

THE ONTARIO PRO-CON DEBATE FORUM

Established 1960



DEBATE TOURNAMENT JUDGES' BRIEFING

Thank You for Volunteering



What is a Debate?

Normally, one PRO-CON (or cross-examination) debate requires approximately an hour to stage. It consists of three main activities: speeches, cross-examination questioning, and rebuttals, producing a debate of approximately 50-60 minutes.



School teams...

- Consist of 4 debaters, 2 on an affirmative side, 2 on a negative side.
- Team sides remain AFF or NEG throughout three rounds of debate: no partner or side switches are allowed during tournaments.
- 2 rounds of prepared debate, 1 round of impromptu debate; produces 1 ballot per round.
- 1 adult registers each team, 1 judge per room

Official Guidelines and Debate Ballot

ONTARIO PRO-CON DEBATING FORUM JUDGES' PACKAGE

SCHEDULE

8:10 - 9:00
9:10 - 9:45
10:00 - 11:00
11:00 - 12:00
12:00 - 1:00
1:00 - 1:45
2:15

Registration for Debaters and Judges in Atrium
Briefing of Timekeepers in Room 206
Briefing of Debaters (please wait in the Auditorium)
ROUND ONE (prepared)
ROUND TWO (prepared). At end of debate, announce impromptu topic for Round 3
Lunch (Cafeteria)
ROUND THREE (impromptu)
Presentation of Awards in Auditorium

FORMAT AND SPEAKING TIMES

PREPARED ROUNDS (1 & 2):

- 1st Affirmative constructive speech
- 1st Affirmative cross-examined by 2nd Negative
- 1st Negative constructive speech
- 1st Negative cross-examined by 1st Affirmative
- 2nd Affirmative constructive speech
- 2nd Affirmative cross-examined by 1st Negative
- 2nd Negative constructive speech
- 2nd Negative cross-examined by 2nd Affirmative

Preparation for Rebuttals

- 1st Negative rebuttal
- 1st Affirmative rebuttal
- 2nd Negative rebuttal

5 min.
3 min.
5 min.
3 min.
5 min.
3 min.
5 min.
3 min.

5 min.
3 min.
3 min.

¹Answering

¹Questioning

¹Content

¹Delivery

Team Total			
	PLs	1 st Aff	2 nd Aff
Delivery	10		
Content	20		
Questioning	5		
Answering	5		
Rebuttal	5		
Total	50		

Judge's Comments: (First Affirmative)
No scores under 30!

ONTARIO PRO-CON DEBATING FORUM BALLOT

JUDGES: _____
ROOM: _____
AFFIRMATIVE TEAM

Team No. _____

Name (First Affirmative) _____

Name (Second Affirmative) _____

W or L
Total Bank

ROUND(circle) 1 2 3

LEVEL(circle) NOV JUN SEN
NEGATIVE TEAM

Team No. _____

Name (First Negative) _____

Name (Second Negative) _____

W or L
Total Bank

Team Total			
	PLs	1 st Neg	2 nd Neg
Delivery	10		
Content	20		
Questioning	5		
Answering	5		
Rebuttal	5		
Total	50		

Judge's Comments: (First Negative)
No scores under 30!

¹Content

¹Questioning

ONTARIO PRO-CON DEBATING FORUM BALLOT

Class

Round

Room

Teacher

Teacher's Signature

Date

AFFIRMATIVE TEAM

NEGATIVE TEAM

Team No.

W or L

Team No.

W or L

TOTAL

RANK

TOTAL

RANK

Name (First Aff.)

Name (First Neg.)

Name (Second Aff.)

Name (Second Neg.)

