, Josie likes pears.

2. *If Jordan likes apples, then Jordan likes fruit. Jordan likes fruit. Thus, Jordan likes apples.*

3. *If Kevin is a logician, then Kevin understands fallacies. Kevin is not a logician. Hence, Kevin does not understand fallacies.*

5. *If Emily starred in the movie Logicians are Cool! Then Emily is an actress. However, Emily is not an actress. Thus, Emily did not star in the movie Logicians are Cool!*

6. *If George is X, then George is Y. George is X. Thus, George is Y.*

7. *If Mary is tall, then Tom is 20 years old. However, Tom is 20 years old. Thus, Mary is tall.*

8. *Bob Marley was not a member of the Beatles. If Bob Marley was a member of the Beatles, then Bob Marley knows Ringo Starr. Thus, Bob Marley does not know Ringo Starr.*

9. *Tim is French. If Tim was born and reared in France, then Tim is French. Therefore, Tim was born and reared in France.*

11. *Olivia is not a dancer. If Olivia is a ballet star, then Olivia is a dancer. Thus, Olivia is not a ballet star.*

12. *If *, then \$. \$. Thus, *.*

15. *If Kate is a sun-lover, then Kate is a holidaymaker. Thus, since Kate is not a sun-lover, Kate is not a holidaymaker.*

§5.2. Informal fallacies

1. Appeal to Pity

It occurs when someone argues that his or her woeful, pitiable condition justifies acceptance of some conclusion, when that woeful, pitiable condition is irrelevant to the conclusion. For instance:

“Bob didn’t come to work yesterday without a notice because it was his birthday and he decided to have a little holiday for himself. Thus, he shouldn’t be punished for missing the deadline and failing the project”.

2. Appeal to the People

It is unreasonable to claim that since all (or most) people believe, say, or do X, we should thereby agree that *we* should believe, say, or do X. For instance:

“Everyone drinks our coffee and it is the best brand in the country. So, you should drink it too!”

Appeal to people is also used when one argues that you should believe X and use as the reason for it your (logically irrelevant) desire to be associated with a portion of society (*“All cool people wear these jeans and you should buy a pair!”*).

3. Ad Hominem (Argumentum ad Hominem)

Argument against the Person is one of the most common fallacies heard today. Instead of challenging a person’s conclusion or argument, the wielder of an *Ad Hominem* (Latin: “against the man”) chooses to attack irrelevantly the other’s character traits, lack of consistency, motives, or situation. Logicians often name three fairly distinct kinds of Ad Hominem arguments: abusive, *tu quoque*, and circumstantial.

Ad Hominem abusive occurs when the fallacious arguer ignores another’s position, argument, or conclusion and makes an irrelevant personal attack on the other’s character traits. For instance:

“These young people propose to reduce taxes and help the poor but they had low grades at school and should not be trusted.”

Ad Hominem tu quoque (Latin: “you also”) occurs when the fallacious arguer points out the other person’s inconsistency in holding her position, and concludes that the inconsistency alone warrants everyone’s rejection of her position or argument. The problem here is that being inconsistent does not mean that your argued position is in any way mistaken or shaky. Inconsistent people can be correct, and they can reason well. For example:

Patient to doctor: "You tell me to stop eating sugary foods as I have high blood sugar but I can see a box of chocolates on your own shelf. Therefore I am justified in rejecting your claim."

Ad Hominem circumstantial occurs when a fallacious arguer points to a vested interest another might have in people agreeing with his or her position, and concluding on that basis that we reject that person's position or argument. For instance:

"We are not going to let Mr. Jones build affordable housing in the area as he wants only to buy a cheap flat there for himself. Thus it can't possibly be good for our residents!"

4. Accident

People are guilty of Accident when they appeal to a generally accepted rule and misapply it in a specific situation for which that the rule was never designed or intended. For instance:

It is wrong to stick people with knives. Thus, it is wrong for surgeon to perform operations on people.

5. Straw Man

A Straw Man fallacy occurs when person A holds a position (or offers an argument), and person B misinterprets that position, attacks that weaker misinterpreted version, and shows to all who will listen that *that* version is bad and should be rejected. However, B has done nothing to show A's actual position is bad; all B has done is trash a weak version of A's position.

For example, *an animal rights group argues that cosmetic companies should use fewer animals in their cosmetic tests. A cosmetic company advocate responds fallaciously: "These pro-animal people are wrong and should be ignored. Why? They would have advances in science stop in its tracks. They think all animals should be preserved, and that all scientists and product testing should never use animals. However, if we do that, we will never get cures for cancer or diabetes or other tragic diseases. That's just crazy!"*

II. Are the following fallacious lines of reasoning best understood as examples of Appeal to Pity, Appeal to the People, Ad Hominem, Accident, or Straw Man?

1. *We should not run with knives in our hands. So even though your friend is entangled in a rope tied to a heavy rock pulling him over a cliff edge, you should not run to him with a knife to cut the rope.*

2. *Driver to traffic cop: "Man, has my day ever been bad. I spilled coffee in my keyboard at work, my girlfriend found out I am married, and my stocks are continuing to take a nosedive. With all of this going on, you thereby should not give me a speeding ticket for going 50 mph in a 25 mph zone.*

3. *Teenager to teen friend: "My parents say I need to be home by 11:00 tonight. That is so unfair! They do not want me to have any fun or ever meet anyone. They want to control every aspect of my life! Since that is clearly unjust, I need not take seriously their curfew.*

4. *Senator argued for his bill allowing trespassing by saying, "A lot of famous American figures did that regularly. It is American as apple pie. If you love your country, you should support my bill!"*

5. *Senator's wife gave her friends her reasons for supporting her husband's bill. However, others argued, "Oh, you're married to him so it's in your best interest to have him be happy. Thus we can reject your arguments for the bill's endorsement."*

6. *College student Adam tells his friend that she needs to study to pass her Sociology test. She responds, "Adam, I've never seen you study beyond reading the required text. You are hardly one to talk. I can thus discount your claim about the need to study for my Sociology test."*

7. *"Wheaties: The breakfast of champions!"*

8. *Nervous student to himself: "It's always good to study before an important math test. So, even though it's late the night before the test, and I haven't slept for 48 hours, I should force myself to study the rest of the night!"*

9. *Professor Johnson teaches Medieval History. However, he never dresses well, needs a haircut, and has bad breath. I guess we can ignore what he has to say about Medieval history.*

10. *Professor Lopez says we students should spend less time with our phones and video games and spend more time traveling, reading, and talking to a larger variety of people. Lopez obviously hates technology and would have us go back to the Stone Age, rubbing sticks together to light fires and to send smoke signals. What nonsense. We can thus reject his claims about broadening our activities.*

6. Red Herring

It occurs when someone subtly changes the subject and draws a conclusion that unaware listeners take to be regarding the original issue. For instance:

An opposing senator argues: "Senator Smith would have us support smoking in places isolated from non-smokers. However, what this is really about is the moral decay of our society. People are not willing to take responsibility for their actions!"

The phrase "Red Herring" refers to the old British practice of training hounds to chase foxes for horse-mounted foxhunts. Trainers would guide dogs to follow the scent of foxes, and not go off track looking for something else. The trainers would sometimes take a smelly herring, wipe it across the fox's track, throw it into the bushes, and see if the dog would stick with the fox scent or get sidetracked and follow the tantalizing aroma of rotting fish. Going after the herring indicated a poor hunter, as today it indicates a poor thinker.

7. Appeal to Ignorance

The fallacy of Appeal to Ignorance occurs when someone argues that because we do not know that X is true, that gives us reason to believe that X is false, or, because we do not know that Z is false, that gives us reason to believe that Z is true. For instance:

No one has ever been in a black hole; therefore, they do not exist.

8. Weak Authority

Appeals to authority may be strong or weak, depending on how authoritative the authority is on the issue in question. Consider the following argument:

My five-year-old nephew John [who has never studied astronomy and does little but watch cartoons] says that mice are mammals. Thus, mice are mammals.

It is clearly an example of Weak Authority because John—at least at this young stage of his life - is no authority on animals and mammals, specifically. He is correct in his claim, but it would be a weak inference on our part to believe this claim about mice.

9. Genetic Fallacy

The Genetic Fallacy gets its name from the same root word we find in *genesis*, referring to the beginning. We commit this fallacy when we argue that because the origin of the belief—that is, how the belief came to be held - is questionable, the belief itself is questionable. However, this does not follow. We can acquire true beliefs in bizarre ways, and we can acquire false beliefs in reliable ways. This happens, for example, when little kids come to believe that Santa Clause exists because all the adults in their lives say so.

10. Hasty Generalization

Hasty Generalization occurs when the arguer appeals to what is known about a portion of a group and then makes a weak inference to that claim being true of the whole group. Clear examples are weak polls. For example:

A professor asked three students in her graduate class on British Literature if they like to read books. All three said they did. The professor said that she thereby could conclude that all the students at her university like to read books.

III. Are the following fallacious lines of reasoning best understood as examples of Red Herring, Appeal to Ignorance, Weak Authority, Genetic Fallacy, or Hasty Generalization?

1. *No arguments or evidence has proven alchemy to be true. Thus, the claims of alchemy are fake.*

2. *I heard a guest actor trying to answer some questions on the radio yesterday. He kept mumbling and had a hard time answering any question directly. All actors must be stupid.*

3. *X is a respected American historian. He says the Mariners will win the next World Series. Thus, I am putting my money on the Mariners!*

5. *A Roman Catholic priest, speaking publicly from his pulpit, asked five of his parishioners if they believed in God. All five said yes. The priest responded, "See, this country is full of believers!"*

6. *Most people come to believe that George Washington was the first U.S. president due to the cultural conditioning of the educational system. Thus, there is no objective truth to whether or not George Washington was the first U.S. president.*

7. *Many dieticians think we should eat chemical-free foods. However, chemicals are vitally important to our lives. Without them, we would not have the plastics we all rely on today, nor would we have access to strong, lightweight materials for cars or planes. These dieticians are just foolish.*

8. *Raw vegans have come up with no good reason to believe that cooked food is harmful to us. Thus, cooked food is perfectly safe for human consumption.*

9. *Michelle Obama (the U.S. ex-president's wife) says American children should eat less fat. Because she says this, we can conclude that American children should eat less fat.*

10. *Friend to friend: "You heard that John Lennon is an Indian on a talk radio show. However, those radio show hosts are crazy. Thus Lennon is not an Indian."*

11. False Cause

A False Cause fallacy occurs when someone argues from cause to effect or effect to cause, but does so when there is no good reason to believe that such a causal relationship may be expected. For instance:

As Joe drives by a partially destroyed building and sees flames jutting out of its windows and rescue vehicles all around, he concludes that Martians must have just attacked.

Logicians sometimes like to distinguish at least three kinds of False Cause. One, receiving the fancy Latin enumeration of ***non causa pro causa*** (“not the cause for the cause”) is the most general, positing something as a cause of something else when the first thing is not actually the second thing’s cause. An example is:

All great historians for the Roman Empire read Latin. Thus, if Sara learns Latin, she will be a great historian of the Roman Empire.

A more specific form of False Cause is called ***post hoc ergo propter hoc*** (“after this therefore because of this”). Sometimes people refer to it as simply a *post hoc* fallacy. These examples of False Cause make the point that merely because action B occurred immediately after action A, it follows that A caused B. However, this line of reasoning is surely weak, because it often happens that one thing follows another, when there is no direct causal connection between the two. An example could be:

Senator Garcia spoke at our university today at noon. Immediately afterwards a tornado struck our city. We must never let Garcia speak here again!

A third distinct variety of False Cause is sometimes called **False Cause oversimplification**. Here, the causal connection appealed to obtains (that is, it accurately reflects how the world works), but it is not the whole story. Other causes ignored in the argument were at play. For instance:

The relationship between big businesses and local communities is declining these days. Obviously, the CEOs are not doing their jobs.

12. Slippery Slope

Slippery Slope arguments can be strong or weak, but they all share a pattern in common. They are actually a form of False Cause, but have their own unique characteristics. A Slippery Slope line of reasoning argues that A will cause B, B will then cause C, C will then cause D, and D will then cause E. However, no one wants E! So we should not even allow ourselves to get started down the slope; we should thus reject A. This argument can be strong if we have good reason to affirm each causal link (e.g., between A and B). However, if we have good reason to reject one or more of the causal links, then just because we allow A to take place, it does not mean that E will occur. An example is as follows:

Teacher to school administrator: “We can’t let students choose which classes they take, for they’ll next want to choose how many they need to graduate. After that, they will not be satisfied until they teach the classes themselves. Then they will want to take charge of the buildings and sell them to China. Chinese business groups would take over our country and we would all have to be Communist. If you value democracy, we must say ‘No!’ to these students!”

13. Weak Analogy

Analogical arguments compare two things or two groups of things. Such arguments point out some relevant similarities between the two things, and conclude that they are so relevantly similar that what is true of one is probably true of the other. One basic problem with many weak analogies is that there is a significant and relevant difference between the two things being compared. For instance:

Both Albert Einstein and Aristotle were males, very smart, highly respected, and wrote books. Einstein believed that nothing travels faster than the speed of light. Thus, Aristotle probably believed this, too.

14. Begging the Question

Begging the Question (we will consider this the same as Circular Reasoning) occurs when someone assumes the truth of the conclusion when offering a premise for that conclusion. The premise is needed to support the conclusion (as is proper and expected), but also the conclusion is needed to support the premise (hence the “circle”). For example:

Aristotle was a more intelligent philosopher than Epicurus was. We know this to be true because insightful philosophers say so. Moreover, we know them to be insightful philosophers because they are the kind of people who recognize that Aristotle was a more intelligent philosopher than Epicurus was.

15. False Dichotomy

A Disjunctive Syllogism is a two-premise argument of the form

P or Q
P is false.
Thus, Q

This is a deductive line of reasoning, and perfectly valid. However, if someone offers an “either-or” statement as one of the premises, and neither disjunct (the two statements to either side of the word “or”) is true, then ruling out one in the other premise does not actually give good reason to say the other is true. Since this problem is a matter of content—and of understanding that the disjunction is too limiting to be true—we are in the realm of informal fallacies. An example is this claim:

“Either you vote Republican or government will take away all your guns. For the safety of your family and our country, vote Republican!”

IV. Are the following fallacious lines of reasoning best understood as examples of False Cause, Slippery Slope, Weak Analogy, Begging the Question, or False Dichotomy?

1. *Senator advocates allowing terminally ill patients to receive voluntary passive euthanasia. However, if we allow that, patients will next be asking for voluntary active euthanasia, and then it will be non-voluntary passive euthanasia, then non-voluntary active euthanasia. My God, we could then see involuntary euthanasia, first of the mentally ill, then for those with colds and so on. We would lose half of New York! We cannot allow that, so we must disagree with the senator on this.*

2. *Surely, you want to send the very best card to your grandfather for his birthday. In addition, it is either Hallmark brand cards or...well...rubbish. Thus, you should send him a Hallmark card.*

3. *We try on shoes before we buy them. We give cars a test drive before committing to a purchase. Thus, we should live in new flat or a house for free before we buy it.*

4. *Free market capitalism is an ideal system, because having the liberty to buy and sell anything you want is better than any other economic approach.*

5. *I had a chamomile tea right before my physics test yesterday, and I failed the test. I am never drinking chamomile tea again!*

6. *Either you will marry me this week or you do not love me! Surely, you love me; so it is settled, you marry me this week.*

7. *Each time I arrived with chocolate two hours late for my dates with Anne, she was upset with me. Anne must really dislike chocolate.*

8. *Tracy and Susan have the same parents and the same upbringing. Both go to LA College, and both like chemistry and books. Tracy wants to go out with me. Thus probably Susan does, too.*

9. *My son scored a goal in his hockey match yesterday. I can conclude that extra exercise I encouraged him to do paid off.*

10. *Reading novels leads to watching TV series. Watching TV series leads to spending more time on the sofa. After a while, that will cause your health to deteriorate. However, we do not want this to happen in our society. Therefore, we should ban reading novels.*

16. Is-Ought Fallacy

An “Is” statement is *descriptive*; it describes how the world actually is. The statement may be false (as it fails to correspond to reality), but it still claims to be accurately describing the way things are. An “Ought” statement is *prescriptive*; it prescribes how things ought to be (whether or not they happen to be that way now, and whether the prescriptive claim is true or false, or whether everyone agrees to it or not). They are thus claims about the moral nature of something or other.

The Is-Ought Fallacy occurs when someone argues from a merely descriptive claim (or set of merely descriptive claims) to a prescriptive claim, or vice versa. The idea behind the problem is that just because something *is* (or is not) the case, does not mean that it *ought* to be (or not be) the case. Moreover, just because something *ought* to be (or not be) the case does not mean that it *is* (or is not) the case. For instance:

The lifestyle and public demands of religious and political leaders ought to be consistent [a prescriptive claim]. Thus, the lifestyle and public demands of religious and political leaders are perfectly consistent [a descriptive claim].

In the early 1800s, slavery was perceived by the majority in the USA as morally permissible [a descriptive claim]. Thus, slavery was not wrong in the USA in the early 1800s [a prescriptive claim].

17. Equivocation

To equivocate is to use a word in two different ways and with two different meanings, while allowing others to think you are meaning only one thing. The fallacy of Equivocation occurs when someone begins an argument meaning one thing by a word, but switches meanings (tacitly or explicitly) later in the argument, and the conclusion follows only because of that illicit switch in meanings. An illustration is this:

Student to student friend: “Professor Storey’s logic lecture today was so exciting that we sat glued to our seats.” Intellectually challenged

friend's response: "You thus must have had difficulty standing up. How'd you get up off that sticky chair?"

18. Amphiboly

The fallacy known as Amphiboly is akin to Equivocation, but whereas Equivocation plays off an ambiguity of a single word or term, Amphiboly plays off a grammatical ambiguity. For instance:

Botany student to class-skipping fellow student: "Our professor spoke about trees in our classroom today." Fellow student: "Wow! You must have moved outside, because I don't recall any trees in our classroom."

19. Composition

In Composition, the arguer contends that merely because something is true of each of the parts of a thing, that character trait is true of the whole, as well. However, that does not always follow; it is not a reliable inference. For instance:

Each sentence in Sarah's English essay is well formed. Thus, her essay is well formed.

20. Division

Division occurs when someone argues that merely because something is true of a thing as a whole, that trait is also true of each part of that whole. For example:

Stanford University is an excellent academic environment. Thus, Stanford freshman Bill Dense is an excellent student.

V. Are the following fallacious lines of reasoning best understood as examples of the Is-Ought Fallacy, Equivocation, Amphiboly, Composition, or Division?

1. Senator Adams is a handsome man. Thus, his right knee is handsome.

2. I do not see how you can say you are an ethical person. It is so hard to get you to do anything; your work ethic is so bad.

3. *March Planned for Next August*

4. *Senator: "The majority of this fine city is opposed to trespassing. Thus such activity is morally wrong!"*

5. *Each of Jessica's backyard garden crops taste good: her cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes and beans. Thus if she mixed them all together they would taste good, too.*

6. *Pastor: "It's clear that stealing is wrong, which by itself convinces me that no one in this congregation is be engaging in such immorality."*

7. *Town residents contributed \$150,000 to charity for animals last night. Joshua lives in this town. Thus, Joshua contributed \$150,000 to the animal charity last night.*

8. *Teenage daughter to friend: "My mom censors my phone calls by telling me not to take calls from that really cool biker." Confused friend in reply: "That's horrible! Your mom is thus breaking the law, as censorship is against the First Amendment."*

9. *Each grain of sand in this sandcastle can withstand great pressure and maintain its shape. Thus, this sandcastle can withstand great pressure and retain its shape.*

10. *Lawyers will give poor free legal advice.*

VI. Study each fallacious line of reasoning below; determine which of the two formal fallacies or 20 informal fallacies it most clearly illustrates.

1. *We should re-elect our current mayor. After living through a tornado, he is feeling kind of bad recently. He needs encouragement.*

2. *Pastor Bustle has argued against the new proposal demanding that churches pay property tax. Nevertheless, we can ignore his arguments because he is a pastor and passage of the bill would cost his church money.*

3. *The school's parent-teacher association has argued that our students are not reading at acceptable levels due to our teachers using progressive classroom methods. However, we can reject the PTA's position. Students spend a lot of time playing video games and sending text messages on their phones. Technology seems to be taking over everyone's attention these days. We really should get back to the good old days where people talked to each other each evening face-to-face.*

4. *Democracy is the best form of government. From this, we can conclude that the rule of centralized authority is not ideal.*

5. *The claims of alchemy must be true, for scientists like Francis Bacon believed in it.*

6. *The NY Times told today of a two Egyptians who rescued a drowning child from a raging river. Egyptians must be a courageous people.*

7. *Mid-level management has requested a water cooler in their lounge. However, if we give them that, they will next want full kitchen access. Then it will be their own gym, then an entire building devoted to them. We cannot afford to purchase a new building, so we must not give them that water cooler.*

8. *Kale is a leafy green that grows easily in Washington. Poison hemlock is a leaf green that grows easily in Washington. Kale is nutritious for humans. Thus poison hemlock is likely nutritious for humans, too.*

9. *No one has understood the complete nature of God. Thus, no one can understand God's complete nature.*

10. *The immorality of a society brings on political collapse. Thus, since the country X is acting immorally these days, it will soon undergo collapse.*

11. *An elephant is an animal. Hence, a small elephant is a small animal.*

12. *Either our country gets on its knees and asks God for forgiveness, or our political and social systems will collapse. Surely, we do not want collapse! Thus, get on your knees and pray!*

13. *My friend says that I should vote Democrat in the next election. However, she is a granola-eating lunatic, and an environmental extremist. Thus, her arguments for voting for Democrats are faulty.*

14. *We should do unto others, as we would have them do unto us. Since, as a fan of acupuncture, I like pricking, I ought to prick others with a needle.*

15. *A secretary says she found a picture of a famous actress in her boss's desk drawer. However, this actress is a grown woman. How on Earth did she fit in that drawer?*

16. *"I saw an old John Wayne Western movie last night. The Wayne character rode a horse quite well. There apparently were quite a few people who could ride horses in the Wild West." Friend's response: "That's a ridiculous way to come to believe something. Movies are often fictional. Thus your belief is false."*

17. *The factory manager charges me with stealing tools from work. However, I have seen him steal office supplies week after week. Thus, his claims about me may be rejected.*

18. *Culture Y believes that stealing is morally okay. Thus, such activity is morally okay in that culture.*

19. *Everyone cool at school is wearing ripped jeans. Thus, I too should wear ripped jeans.*

20. *Every academic department at this college works efficiently as individual units. Thus, all the departments work efficiently together.*

21. *Believer to illogical atheist friend: "The Bible says that the Jews lived in captivity under Egyptian rule." Illogical friend's response: "But the Bible is a highly complex book, with a great deal of metaphor. It is not a reliable way to gain knowledge about history. If you believe the Jews lived in Egypt due to reading it in the Bible, then it must be false that the Jews lived in Egypt."*