	Pts.	1st Aff	2nd Aff
Delivery	10		
Content	20		
Questioning	6		
Answering	6		
Rebuttal	8		
Total	50		

	Pts.	1st Neg	2nd Neg
Delivery	10		
Content	20		
Questioning	6		
Answering	6		
Rebuttal	8		
Total	50		

General Comments:

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

FIRST AFFIRMATIVE	FIRST NEGATIVE
¹ Delivery	³ Delivery
¹ Content	³ Content
⁴ Questioning	⁶ Questioning
² Answering	⁴ Answering
¹⁰ Rebuttal	⁹ Rebuttal
SECOND AFFIRMATIVE	SECOND NEGATIVE
⁵ Delivery	⁷ Delivery

The order of speaking is as follows:

1st Affirmative constructive speech	5 min.
1st Affirmative cross-ex. by 2nd Negative	3 min.
1st Negative constructive speech	5 min.
1st Negative cross-ex. by 1st Affirmative	3 min.
2nd Affirmative constructive speech	5 min.
2nd Affirmative cross-ex. by 1st Negative	3 min.
2nd Negative constructive speech	5 min.
2nd Negative cross-ex. by 2nd Affirmative	3 min.
Preparation for Rebuttals	5 min.
1st Negative rebuttal	3 min.
1st Affirmative rebuttal	3 min.
2nd Negative rebuttal	3 min.
2nd Affirmative rebuttal	3 min.

Defining the Terms of the Resolution

- 1st Affirmative starts debate by defining resolution, outlines terms of the debate, which are defined in reasonable, straightforward manner.
- Not allowed to "squirrel" resolution (define it in such a way that it cannot actually be debated); cannot be defined in an outrageous, ridiculous, narrow manner (as in "BIRT We must disband the police"; then debaters define "police" as an 80's rock band).



- 1st AFF also cannot define resolution broadly or in such a way that it becomes *truism* (statement that is undebatable because it is naturally true as in “BIRT the sky is blue”).
- Debaters penalized if definitions inappropriately limiting, with maximum penalty being loss of debate.

- Negative team must accept AFF definitions, debate on those terms.
- If it strongly disagrees with definitions, members can state their concerns in debate.
- Judge will take this into consideration when scoring.
- If negative team does not refute affirmative team arguments, it cannot win debate.



- Traditionally speeches incorporate conventional language of debate as in: "Honourable judge, patient timekeeper, my worthy opponents, and my most esteemed colleague..."
- Experienced debaters find creative ways to breathe new life into these phrases.
- Speeches marked on tone, style, deportment, persuasiveness, eye contact, decorum (appropriate acknowledgement of audience).
- 15 seconds grace per speech.



First Affirmative Speech in Pro-Con Debate (First Affirmative Constructive - 5 mins)

Madam/Mr. Moderator: The resolution before us today is **(BIRT) we should ban animals in captivity.** I will begin by defining the key terms in this debate.

Today, when we speak of “animals” we mean those found in the wild.

When we speak of “banning” we refer to forbidding the use of by law.

And we all agree that “captivity” alludes to zoos, holding tanks, pens, aquatic parks. Not preserves, sanctuaries or national parks.

So, what we are saying/asking today is: **We inflict unnecessary suffering on wild animals when we**

Speeches are Judged for Their Merits

- Judges will not evaluate speeches for what has not been offered as arguments.
- They can only judge arguments that have been presented.
- Having said that, judges can note a debater's ability or inability to critique opponents' arguments.
- Look for clear language, logical concepts that identify an opponent's weaknesses and rhetorical strategies.