22. *Senator Y has stated that people should never be without clothes in public view. Apparently, she cannot stand the sight of the human body, and would throw into jail any doctors who examine their patients, and would label as offenders all people on the beach. That is absurd! We can thus reject Y's position.*

23. *Fellow student David argued to the teacher that the class would learn the material better if we all were given essay assignments instead of research projects. However, David is an English major who knows how to write well and easily. Essays would be a piece of cake for him! Thus, David's arguments are bad.*

24. *If Senator A votes for Senator B's gun control bill, B votes for A's education tax bill. Nevertheless, A will not vote for B's gun control bill. So, B will not vote for A's education tax bill.*

25. *Orangesun is the king of juices! Thus, you should drink Orangesun!*

26. *I got food poisoning at Kate's Café last week. I am eating at a restaurant tonight, so I better prepare for stomach cramps.*

27. *A person avoiding taxes: "I know I declared multiple business expenses that never took place, but if I had to pay my full tax bill, I'd not have enough money left over to take my three kids and their grandmother to Disneyland for vacation. In addition, the kids and Granny are so looking forward to that. They cry each night thinking they will not be able to go. Thus, the state should waive all penalties for my recent tax fraud.*

28. *Dieticians tell us that if we eat too much fast food, we will get sick. Let us not eat too much fast food, so we will thereby never get sick!*

29. *Terminally ill patients should have the right to doctor-assisted euthanasia, because many of them cannot commit suicide on their own.*

30. *Either you join the U.S. Chess Federation, or you do not like to play chess. However, you love to play chess, don't you? The choice is obvious.*

31. *Different cultures have different beliefs about the morality of X. Therefore, there is no objectively correct answer to whether or not cultures should allow X.*

32. *People are driving like crazy on the highway tonight. Thus, there must be a full moon.*

33. *Logic tutor: "All three students who met with me today were confused about validity. Therefore, everyone at our college is confused about validity.*

34. *If Ed likes apples, then William likes bananas. Thus, since William likes bananas, Ed likes apples.*

35. *My family doctor says we ought to reject Senator's education programs. Based on the understanding on such matters, we should reject the proposals.*

36. *Cows are similar to lions. Both have hair, have four legs, have a tail, and give birth to live young. Thus, because cows are vegetarians, lions are, too.*

37. *It seems like every time I step into my bathtub, the phone rings immediately afterwards. I am kind of lonely tonight, so I think I'll take a bath.*

38. *Harry says that he is never mistaken and that we should always believe him. Well, I guess that is that. Since he is never mistaken, we can trust what he says here.*

39. *We should never lie. Thus when your friend asks what you think of her particularly ugly tattoo, you should state your true opinion openly and clearly.*

40. *Apple is an efficient company. Thus James, one of Apple's marketing managers, is an efficient Apple employee.*

§6. STYLE

The ‘presentation’ aspect of debating has different names in different places. In Australia, for example, ‘presentation’ is referred to as ‘manner’; at the World Schools Debating Championships, it is called ‘style’. However, the essential techniques and principles remain the same.

A single good speaking style does not exist: styles vary drastically and no two speakers will have identical speaking styles. However, speaker with vastly different speaking styles can be equally persuasive.

Being yourself

All of us have a natural speaking style, whether we realise it or not. Each of us has our individual style, which has been evolving since our very first words. This is our natural style of speaking, our most comfortable way of communicating, *and our most effective way of persuading*. Unfortunately, a few debaters do not trust their natural style. Instead, they adopt a ‘debating persona’ – a completely different speaking style that emerges only for debates. Usually, this involves forced gestures, an uncomfortably rigid stance and a painfully careful pronunciation of almost every word. Ultimately, however, this approach is weak – rather than being persuasive, it simply appears insincere.

Instead, you must be yourself. Of course, you can always try to make your style more convincing and engaging. The ideas and pointers in this chapter are designed to help you do that. However, the aim of coaching manner is never to change a speaker’s entire style – rather, it is to mold that style to be more effective. Naturally, this does not mean that a speaker can legitimately say, “Of course I mumble quickly and make no eye contact – that’s my natural style!” However, it *does* mean that you should use these techniques in a way that feels natural and sincere *to you*.

Speed

There two important points to consider about the speed at which you speak:

1. Ensure that you speak at a reasonable pace. It is a basic fact of human biology that we believe we speak slower than we do, in fact. Consequently, individuals usually speak incredibly fast (especially when they are nervous) rather than at a reasonable pace which is easy to follow. It is worth recording your own speeches and listening to them to overcome this simple defect in style.

If you *do* need to slow down, there are at least two good ways of doing it. First, remember to start slowly, to reinforce the feeling of speaking at a measured pace to your audience. Second, many speakers like to write 'SLOW DOWN' on their palm cards. This can be a useful technique, as long as you do not read those words out!

2. Speed is vital to keep your audience engaged. The speed at which you speak must fit the subject matter, which you are discussing. Altering your speed at the right time will highlight important elements of your speech. For instance, after giving a vital statistics you can briefly pause in order to allow the audience to digest its significance.

Engagement

A speaker must ensure that they engage with their audience. You must make them feel the speech you are delivering is tailored to them. It can be done in various ways:

1. Make eye contact. By looking individual in the eye and making eye contact, you are much more likely to get him or her to listen to what you are saying. Eye contact can be daunting but it is vital in order to keep listener's attention. If the audience is a sufficient distance away such that it would not be obvious, it can help to focus upon the exact middle between the eyes of audience members, rotating between different individuals.

2. Note taking. One of the easiest ways in which to ensure you engage is to write your speech in note form rather than an exact transcript of the words you intend to say. Consequently, you will not rely on the paper in front of you for the content but naturally become more conversational, and thus more engaging.

3. Do not go into “automatic” mode. Often, individuals who are giving a presentation simply remain in “automatic mode” and aim to get through their presentation without engaging either with their own material or with their intended audience. You should avoid doing this by recognizing the audience’s presence. Simply pausing for a question can be enough to ensure your audience is kept on their toes.

Stance /Performance

As with gesture, the most important aspect of an effective stance is that you are natural. Many speakers worry about fine details of their stance, such as the position of their feet, the distribution of their weight, or the straightness of their back. However, the most effective way to have a natural stance is not to worry about your stance at all!

The only exception is the issue of movement. There is no rule that requires you to stand rooted to the one spot as you speak – you are welcome to move around the floor. Indeed, as long as it does not seem contrived, it can be quite effective to take a few deliberate paces between arguments. *However, you must avoid movement that is repetitive or distracting.* For example, many speakers ‘rock’ on the spot, by taking small steps forwards and then backwards, or left and then right. Similarly, many speakers wander around the floor without purpose, often in repetitive patterns. Pacing back and forth will not endear you to an audience who has to watch you for eight minutes! The principle of movement is simple: *move, but be aware of what you are doing and move with a purpose.*

Mannerisms

In debating, a mannerism is understood as a distinctive or idiosyncratic trait of visual presentation. For example, a speaker may have a particular unique gesture or way of moving.

Of themselves, mannerisms pose no problem – every debater will understandably have his or her own way of speaking. However, they become a problem when they are repetitive. In some cases, audience members who notice a speaker’s mannerism will pay attention to little else! For example, you might have a tendency to look at a particular part of the room on a regular basis, to continually fiddle with your hair or (as we discussed earlier) to make the same gesture repetitively.

It is impossible to set out any kind of complete list of mannerisms, precisely because they are so idiosyncratic. However, you must nonetheless be aware of the dangers of mannerisms, and be alert to any elements of your visual presentation that could become repetitive and distracting.

Vocal presentation concerns the way that you enunciate and deliver your words to the audience.

Gesture

Gesture is a natural part of most people’s everyday conversation. Watch people talking, particularly when they are standing, and you will often see them gesturing constantly – even if they are speaking on the phone! So what? As debaters, we should strive to appear credible and sincere – in other words, *to look natural*. Gesturing in conversation is natural, so it should be natural to gesture while speaking in a debate.

This is the most important point about good gesture – *allow your natural gestures to occur*. It can often be very tempting to grip your palm cards with both hands, particularly if you are nervous. However, this serves only to limit your natural tendency to gesture. *Free your hands if you can, and let the gestures happen!*

Some debaters, coaches and adjudicators worry about fine details of how you should gesture – for example, a downward gesture is sometimes said to provide a sense of authority. However, paying excessive attention to your gestures – whatever those gestures may be – usually serves only to make those gestures seem artificial. In everyday conversation, we do not deliberately choreograph gestures to match our words (for example, by sweeping your hands outwards above your head when discussing ‘the whole world’!). It therefore seems unnatural and insincere to pay significant attention to specific gestures during your speech. You are much better thinking about your arguments, and merely keeping the issue of gesture in the back of your mind.

Volume

Volume is a significant component of vocal presentation. Perhaps the most important element of volume is that *your volume should be appropriate for the context of your speech.*

There are three important points to consider about the volume at which you speak:

1. Your first priority is to ensure you can be heard. Variations in volume, loud or quiet, can have certain rhetorical effect. That said, the most important function of volume is trivially simple: you must ensure that the audience can hear what you are saying.

2. You must be aware of the effect of your volume upon your tone. Volume conveys to your audience what the tone of your speech is. Consequently, if you do decide to vary your volume, you should also note that you are varying your tone.

Some speakers feel that they always need to speak loudly and aggressively in order to appear confident and forceful. There is no question that this can be worthwhile, but if used continuously, it can have the opposite effect – the speaker can appear flustered and out of control. It is often more effective *not* to give the impression of taking your

argument and “shoving it down your audience’s throat” – it is more effective to speak softly, almost as though letting your audience in on an important secret. This style has the advantage of forcing your audience to concentrate harder on what you are saying, and can itself give the impression of force and confidence, because you are comfortable enough to deliver your message in a more relaxed and subdued tone.

3. Variations in volume are key tools of emphasis. The most important stylistic device to emphasise a particular point is to vary the volume of your speech. Raising your voice at a crucial point, for instance the conclusion, draws specific attention to the importance of what you are saying and makes it more persuasive. The converse, however, is also true: if you speak at a consistently loud volume, you are unlikely to be able to rely upon this technique.

Humour

Humour in debating is a double-edged sword. If used effectively, it can significantly improve your connection with an audience; if used poorly, it can distract, confuse and reduce your credibility. Humour is very difficult to teach, but easy to practice. We will therefore simply examine some general pointers as to the use of humour in debating.

1. You do not need humour! It is often easy, particularly in the company of funny and entertaining debaters, to see humour as an essential part of debating. It is not – some of the great argumentative speeches in history were presented without any humour (can you imagine, “I have a dream.... in fact, I have lots of dreams...what it is about dreams anyway...?”). Usually, a debater’s sense of humour – and sense of when to use that humour – develops slowly and over many years. There is no need to rush this process.

2. If you are using humour, make sure that it is appropriate for your context. Of course, manner should always be appropriate to its context, as we will examine shortly. This is especially important in the case of

humour. If, for example, you are debating about sport or television, jokes are probably great. If, on the other hand, you are debating about terrorism or domestic violence, jokes will almost certainly go down poorly – and even if they are well received by the audience, they will hardly improve your credibility on the issue of debate.

3. Obviously, there is no point using isolated jokes. If your humour does not directly relate to the issue and the debate, it will hardly be amusing. For example, general witticisms may raise a smile, but will not improve your credibility on the issue of debate (for example, “Our opposition’s case is like a skyscraper – it has many ‘flaws’”.)

4. Do not get personal or sarcastic. We learned in Step One of Chapter One that it is important to always maintain polite and respectful relations with your opposition – cracking personal jokes about your opponents is probably the easiest way to violate this principle.

5. Keep it clean. Humour in debates is supposed to lighten the atmosphere and endear you and your arguments to your audience. Jokes that even *some* members of your audience may find lewd or rude will only harm your persuasive credibility as a speaker.

6. Remember, laughter is not rebuttal. It does not matter how many jokes you make about your opposition’s case, nor how much your audience laughs – this does not in itself show why your opponents’ arguments are wrong. Of course, you can use humour to *assist* your rebuttal, but it will never substitute for actual analysis and argument.

7. Do not get distracted. It is very easy to become enthused because your audience is responding warmly to your jokes. At this point, you have a choice – either push on with your arguments (confident that your audience is responding well to your speech, and is listening carefully to what you say) or simply tell a few more jokes. Too many debaters in this situation choose the latter. Musicians sometimes say, “If you play for applause, that’s all you’ll ever get” – the same can be said of debaters who get carried away and manage to trade their argument for a few more laughs.

For a section on humour, this all sounds very depressing! Our list of general pointers was a list of “don’ts”. This is not to suggest that humour should not be used – in fact, if it is used effectively, humour can be one of the most effective contributors to effective manner. The key is to use humour carefully so that the joke does not end up on you.

The importance of clarity

Clarity is by far the most important element of verbal presentation. For many public speakers, ‘clarity’ refers to the *way* that they enunciate their words. That, however, is not the point here – we should be far more concerned with the actual words used to enunciate ideas. Too many debaters use long words and convoluted sentences to sound impressive – even if that means making their speeches difficult to understand and painful to follow.

The opposite should be true. You should always aim to express your ideas as simply and clearly as possible, using simple language and short sentences wherever possible.

The underlying principle should be clear: you should aim to present an impressive case, not to use ‘impressive’ words and phrases! Of course, this is *totally unrelated* to the content of your argument itself – although arguments should be simple, there is no need to reduce your ideas to colloquial or banal concepts. Our concern here is the language used to *express* those concepts, however intricate they may (or may not) be.

There are a number of important principles.

Avoid complex vocabulary wherever possible. For example, there is no reason to accuse your opposition of ‘naïve inductionism’ – it is far simpler and hence more effective to say, ‘our opposition assumes that because has occurred in the past, it will continue to occur in the future’.

Acronyms can cause great confusion to adjudicators or audience members who do not understand them. Therefore, you should state what

any acronym stands for the first time you use it. For example, it is not enough to simply refer to the ‘WHO’ – the first time that you do so, you should say something like, ‘the WHO – the World Health Organisation’. (This principle does not apply to the *very* simplest acronyms, such as the USA or the UN.)

There can sometimes be value in using technical terms, but these need to be explained. For example, it is never enough simply to refer to ‘economies of scale’ – you need to explain the term as well (‘declining average costs as production increases’).

Answer any rhetorical question! Rhetorical questions can be a useful way of directing your audience’s attention to the core of your argument. However, there is nothing worse than leaving a rhetorical question unanswered (for example, “How can we possibly justify having killed innocent Iraqi civilians?”). Your opponents will happily answer the question for you – or rather, for them (for example, “Our case shows exactly why it was justified to take innocent Iraqi lives to avoid a much greater conflict in the future.”).

Finally, this is as good a point as any to discuss the use of ‘clever’ verbal techniques.

In other forms of public speaking, speakers are often encouraged to use various ‘devices’ when writing their speeches – for example, the frequent use of metaphors, ‘triplets’ or alliteration. There is nothing inherently wrong with these techniques, but they do understandably sound scripted. Therefore, in debating, they should be confined to those areas of your speech where the audience expects to hear well-crafted prose – essentially, to your conclusion and your formal introduction. A debater who presents substantive arguments (or even rebuttal) in cleverly crafted language will usually suffer as a result, because these arguments will lack the sincerity and effectiveness of a more natural expression.

Implementation

When planning your speech, it is essential not only to structure your arguments (what you are going to say), but to structure your style-skeleton (how you are going to say it). One of the most effective ways to do it is to deploy a style map: simply write next to each point of your speech which elements of style you will deploy when saying this particular point.

Use this list of dos and don'ts to enhance the performance element of your presentation:

- Do not sway whilst speaking.
- Keep your feet planted firmly into the ground.
- Although gestures used in moderation can be helpful in emphasizing specific important moments, excessive gesticulation is off-putting and will detract your overall point.
- Do not slouch.
- Do not look at one specific point throughout the entire duration of your speech.
- Do not use filler words such as “umm” or “ahhh”. These are vocal tics useful in conversation in order to make it clear that you have not finished speaking, but they have no place in public speeches, serving only to make you appear unprepared and unconfident. Consider simply pausing instead, which makes you appear more in control of your material and of your audience.
- Do not “up-speak” (this is when you finish a statement as if it were a question).

I. Considering the notes on style, watch the video and comment on the debating style of the speakers. Pinpoint what stylistic features can be traced in their performance.

MSNBC & Washington Post Democratic Debate (Full Length) - November 20, 2019. Channel: MSNBC URL:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_3F2h_FT98

Practice 1. The art of argumentation

Complete For and Against charts on various topics.

In most debates, you will see reasons for and against the topic. Fill the graphic organizer below keeping track of both sides.

The procedure is as follows: there are 3-4 debaters in each team. All debaters time prepare reasons to support your side of the topic for some time. Then, share your ideas, one at a time. *After* all of the ideas have been shared, develop a single list of reasons in support of one side of the topic. Now adopt the other side of the same topic. Repeat the exercise, so that you end up with a good list of reasons both for and against the issue. Present your ideas to the group.

Use the following topics:

- 1) *Higher education is a necessary prerequisite of one's financial success.*
- 2) *Companies should hire 50% male and 50% female employees.*
- 3) *Political leaders should not perform on social platforms.*
- 4) *Security cameras are an invasion of our privacy.*
- 5) *Children should not use smartphones without parental supervision.*
- 6) *History is important to study for understanding the present scenario.*

Debate Topic:	
For/Yes	Against/No

Picture 2 – For and Against chart

Practice 2. Holding debates

Prepare beforehand and hold debates on the given topics according to the World Universities format.

In a team of six, distribute roles and sides to prove. Also, choose a chairperson, a timekeeper and an adjudicator from the rest of the group (you will find the guides for them after the list of debating hints – tables 2 and 3). The next time, the other team of six prepares debates.

Topics to choose from:

1) *Face-to-face interaction with professors is more effective than online sessions and lectures.*

2) *A truly free press is impossible.*

3) *The students should have the possibility to grade teachers.*

4) *The concept of an intellectual property is no longer valid in XXI.*

5) *Living in a dorm hurts the educational process.*

6) *English language should be an additional official language in all the countries.*

7) *Suggest your own topic**

While preparing, look at the hints for successful debates and use them to polish your performance.

Hints for successful debating

- ❖ Demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the subject;
- ❖ Logically arrange your arguments and number them;
- ❖ Show an ability to communicate;
- ❖ Adopt a public speaking voice, not a private conversation voice;
- ❖ Address the audience with minimal reference to your notes;
- ❖ Speak within the allotted time allowed;
- ❖ Adhere to the rules for timeouts, and points of information;
- ❖ Do not reuse the same arguments over and over again;

- ❖ Come up with some interesting, relevant examples;
- ❖ Pass notes to each other during the debate if you come up with a good idea/rebuttal/etc.;
- ❖ Sound serious or passionate: your conviction can be very engaging;
- ❖ Pause between arguments: it adds emphasis and makes it easier to follow your speech;
- ❖ Be artistic, confident, eloquent, and persuasive in your presentation, like a good actor;
- ❖ Do not personalize;
- ❖ Understand that you are playing a role like an actor on stage in a theatre;
- ❖ Put aside your personal beliefs/opinions about the topic, even argue on the opposite side;
- ❖ Introduce yourself by your debating role, not by your personal name, eg, “I am the second speaker for the Negative side”;
- ❖ Deliver your arguments in a non-personal way;
- ❖ Address the audience/judge, not the opposite team;
- ❖ Do not point to the opposite team, or say, “you”;
- ❖ Do not think that the opposite team actually believe the position they are arguing for in the debate, or that you can change their minds;
- ❖ Always use the lectern.

Table 2. A general guide to the duties of a chairperson

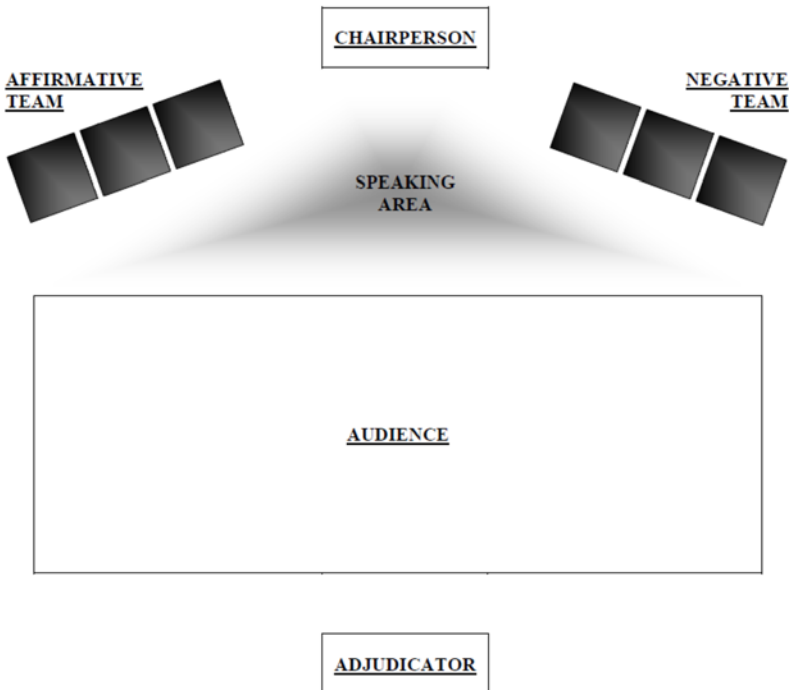
DUTY	EXAMPLE
Set up the room before the debate.	Look at the diagram below.
Welcome your audience and adjudicator and introduce the debate as a whole.	Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to this evening’s debate. My name is _____ and I will be the chair this evening.

Continuation of table 2

	The topic of tonight's debate is THAT _____.
Introduce the teams.	<p>The affirmative team is from _____.</p> <p>They are:</p> <p>First speaker: _____</p> <p>Second speaker: _____</p> <p>Third speaker: _____</p> <p>The negative team is from _____.</p> <p>They are:</p> <p>First speaker: _____</p> <p>Second speaker: _____</p> <p>Third speaker: _____</p>
Introduce the adjudicator.	The adjudicator for tonight's debate is _____.
Announce the speaking time.	Speeches will be ____ minutes long. There will be a double bell at this time. There will be a warning bell after ____ minutes.
Introduce the first speaker. Introduce each speaker in this way. Wait for the adjudicator to signal that he or she is ready before you introduce the next speaker.	I now call the first speaker of the affirmative team.

Continuation of table 2

<p>Call a representative of each team to give a vote of thanks. As a general rule, you call a representative of the losing team first, but don't describe them that way!</p>	<p>I now call on a member of the _____ team, to propose a vote of thanks.</p> <p>I now call on a member of the _____ team, to second that vote of thanks.</p>
<p>Conclude the debate.</p>	<p>That concludes this evening's debate. I would like to thank you all for your attendance and support, and wish both teams the best for their future debates.</p>



Picture 3. The basic lay-out of a debate

Timekeeper`s guide

A timekeeper is responsible for ringing bells to indicate where each speaker is up to in his or her speech. Assuming that there are no points of information, each speaker will receive two ‘bells’:

1. A single warning bell. The length of speeches depends on the grade and competition of debate. However, the warning bell is usually rung two minutes before the speaker’s time has expired. For example, if speeches are eight minutes long, a warning bell is usually run at the six-minute mark.

2. A final double bell. This indicates that a speaker’s time has expired. A speaker is expected to finish his or her speech shortly after this double bell. If a speaker continues for any significant period of time (for example, thirty seconds or more), the adjudicator will usually stop considering the speech, and will deduct marks. This is to avoid giving an unfair advantage to speakers who speak overtime. Some adjudicators appreciate a summary of speakers’ times. Table 3 can be used for that purpose.

Table 3. Timekeeper`s notes

AFFIRMATIVE TEAM	TIME	NEGATIVE TEAM	TIME
First Affirmative		First Negative	
Second Affirmative		Second Negative	
Third Affirmative		Third Negative	

Adjudicator`s guide

Adjudicators use three categories to consider debates:

1. Manner (style) describes the *way* that a particular speech is presented: ‘how you say it’.

2. Matter (content) describes the arguments that are presented, both in their general strength and in the way that one supports and explains them.

3. Method (strategy) describes the *structure* of the speech. It can often become a ‘mixed bag’ category involving all those parts of the speech that do not seem to fit into either manner or matter.

To determine the result an adjudicator allots a mark to each team out of a maximum of **300** of which **100** marks are apportioned to each speaker on the following basis:

- Matter: maximum **40** marks
- Manner: maximum **40** marks
- Method: maximum **20** marks

It is important to consider the weightings of these categories. First, matter and manner (content and style) are weighted equally. Many debaters and supporters automatically assume that a team that presents well should win the debate – this is not necessarily the case. Second, method (strategy) is only weighted half as significantly as matter and manner, but is still significant nonetheless. Many debaters and supporters discount the importance of method, seeing it as a ‘poor cousin’ to matter and manner. However, although it is weighted less, method can and does directly affect the outcome of many debates.

Practice 3. Analyzing newspaper articles

1. Bougainville referendum: region votes overwhelmingly for independence from Papua New Guinea

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

Jubilation at result but region faces long process ahead before it can become world's newest nation.

The autonomous region of Bougainville has voted overwhelmingly in favour of becoming independent from Papua New Guinea, paving the way for the group of islands to become the world's newest nation.

More than 180,000 people in Bougainville, a collection of islands flung 700km off the coast of Papua New Guinea in the Solomon Sea, participated in a referendum over the last few weeks that has been nearly 20 years in the making.

Almost 98% of people². (176,928 people) voted for independence and less than 2% (3,043 people) voted to remain as part of Papua New Guinea but with "greater autonomy". There were 1,096 informal ballots.

Those gathered in Buka to hear the announcement of the results from the chair of the Bougainville Referendum Commission's chair Bertie Ahern burst into cheers and applause when the result was announced.

As the writs were signed by commissioners after the result, the crowd burst into song.

In 2001, the government of Papua New Guinea promised the vote as part of a peace agreement to end a devastating decade-long civil war that saw an estimated 20,000 people, out of a population at the time of 200,000, killed.

The vote took place amid a mood of great celebration, with people in the main township of Buka singing, dancing, cheering and playing pan

flutes as they followed the region's president John Momis to the polling booth to watch him cast the first vote in the referendum on 23 November.

"It's obvious that the people are now in the mood for celebration and I join them as they have every right to celebrate," said Momis, emerging from the polling booth with arms raised.

However, Bougainville will not become a new nation overnight, as the referendum result is non-binding, the leadership of PNG and Bougainville will have to negotiate, with the final say as to whether Bougainville will be allowed to break away from the rest of the country resting with the PNG parliament.

Speaking at the announcement of the result in Buka, Sir Puka Temu, PNG's minister for Bougainville, said the result was a "credible one" but reminded the crowd that the referendum was non-binding and that the national parliament of PNG "had the final authority" over the result.

Temu said PNG's prime minister, James Marape, would make a statement in the coming days about the way forward, adding: "I will not present the result of the referendum to the parliament until after the consultation has been concluded."

"For the rest of PNG, this is a big result, this is a transformational political announcement and therefore please allow PNG sufficient time to absorb this result."

There are fears that the PNG government, which does not wish to lose part of its nation, or set a precedent for other independence-minded provinces, might drag out the consultations process, with some Bougainville observers estimate it could be a decade before an independent Bougainville is established.

There are concerns that any delays in this process could cause frustration in Bougainville and eventually lead to unrest, threatening the hard-won peace on the islands.

However, the president of the Autonomous Bougainville Government, John Momis, told the crowd he believed Marape was

committed to Bougainville, saying of the prime minister: “He is intelligent, he is educated and he is humble, he is prepared to listen.”

“We are all full of expectations and hope,” said Momis. “If we work together the outcome will be good and official... and most importantly and produce lasting peace.”

(The Guardian, 11.12.2019, URL:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/11/bougainville-referendum-region-votes-overwhelmingly-for-independence-from-papua-new-guinea>)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. What do you know about Papua New Guinea?
2. What regions are also fighting for independence today?
3. Why do countries not want to grant independence to their regions?
4. Which is better - independence or greater autonomy?
5. What were the biggest struggles for independence in history?
6. Would independence for more regions bring peace?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

2. If universities value overseas students, they must stop marginalising them

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

Overseas students may be able to stay longer after graduation, but it will not change how they are treated while studying.

Universities have prioritized internationalising their campuses for a long time, but lately the conversation has shifted towards decolonisation. Yet these are not two separate initiatives: international students' experiences would improve if universities thought more about the impact of empire on them too.

UK universities' attitudes towards international students have evolved since they first started arriving after the Second World War. This was initially seen as a form of international aid, based on the assumption that western universities' knowledge was superior and would benefit developing nations. This imperialist attitude created a hierarchy of education between the west and the rest of the world.

By the 1980s, this aid mentality had shifted towards trade, as higher education became a commodity on the global market, an idea that continues today. On the one hand, universities genuinely want to support intercultural understanding and promote access to education, but on the other, they're forced to compete in a highly aggressive marketplace in which international students are an important source of revenue.

This is why attitudes towards international students are conflicted. They are supposedly valued by universities, which last week successfully pushed the government to introduce a more favourable visa regime enabling them to stay and work in the UK for longer after graduating.

Yet this enthusiasm for international students isn't always replicated in the classroom. From the outset, they are labelled and singled out as "international". They have different induction activities, fee arrangements, webpages, attendance monitoring and so on, which creates a divide reminiscent of the approach of imperialist colonisers. It may seem practical to use the "international" label, but if we are to truly decolonise universities we need to remove the baggage of colonisation and strip away segregating labels.

This continues when international students enter the classroom, and they are bombarded with assumptions about how they should learn and

what they should know. It is compounded by the persistence of the belief that western knowledge is superior, evidenced by the fact that students from all around the world want to study in the UK.

But teaching and learning styles in the UK can differ markedly to an international student's earlier schooling. From the number of hours children spend in school to preferred assessment types, no two education systems are identical. An Equality Challenge Unit study across universities in the UK and Australia found that international students felt marginalised and inferior compared to home students.

To genuinely decolonise curriculums, universities need to do more than just update reading lists. They need to think about how teaching, learning and assessment are structured. For example, do sessions give students the time and space to share their knowledge and histories? Do students have a choice of assessment beyond exams and essays that is innovative and allows them to draw on and develop their existing skills? This matters both for students from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education, and those who have come from other countries.

Universities also need to consider whether they are properly preparing international students for employment after graduation. When courses, teaching and activities are being designed with employability in mind, which labour market are students being prepared for? International students deserve specialist employability support, which should go beyond two-year work visas after graduation and aim to enhance their job prospects wherever they choose to settle.

Universities need to acknowledge that each student is on an educational journey that has started long before they enter the classroom, and will continue long after they leave. The experience they offer should be both inclusive and tailored to the individual as far as possible, and understand what international students have learned and give them the chance to showcase it. To do this, universities need to have more critical

discussions about knowledge, how it is produced and what that means for different people.

This might sound like a tall order. But a good start is talking to students, and asking them for their input on making courses more representative, inclusive and empowering. After all, decolonisation efforts have already shown how powerful real voices and stories are in advancing genuine learning and knowledge.

(The Guardian, 18.09.2019, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/sep/18/if-universities-value-overseas-students-they-must-stop-marginalising-them>)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. What is the attitude to foreign students at your university?
2. Can the label “international” really be offensive?
3. What problems can be caused due to the differences in education systems?
4. In what way are requirements of the labour market considered in the curriculum?
5. What steps would you suggest overseas students themselves should take?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

3. Paloma Faith: 'Theresa May is criticised all the time because she's a woman'

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

Singer campaigning for gender equality contrasts ridicule of May's dancing with positive reaction to Tony Blair's taste for rock music.

Paloma Faith has hit out at the widespread mockery of Theresa May's dance moves, saying the prime minister is unfairly criticised because of her gender.

The British musician, a vocal feminist who is spearheading a campaign for global gender equality launched on the eve of the International Day of the Girl on Thursday, said: "Why shouldn't Theresa May dance? I felt bad for her. I'm worried about her policies but I'm not worried about her dancing."

Faith said ridicule of the prime minister over her dance moves, which she parodied by bouncing on to the stage at the Tory party conference last week to the strains of Abba's Dancing Queen, was an example of the way women in the public eye are more harshly treated.

"She is criticised all the time because she's female," Faith said. "I'm not aligned to her party. I'm not for Brexit. But I do think the way the media reports on her, that she has a harder time than a male prime minister. I remember when Tony Blair came out as loving music and being in a rock band. Everyone said it was cool and great."

Faith said the memes that appeared after May was photographed holding hands with Donald Trump at the White House last year were another example of the way society tries to put women down.

"There were all these memes of her holding the hand of Donald Trump, and people saying it was her being submissive. If it was a male PM who had stumbled on the stair and he had put a hand on their shoulder, there would have been nothing.

"I'm in my own little microcosm of music, a woman in power. I was at the [Brit] awards ceremony for best female and another singer won. The camera panned to me at that point and there was stuff about my reaction: 'Oh, she's jealous.' There was nothing like that for the male singers. That's the sort of stuff women in the public eye face, and that's

what happens to Theresa May. They treat her differently than if she was a man. Everyone says: ‘Oh, it’s just a joke.’ But the joke’s on us.

She said the system needed to change, to recognise women, and to realise that women in power should not have to act like men in power.

She cited singers including Adele, one of the most successful female artists, as great role models for young women.

“Adele was raised by a single mother. She wouldn’t necessarily describe herself first as a feminist. But she has achieved so much as a human being.”

She said she has made a new video, which comes out in a few weeks’ time, which she sees as a feminist statement fit for the era of #MeToo.

(The Guardian, 11.10.2018, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/oct/11/paloma-faith-theresa-may-criticised-because-woman-gender-equality>)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. Do you believe female politicians’ behavior attracts more attention of the public?
2. How appropriate would it be for politicians of any gender to perform dance moves or something of that kind?
3. Do you agree with Faith’s opinion on how women are perceived by the society today?
4. Can you provide more examples of different attitudes towards men and women in similar situations?
5. What is the essence of MeToo movement? What do you think of it?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

4. A country with a growing death row reconsiders its future with capital punishment

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — When the ostensible murder victim showed up at a family funeral, Gunalakshmi Karupaya thought her prayers had been answered. Here was living evidence that could overturn her husband's death sentence.

Yet more than two years later, Mainthan Arumugam remains in prison, one of nearly 1,300 inmates facing execution in Malaysia. It may be the largest death row in Southeast Asia — and one that, like Mainthan, has become a rallying point in a country on the cusp of a potentially historic legal shift.

After an upset election in 2018 that ended the ruling coalition's six-decade run, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's government issued an immediate moratorium on executions. It also promised to abolish capital punishment, a legacy of British rule and a mandatory penalty for almost a dozen offenses. The subject has been intensely debated ever since.

Any change would have significance beyond Malaysia's borders. Nearly half of the prisoners on death row here are foreign nationals, and more than 100 are women, Amnesty International [reported](#) this past fall.

The report found that 73 percent of death row inmates had been sentenced for drug trafficking, with most convicted of transporting small amounts of drugs. It also documented the use of torture for "confessions," restricted access to legal counsel and a pattern of unfair trials.

The circumstances that entangled Mainthan, a father of four who worked as a scrap metal trader in the capital, represent "the most preposterous case," the executive director of Amnesty International

Malaysia told a public forum in November. “Mainthan was sentenced to death for a murder,” Shamini Darshni Kaliemuthu recounted. “There was indeed a body. But the person who he supposedly killed is still alive.”

He and three other men were arrested in August 2004, a few days after police found body parts in a Kuala Lumpur neighborhood. They were charged with the murder of a man who had eloped with the sister-in-law of a friend of Mainthan’s. During the trial, Mainthan said he had only helped find the couple, who were brought to his house before the friend took them away.

The prosecution largely built its case on the evidence of two witnesses who claimed they saw a bloodied person on Mainthan’s workshop floor the night before the body parts were discovered. But the four suspects said that person was an occasional worker for Mainthan — known as Devadass — who they believed had stolen from a neighbor. They had admitted to beating him up, but nothing more, and testified that he went to a hospital for treatment.

The problem was, defense lawyers could not locate Devadass to appear as a court witness. The judge publicly doubted his existence, dismissing him as a fictional “afterthought.” All the suspects were found guilty, but three had their convictions overturned on appeal. Only Mainthan’s was upheld.

So Gunalakshmi was astonished to spot Devadass at her mother-in-law’s funeral in March 2017. Devadass was almost equally surprised: He had no idea her husband was on death row. He promptly signed a statement explaining that he was the only man assaulted at the purported crime scene on that night nearly 13 years earlier. Gunalakshmi soon filed an application to reopen Mainthan’s case. The family expected it to be the turning point that would win his release.

“I thought Mainthan would be out soon,” she reflected recently, sitting in the makeshift house where she has raised the children on her salary as a school cleaner. While she doesn’t dwell on the family’s

hardships during the past 15 years, exposed electrical wiring and threadbare furniture betray their ongoing struggle.

Criminal defense attorney Amer Hamzah, who began representing Mainthan in 2014, said he rarely takes on cases after the appeal process ends but was struck by the “many unanswered questions” this one raised. He spotted a jarring anomaly in the evidence: The identity of the victim named on the charge sheet did not match the identity of the dismembered body, as revealed by fingerprints. Then Mainthan’s family told him about Devadass suddenly reappearing.

“Based on the inadequacies in the evidence, Mainthan should not have been found guilty,” Amer said. Testing Devadass’s testimony would be “the best way to assure justice is done. Not only to Mainthan, but also to the deceased.”

The country’s highest court disagreed, an outcome that wasn’t a shock; judges are very conservative about reviewing decisions, said lawyer Khaizan Sharizad Razak, who co-directed a documentary about Mainthan’s case that shot it to prominence. “But if the court has such a high threshold for reopening a case, we’re all stuck.”

Malaysia’s death row inmates live years in limbo. The last known executions were in 2017, when the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty says the country executed four people by hanging. Amnesty International counts 30 executions there from 1998 to 2018, based on what the organization describes as reports “from credible sources.”

Yet the government’s proposed changes could set prisoners on a new course. The call for abolition was lauded as a critical reform in a part of the world where most countries retain capital punishment, although some rarely apply it. At the same time, it angered families who have lost loved ones to violent crime. They were supported by opposition politicians and other proponents of the law.

The government has since backtracked and now is focused on repealing only the mandatory death penalty as it applies to 11 offenses,

including murder and hostage-taking. (The death penalty remains optional for nearly two dozen other offenses.) Disappointed but undeterred, reform advocates still view the proposal as an opportunity to start righting a decades-old wrong — and as a first step toward abolition.

Public opinion is also more nuanced than presumed, according to Ngeow Chow Ying, a lawyer who has campaigned against capital punishment and who convened the November forum. Recent surveys that went beyond a simple for or against question, “to present specific scenarios” in which the death penalty could apply, suggested there would be little public opposition to abolishing the mandatory death penalty, she said.

A bill to do so is expected to be introduced in Parliament by March. The law minister has also raised the issue of resentencing inmates already on death row. How this should happen is under discussion.

Mainthan is closely following the debate through his family and their visits to the prison. Now 48 and much thinner, his hair streaked gray, he has been held in solitary confinement for nearly a decade. He continues to hope for a favorable decision on his request for a pardon from the state leader — in his case, the sultan of Selangor. Such action is his last resort. Neither the sultan nor Mahathir has commented on the case.

At home, Mainthan’s clothes remain ready for his return, folded neatly in the small bedroom where everyone sleeps. His youngest child, just 16 months old when he was arrested, only remembers seeing him through the glass window that separates prison visitors from inmates.

Gunalakshmi looks tired, but her voice is unflinching. “He has hope. I have hope,” she said. “We will fight again and again to get him back.”

(Washington Post, 31.12.2019, URL: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/a-country-with-a-growing-death-row-reconsiders-its-future-with-capital-punishment/2019/12/30/6037ecd0-0c26-11ea-8054-289aef6e38a3_story.html)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. What are the possible ways to deal with serious criminals?
2. Is death penalty appropriate in the modern world?
3. Do you know anything about Amnesty International? If not, search for essential information.
4. Are the miscarriages of justice inevitable?
5. How can be wrongly accused people helped and reintegrated into society?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

5. Hope probe: UAE launches historic first mission to Mars

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

The United Arab Emirates' historic first mission to Mars is under way, after a successful lift-off in Japan.

The Hope probe launched on an H2-A rocket from Tanegashima spaceport, and is now on a 500-million-km journey to study the planet's weather and climate. Hope's arrival in February 2021 is set to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the UAE's formation.

Her Excellency Sarah Al Amiri, the science lead on Hope, spoke of her excitement and relief in seeing the rocket climb successfully into the sky. And she stated the impact on her country would be the same as that on America when its people watched the Apollo 11 Moon landing 51 years ago, also on 20 July.

"It was an anchor for an entire generation that stimulated everyone that watched it to push further and to dream bigger," she told BBC News. "Today I am really glad that the children in the Emirates will wake up on

the morning of the 20th of July having an anchor project of their own, having a new reality, having new possibilities, allowing them to further contribute and to create a larger impact on the world."

The UAE craft is one of three missions heading to Mars this month. The US and China both have surface rovers in the late stages of preparation. The American mission, Perseverance, sent its congratulations to Hope. "I cannot wait to join you on the journey!" its Twitter account said.

The UAE has limited experience of designing and manufacturing spacecraft - and yet here it is attempting something only the US, Russia, Europe and India have succeeded in doing. But it speaks to the Emiratis' ambition that they should dare to take on this challenge.

Their engineers, mentored by American experts, have produced a sophisticated probe in just six years - and when this satellite gets to Mars, it's expected to deliver novel science, revealing fresh insights on the workings of the planet's atmosphere.

In particular, scientists think it can add to our understanding of how Mars lost much of its air and with it a great deal of its water.

The Hope probe is regarded very much as a vehicle for inspiration - something that will attract more young people in the Emirates and across the Arab region to take up the sciences in school and in higher education.

The satellite is one of a number of projects the UAE government says signals its intention to move the country away from a dependence on oil and gas and towards a future based on a knowledge economy.

But as ever when it comes to Mars, the risks are high. A half of all missions sent to the Red Planet have ended in failure. Hope project director, Omran Sharaf, recognises the dangers but insists his country is right to try.

"This is a research and development mission and, yes, failure is an option," he told BBC News.

"However, failure to progress as a nation is not an option. And what matters the most here is the capacity and the capability that the UAE gained out of this mission, and the knowledge it brought into the country."

How has the UAE managed to do this?

The UAE government told the project team it couldn't purchase the spacecraft from a big, foreign corporation; it had to build the satellite itself.

This meant going into partnership with American universities that had the necessary experience. Emirati and US engineers and scientists worked alongside each other to design and build the spacecraft systems and the three onboard instruments that will study the planet.

While much of the satellite's fabrication occurred at the **Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics (LASP)** at the University of Colorado, Boulder, considerable work was also undertaken at the **Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC)** in Dubai.

LASP's Brett Landin believes the Emiratis are now in a great place to do another mission on their own.

"I could give you the process for fuelling a spacecraft, but until you've put on an escape suit and transferred 800kg of highly volatile rocket fuel from storage tanks into the spacecraft, you don't really know what it's like," the senior systems engineer said. "Their propulsion engineers have now done it and they know how to do it the next time they build a spacecraft."

What science will Hope do at Mars?

The Emiratis didn't want to do "me too" science; they didn't want to turn up at the Red Planet and repeat measurements that had already been made by others. So they went to a US space agency (Nasa) advisory committee called the **Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group (MEPAG)** and asked what research a UAE probe could usefully add to the current state of knowledge.

MEPAG's recommendations framed Hope's objectives. In one line, the UAE satellite is going to study how energy moves through the atmosphere - from bottom to top, at all times of day, and through all the seasons of the year. It will track features such as lofted dust, which on Mars hugely influences the temperature of the atmosphere. It will also look at what's happening with the behaviour of neutral atoms of hydrogen and oxygen right at the top of the atmosphere. There's a suspicion these atoms play a significant role in the ongoing erosion of Mars' atmosphere by the energetic particles that stream away from the Sun. This plays into the story of why the planet is now missing most of the water it clearly had early in its history.

To gather its observations, Hope will take up a near-equatorial orbit that stands off from the planet at a distance of 22,000km to 44,000km.

"The desire to see every piece of real estate at every time of day ended up making the orbit very large and elliptical," explained core science team lead on Hope, David Brain from LASP.

"By making those choices, we will for example be able to hover over Olympus Mons (the largest volcano in the Solar System) as Olympus Mons moves through different times of day. And at other times, we'll be letting Mars spin underneath us.

"We'll get full disc images of Mars, but our camera has filters, so we'll be doing science with those images - getting global views with different goggles on, if you like."

(BBC News, 19.06.2020, URL:<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-53394737>)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. How important is space exploration?
2. Should all countries have a space programme?
3. What does it mean to the UAE to belong to the space club?
4. What can other countries learn from the UAE's vision?

5. What do you imagine the future will be like in terms of exploring other planets?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

6. Trump confirms he is considering attempt to buy Greenland

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

Donald Trump has confirmed he is considering an attempt to buy Greenland for strategic reasons, though he said the idea is “not No1 on the burner”.

The US president’s interest, reported earlier this week, was greeted internationally with widespread hilarity but with indignation in Greenland and Denmark.

The government of the semi-autonomous Danish territory insisted it was not for sale. The Danish prime minister called any discussion of a sale “absurd”.

Nonetheless, on Sunday White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow first confirmed the story in an interview, before Trump spoke to reporters as he left New Jersey to return from vacation to Washington.

Saying the “concept came up” and he was “looking at it”, the man who runs a notoriously leaky White House also questioned how the idea found its way to the press.

Trump sought to tie the idea of a US purchase of the world’s largest island – not including the continent of Australia – to his own area of professional expertise, saying it would be “essentially a large real estate deal”.

“Denmark essentially owns it,” he said. “We’re very good allies with Denmark, we protect Denmark like we protect large portions of the world. So the concept came up and I said, ‘Certainly I’d be.’ Strategically it’s interesting and we’d be interested but we’ll talk to them a little bit. It’s not No1 on the burner, I can tell you that.”

Denmark is a member of Nato, a mutual defence organisation frequently criticised by the US president. Trump believes member nations do not pay enough for the privilege of membership alongside the powerful US military.

Such American forces have operated for decades from Thule Air Base in Greenland, the northern-most US base that is part of a global network of radars and sensors for missile warnings and space surveillance.

“Well a lot of things can be done,” Trump said on Sunday. “Essentially it’s a large real estate deal. A lot of things can be done.”

He then claimed without offering evidence that ownership of Greenland was “hurting Denmark very badly because they’re losing almost \$700m a year carrying it. So they carry it at a great loss and strategically for the United States it would be very nice and we’re a big ally of Denmark, we protect Denmark and we help Denmark and we will.”

“I’m supposed to be going there,” he said. “We may be going to Denmark but not for this reason at all.”

On Sunday, during a visit to Greenland, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told the newspaper *Sermitsiaq*: “Greenland is not for sale. Greenland is not Danish. Greenland belongs to Greenland. I strongly hope that this is not meant seriously.”

In remarks to the Danish broadcaster DR, Frederiksen said: “It’s an absurd discussion and [Greenland prime minister] Kim Kielsen has of course made it clear that Greenland is not for sale. That’s where the conversation ends.”

US presidents have paid for territory before. In 1803, Thomas Jefferson bought huge tracts of land from France for \$15m in the Louisiana Purchase. In 1867, Andrew Johnson paid \$7.2m for Alaska from Russia. Territory has also been purchased from Denmark. In 1917, Woodrow Wilson bought the Danish West Indies for \$25m, renaming them the US Virgin Islands.

Kudlow appeared on Fox News Sunday, for an interview mostly given over to rejecting fears of looming recession and defending policy on trade with China. Wrapping up, host Dana Perino asked: “If you get asked to go do a site survey about purchasing Greenland, can I go with you?”

“Well,” said Kudlow, laughing, “maybe I’ll run the central bank.”

He continued: “Look, it’s an interesting story. It’s developing. We’re looking at it. We don’t know. Years ago, Harry Truman wanted to buy Greenland.”

That is true: the Democrat offered Denmark \$100m in 1946 but was turned down.

“Denmark owns Greenland,” Kudlow said. “Denmark is an ally.” But he also said “Greenland is a strategic place up there” and added something not discussed by Trump: “They’ve got a lot of valuable minerals.”

“I don’t want to predict it now,” Kudlow said. “I’m just saying the president, who knows a thing or two about buying real estate, wants to take a look at a potential Greenland purchase.”

Greenlanders have expressed horror. One, Else Mathiesen, told local media: “You can’t just buy an island or a people. This sounds like something from the era of slavery and colonial power.”

Nonetheless, Fox host Perino seemed taken with the idea, asking again if Kudlow would take her on any official visit.

“You know,” said Kudlow, “I could make that happen.”

(The Guardian, 18.08.2019, URL:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/18/trump-considering-buying-greenland>)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. Why is Greenland important strategically?
2. What might Greenlanders think of Mr. Trump's interest?
3. How could Greenland change if Donald Trump bought it?
4. Is it possible to purchase a country? How ethical do you think it is?
5. Do Trump's actions really remind of the era of slavery and colonial power?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

7. This Is Why Singular 'They' Is Such a Controversial Subject

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

ON Tuesday, Merriam-Webster selected its word of the year, not some viral neologism like *post-truth* or *selfie* but a word that has been around since the Middle Ages: the pronoun *they*.

Pronouns are tools that people typically use with all the thought one gives to using doorknobs. Students are taught in early language lessons that every sentence needs a subject and are given a short list of usual suspects: words like *he*, *she*, *you* and *they*. The latter, they are told, is used to refer to more than one person. Yet that's not always the case.

Merriam-Webster chose the singular form, one that has been gaining currency and causing controversy.

There are two reasons that singular *they* is on the upswing. One is that it's a convenient way to refer to an unknown person in a gender-neutral way, versus using cumbersome constructions like "he or she." In recent years, it has been far easier to find this generic *they* in mass media because using it makes life easier for readers and writers alike.

In 2015, Washington *Post* copy editor Bill Walsh announced that his desk would start allowing this usage of *they*, explaining that it's the best option in a language that famously lacks a gender-neutral third-person singular pronoun: Using *he* seems sexist, using *she* seems patronizing and "alternating *he* and *she* is silly," he wrote, "as are *he/she*, *(s)he* and attempts at made-up pronouns." In 2017, no less an authority than the AP Stylebook also approved this usage "when alternative wording is overly awkward or clumsy."

The other is that singular *they* is being used by individuals — who might identify as transgender, non-binary, agender, intersex or even cisgender — who don't feel like a gendered pronoun fits. This usage of singular *they* can operate as a form of protest against some of the most fundamental ideas governing society today: namely, that every person can be identified as male or female in a clear-cut manner and that males and females should look and act and be referred to in certain ways. Modern terms like the honorific *Mx.* and the adjective *Latinx* have been taken up with similar flair.

Using singular *they* to refer to an unknown person is both better established in the language and less likely to lead to outrage on Twitter. Though some traditionalists wrinkle their noses at seeing the word *themselves* in a newspaper article, this usage has been around for some 600 years, and people employ it every day in conversation. Kirby Conrod, a University of Washington linguist who studies pronoun usage, provides the example of dealing with bad drivers: It's unlikely you'd

slam your hand on the wheel and exclaim, “Did you see that? He or she cut me off!”

The newer usage of singular *they* to describe a known individual who is rejecting the yoke of other pronouns has been inching closer to the mainstream for years. In 2015, the American Dialect Society chose it as their word of the year, having seen how people were starting to use it to “[transcend] the gender binary.” In 2017, singer Jennifer Lopez made news when she used singular *they* on Instagram to refer to a younger family member. (TIME also ran a cover story on non-binary identities that year titled “Beyond *He* or *She*“.) And this year, singer Sam Smith announced on the same platform that “My pronouns are *they/them*.”

This version of singular *they* causes more consternation, grammatical and political.

It's unlikely you'd slam your hand on the wheel and exclaim, "Did you see that? He or she cut me off!"

While it's natural for the usage of pronouns to evolve, just as all language evolves, students are taught that pronouns are the bedrock of language, and it can be discomfiting when the rules about how to use them start to shift. “When there are changes, it can feel much more fundamental,” explains linguist Ben Zimmer, “and that obviously leads to a lot of backlash.”

The backlash has come as singular *they* has become associated with new protocols that progressives have adopted at schools and conference check-in tables around the country. “What are your pronouns?” everyone is asked, the suggestion being that one should never assume another person's gender, however obvious it might seem, in part because it is offensive to use words like *him* or *her* for individuals who use *they* and *them*. For some people, this all amounts to just one more example of hand-wringing liberals trying to control people's behavior and speech.

Conrod, who identifies as non-binary and uses the pronouns *they* and *them*, sums up this objection as people feeling “the social justice police” are creating a world where one “can’t say anything.” In response, Conrod argues that everyone generally agrees that it is rude to misgender a cisgender person, like mistakenly saying “Thank you, ma’am” to a long-haired man, and believes this same attitude should extend to people like them, even if it means doing more work in social situations.

Others balk at using singular *they* to refer to people like Conrod on the grounds that it is linguistically confusing (e.g. does one say “they is” or “they are”?) or that it just sounds weird.

“If people have trouble now, it’s understandable,” Zimmer says, “because when we’re dealing with something as fundamental as a pronoun, changes like this might seem to go against people’s deeply held feelings about how language works.”

There is, however, historical precedent that proves this kind of evolution can take place. Centuries ago, the pronoun *you* was used only in a plural sense: Individuals were referred to as *thee* or *thou*. Gradually, people started to view *you* as the more polite way to refer to individuals as well. And there was similar confusion about whether to say “you is” or “you are.”

“There were a lot of animated arguments,” Zimmer explains. This was especially the case among Quakers who preferred *thou* and considered singular *you* to be an abomination uttered by those who “are out of the pure language.” In the end, the Quakers lost and English speakers embraced singular *you*, as well as the verb form that was already in use. Today people say “you are” when referring to singles and doubles alike, with minimal fuss. Using *thou*, meanwhile, would likely lead to some furrowed brows.

In research about the acceptance of different pronoun usage, Conrod has found that when it comes to people disliking singular *they*, there

seems to be a breaking point around age 35. People of all ages are fairly accepting of using singular *they* to refer to an unknown person, but those over age 35 don't like it when it's used to refer to Mary or John.

Merriam-Webster's selection of a word of the year is based on data showing that far more people than usual are looking up a particular term. Because of that, Conrod sees the anointment of singular *they* less as a sign that it has been widely accepted than a signal that more families are probably having arguments about the pronoun over their holiday meals.

"The language is always shifting and normally people aren't aware of it," Conrod says. "This time people seem really aware of it and have a lot of opinions."

(Time, 13.12.2019, URL: <https://time.com/5748649/word-of-year-they-merriam-webster/>)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. Should all changes in social life be reflected in the dictionaries?
2. How good is it that dictionaries are recognizing non-binary people?
3. Should languages not have gender-based pronouns in order to avoid linguistic confusion?
4. Could the misuse of personal pronouns cause misunderstanding or even offence? What is the situation in your language?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

8. Twitter employees can work from home forever, CEO says

I. Read the article and make up a short summary (10-12 sentences).

Twitter's new policy comes as businesses across the nation are struggling to adapt to social distancing guidelines.

Twitter will allow employees to work from home for as long as they want.

Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey told his employees Tuesday that many of them will be allowed to work from home in perpetuity, even after the coronavirus pandemic ends, according to a company spokesperson.

“Opening offices will be our decision,” the spokesperson said. “When and if our employees come back, will be theirs.”

In an email, first obtained by BuzzFeed News, Dorsey said it was unlikely that Twitter would open its offices before September and that all in-person events would be canceled for the remainder of the year.

The company will assess its plans for 2021 events later this year.

“We were uniquely positioned to respond quickly and allow folks to work from home given our emphasis on decentralization and supporting a distributed workforce capable of working from anywhere,” the spokesperson said.

“The past few months have proven we can make that work,” she said. “So if our employees are in a role and situation that enables them to work from home and they want to continue to do so forever, we will make that happen. If not, our offices will be their warm and welcoming selves, with some additional precautions, when we feel it’s safe to return.”

Twitter's new policy comes as businesses across the nation are struggling to adapt to social distancing guidelines and rethinking how they will operate in a post-pandemic world.

Major tech companies such as Facebook, Google and Microsoft were early to move to a work-from-home model and have also been the most cautious in planning for moving employees back into the office.

Google has told employees that the vast majority of them will work from home until 2021, though some will return in the early summer.

Facebook will similarly start to reopen offices after the July 4 weekend but will let employees who are able to work from home do so until next year.

(NBC News, 12.05.2020, URL:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/twitter-employees-can-work-home-forever-ceo-says-n1205346>)

II. Prepare the answers to the following questions:

1. What are the advantages and the drawbacks of working in the office?
2. In what way is to a work-from-home model beneficial?
3. How does the working space influence one`s performance?
4. Will COVID-19 change the way people work forever?

III. Make up a list of possible topics for the debates based on the issues that were touched upon in the article and the discussion.

IV. Hold the debates on one of the suggested topics.

Supplement 1. Training games

1. If I ruled The World

Learning Objectives

- To help improve general communication skills
- To help improve confidence
- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage listening skills
- To improve memory skills

Activity

‘If I ruled the world’ is a quick game and a useful starting point. Form a circle and explain the game. This is a good game to use at the first meeting of a debating society, as it helps people learn each other’s names, while the skills taught in the game are helpful for good debate.

The first person in the circle announces their name and has to make a statement about what they would do if they ruled the world. For example:

Person A – ‘My name’s Bob and if I ruled the world, I would give everyone cake.’

The second person then has to say:

Person B – ‘His name’s Bob and if he ruled the world he would give everyone cake. My name is Amy and if I ruled the world I would eliminate world poverty.’

The third person then has to say:

Person B – ‘His name’s Bob and if he ruled the world he would give everyone cake. Her name is Amy and if she ruled the world, she would eliminate world poverty. My name’s Omar and if I ruled the world I would make everyone wear blue hats’.

This continues round the circle. If the circle is large, you can start the game again halfway round the circle so not to put too much pressure on the pupils at the far end of the circle.

2. I Couldn't Disagree More

Learning Objectives

- To help improve general communication skills
- To help improve confidence
- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage listening skills
- To encourage & improve rebuttal skills

Activity

'I Couldn't Disagree More' is a useful and quick game that can help students practice rebuttal techniques and helps develop the ability to deal with points of information.

One pupil makes a statement (this statement could be serious, silly, topical, controversial or obvious). The next person has to reply to the statement by saying, 'I couldn't disagree more' and then give a reason why.

Here's an example:

Pupil A – 'I believe that politics is a waste of time'.

Pupil B – 'I couldn't disagree more. Politics is incredibly important as politicians make decisions that affect every aspect of our lives'.

Now it is Pupil B's turn to make a statement:

Pupil B – 'I believe that we should introduce road pricing in the UK'.

Pupil C – 'I couldn't disagree more. In early 2007, over 1.8m people in the UK signed a petition saying that they didn't want it.

As a classroom activity, this game can be modified so statements have to be about a certain topic area for example '*The Environment*'.

3. The Point Of Information Game

Learning Objectives

- To encourage pupils to question a point of view
- To help improve general communication skills

- To help pupils handle objections
- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage & improve rebuttal skills
- To encourage listening skills

Activity

‘The Point of Information Game’ is devilishly simple but very effective. To begin with, the teacher should explain the game to the class.

The activity is – that the speaker (the first time the speaker will be the teacher) will speak on a controversial topic. The speaker has to defend the controversial topic by giving reasons and examples and the rest of the class have to offer points of information. They do this by standing up and saying ‘Point of Information’. The speaker either accepts the Point of Information by pointing at the person and saying ‘Yes’ or declines the point by saying ‘No thank you’.

If the speaker says ‘Yes’ the questioner must offer a point of information. When the point has been given, the speaker must answer that point of information whilst continuing their speech. A time limit should be set and that should be between 1 and 2 minutes.

After the teacher has shown the class how the game is played they can ask for volunteers to be the speaker.

An example of a good controversial topic to start with is **‘I believe that children should be seen and not heard’**.

This game encourages pupils to question points of view but also offers an outlet to pupils who may find debating or public speaking difficult, as they can be involved in the game by offering short points of information. This is a good way to start pupils speaking in public and to help them build confidence.

4. Balloon Debate

Learning Objectives

- To encourage pupils to question a point of view
- To help improve general communication skills
- To help pupils handle objections
- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage rebuttal skills
- To encourage listening skills

Balloon debates are a fun way to introduce debating to a class or to a debating society and can be used as a platform for a wider discussion in class.

Activity

Pick five or six people each of whom chooses a historical or famous person to impersonate. Alternatively, the teacher can allocate the speaker a historical or famous person. Ask them all to imagine that they are together in a hot air balloon that is rapidly falling. One person must be thrown overboard in order to save the others, but who will it be? Each participant must make a speech saying why they should be allowed to stay in the balloon. The rest of the class votes, and the loser is disqualified from the rest of the debate. This continues, until only one pupil is left in the balloon.

Wider Class Discussion & Participation

The other pupils will need to listen carefully to the arguments so that they can vote on who gets thrown out of the balloon! Ask the class why they made the decision they came to. A discussion can take place about whether they voted someone off because of the arguments the speaker made or because of preconceived ideas.

Possible Famous People

The President of the USA

The Pope

A Famous Film or Pop Star

A Footballer

A Doctor

A Teacher

Teachers can think up their own examples or ask the pupils to suggest people.

5. Alley Debates

Learning Objectives

- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage rebuttal skills
- To encourage listening skills

Alley Debates are a fun and quick way to introduce debating to a class or to a debating society. They emphasise quick thinking and rebuttal skills.

Activity

Divide the class into two groups and form two lines a few yards apart facing each other. Set a motion for the Alley Debate – these can be fun or serious.

An Alley Debate should be an ‘either/or’ motion along the lines of ‘**Should I buy Fair Trade goods?**’ Assign one side of the topic to one line and the other side of the topic to the other line.

The teacher then stands halfway between the two lines. They should turn to the first speaker who is in favour of the motion and ask for a reason why they should buy fair trade goods. If the point is convincing the teacher should take a step towards that side. If the teacher is not convinced, stay in the middle.

Then ask the first speaker in the other line why you should not buy fair trade goods and repeat the process. The teacher should work their way down the lines until they reach the final speaker.

Possible Alley Debate Topics

Should I buy fair trade goods or not?

Should people become vegetarian?

Should we stop taking flights to help save the environment?

Teachers can think up their own topics, or encourage pupils to think up their own! The topics can be quite simplistic for younger or inexperienced pupils or can be quite advanced for older or experienced pupils.

6. Complete the Sentence

Learning Objectives

- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage critical thinking skills
- To encourage rebuttal skills
- To encourage listening skills
- To encourage an expression of views and debate on issues and current affairs

Activity

This activity involves promoting discussion about major issues. To start, the teacher should write a number of statements on a blackboard/flip chart (leaving some room between each statements).

Example Statements

- The best way to fight global warming is...
- People commit crimes because...
- Giving aid to developing countries is good because...
- Young people feel powerless because...
- The best way to alleviate poverty is...
- Freedom of speech is important but...

Following this, the teacher should read a statement and ask the class to fill in the remainder of the sentence. Pupils should contribute ideas and the teacher should note the ideas. Once one pupil has offered an idea, ask if any other pupils have a view on the matter.

This can be used as a brief game at the start of a class or society meeting to get pupils thinking about major issues or can be used to stimulate discussion about current affairs. It is important to remember

that there are no right or wrong answers: encouraging pupils to express an opinion and encouraging discussion is the most important thing.

The above are just examples. Teachers can use their own examples or ask the pupils to come up with their own statements.

7. Just a Minute

Learning Objectives

- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage memory skills
- To improve vocabulary and word usage
- To encourage listening skills
- To encourage peer assessment

Resources

- Stopwatch or timing device
- A bell

Activity

Decide a topic that pupils can speak on without needing to prepare for. This topic can either be set by the teacher or through discussion with the class.

When a topic has been decided, the teacher should ask for volunteers to speak. Explain that the minute begins as soon as the first speaker starts.

If the first speaker hesitates, repeats words or talks about something unrelated to the topic they can be challenged by one of the other pupils. To challenge, they should raise their hand and the speaker must stop as will the stopwatch.

The pupil who has raised their hand will be asked to explain their objection. If the challenge is agreed, they then will take over from the speaker (or can nominate another speaker) and the stopwatch will start again. The student speaking when one minute is reached the winner!

8. True or False

Learning Objectives

- To help improve lateral thinking skills
- To help improve rebuttal skills
- To encourage quick thinking skills
- To encourage memory skills
- To improve vocabulary and word usage
- To encourage listening skills
- To encourage peer assessment

Activity

The teacher starts by saying that an absolute moral position, for example ‘killing is wrong’, is always true. The teacher should then ask the class to each think of as many cases where the statement is false, and to make their own lists. So, examples where the statement ‘killing is wrong’ might include sick animals being put to sleep, killing in self-defence, and so on.

The teacher should then go around the group asking for one example from each student; if a student gives an example that has already been mentioned, they have one minute to think of another. If the student fails to think of a new example, they are out of the game. The teacher keeps asking each student in turn until only one student has examples left on their list.

Supplement 2. Watching the film

Watch and discuss the film “The Great Debaters”.

The Great Debaters is a 2007 American biographical drama film directed by and starring Denzel Washington. It is based on an article written about the Wiley College debate team by Tony Scherman for the spring 1997 issue of *American Legacy*.

The film was released in theaters on December 25, 2007.

Based on a true story, the plot revolves around the efforts of debate coach Melvin B. Tolson (Denzel Washington) at Wiley College, a historically black college related to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (now The United Methodist Church), to place his team on equal footing with whites in the American South during the 1930s, when Jim Crow laws were common and lynch mobs were a fear for blacks. The fictional Wiley team eventually succeeds to the point where they are able to debate Harvard University.

The movie explores social constructs in Texas during the Great Depression, from day-to-day insults African Americans endured to lynching. Also depicted is James L. Farmer, Jr. (Denzel Whitaker), who, at 14 years old, was on Wiley's debate team after completing high school (and who later went on to co-found the Congress of Racial Equality). Another character on the team, Samantha Boone, is based on the real individual Henrietta Bell Wells, acclaimed poet and the only female member of the 1930 Wiley team who participated in the first collegiate interracial debate in the US.

The key line of dialogue, used several times, is a famous paraphrase of the theologian St. Augustine of Hippo: "An unjust law is no law at all." Another major line, repeated in slightly different versions according to context, concerns doing what you "have to do" in order that we "can do" what we "want to do." In all instances, these vital lines are spoken by the

James L. Farmer Sr. and James L. Farmer, Jr. characters. The film depicts the Wiley Debate team beating Harvard College in the 1930s. The real Wiley team instead defeated the University of Southern California, who at the time were the reigning debating champions. Though they beat the reigning champions, Wiley was not allowed to officially call themselves victors, because they were not full members of the debate society; blacks were not admitted until after World War II.

In his criticism article on the film, Roger Ebert wrote:

The movie is not really about how this team defeats the national champions. It is more about how its members, its coach, its school and community believe that an education is their best way out of the morass of racism and discrimination. They would find it unthinkable that decades in the future, serious black students would be criticized by jealous contemporaries for "acting white." They are black, proud, single-minded, focused, and they express all this most dramatically in their debating.

The debates themselves have one peculiarity: The Wiley team somehow draws the "good" side of every question. Since debaters are supposed to defend whatever position they draw, it might have been intriguing to see them defend something they disbelieve, even despise. Still, I suppose I understand why that isn't done here; it would have interrupted the flow. And the flow becomes a mighty flood in a powerful and impassioned story. This is one of the year's best films.

NOTE: In fact, the real Wiley team did beat the national champions, but from USC, not Harvard. Co-writer Robert Eisele explains, "In that era, there was much at stake when a black college debated any white school, particularly one with the stature of Harvard. We used Harvard to demonstrate the heights they achieved." (**Resolved: We take the affirmative on the American Way** [Roger Ebert](https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-great-debaters-2007) December 24, 2007 <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-great-debaters-2007>)

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