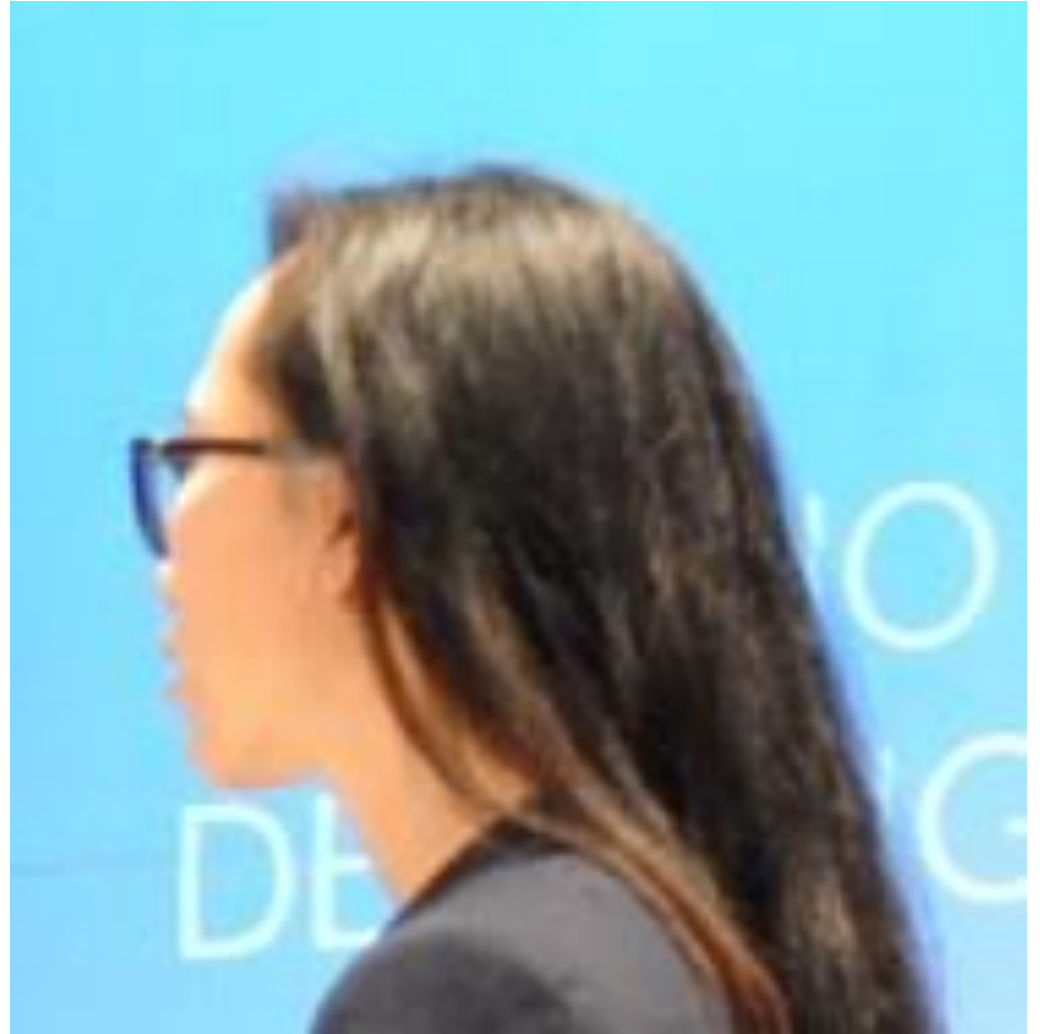
15 second
grace period

Cross-examining the Witness



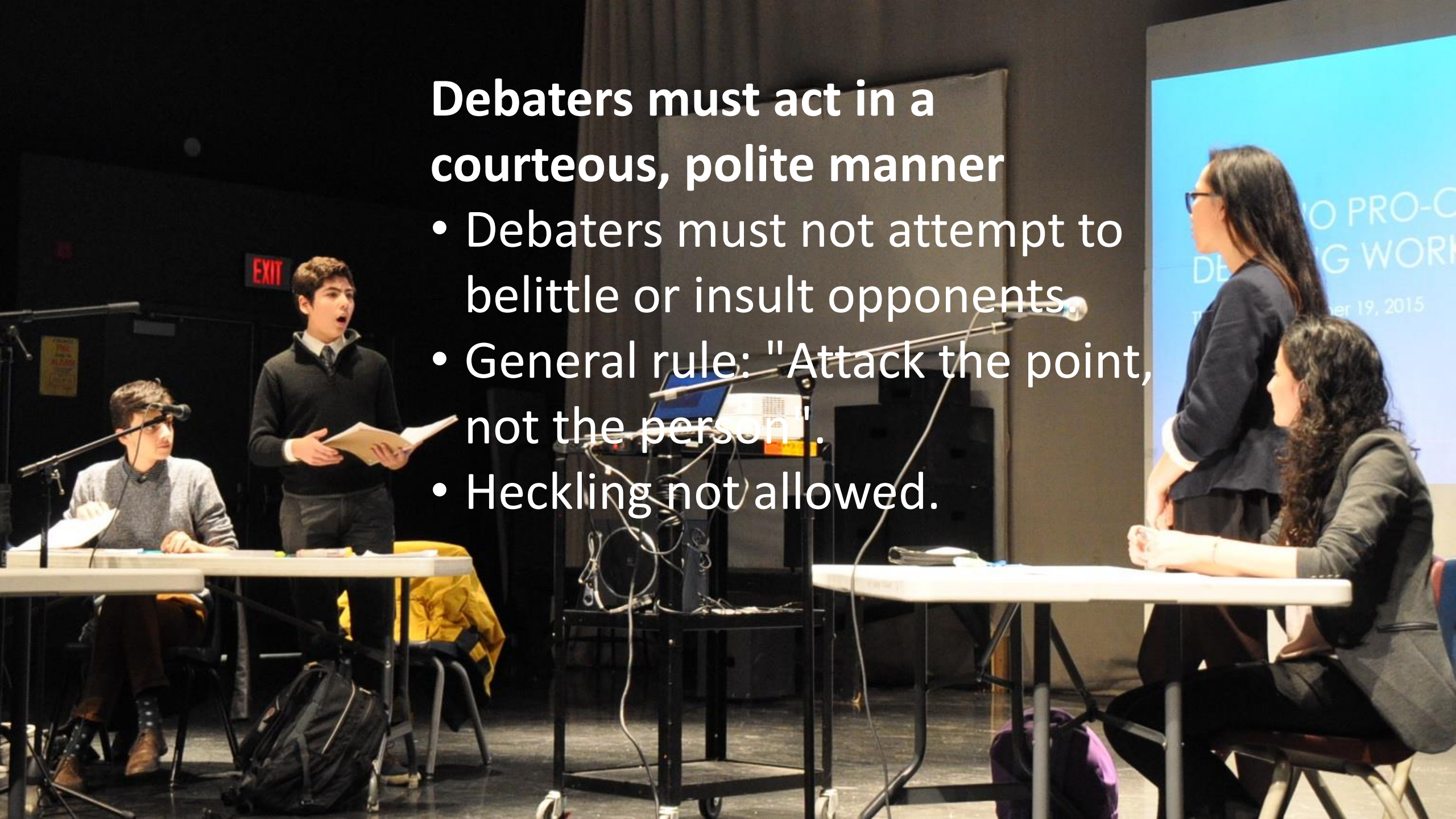
- Examiner *must ask* direct questions; can refer to witness as "you," never by name.
- Cannot make speeches in hopes that it will strengthen team's arguments.
- Not allowed to simply demand "yes or no" answers; witness allowed to justify his/her answer.

- Examiner cannot interrupt witness before he or she has had time to answer question.
- However, after 30 seconds, examiner allowed to interject with "thank you".
- Witness cannot ask questions; witness can ask examiner for clarification.



Debaters must act in a courteous, polite manner

- Debaters must not attempt to belittle or insult opponents.
- General rule: "Attack the point, not the person".
- Heckling not allowed.



Debaters will not receive judges' comments orally after any round of debate

All judges' ballots will be delivered to teams after awards ceremony at the end of the tournament. It is at this time that coaches and their teams can address errors or discrepancies address with tournament organizers.



Specific Points of Interest for Judges



- Be sure to complete 1 ballot for each round of debate that you judge.
- Strive for impartiality.
- We encourage students not to debate in school uniforms to maintain anonymity.
- Numbers in margins indicate sequence of events in debate.
- Fill in comments in this order.

What an Effective Speech Looks and Sounds Like

Category	Level 1 (60-69%)	Level 2 (70-79%)	Level 3 (80-89%)	Level 4 (90-100%)
Delivery (Out of 10) The way debaters present themselves through the use of voice, tone, eye-contact and gesture.	Range: 6.0-6.9 <input type="checkbox"/> Reads prepared text, but without fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker is uncomfortable and lacking in confidence	Range: 7.-7.9 <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly reads rather than delivers text <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker is comfortable for the most part with some evidence of pace, tone, diction, eye contact	Range: 8.-8.9 <input type="checkbox"/> Does not rely solely on written text <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker's pace, tone, diction, eye contact is mostly evident	Range: 9.-10.0 <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates command of the text <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker's use of pace and tone are polished, convincing, persuasive, and memorable

Effective speakers avoid fidgeting, defensive body language like folded arms or hands in pockets, monotone delivery, inappropriate pacing (speaking too rapidly or too slowly), poor posture, hesitancy, dependent on one's notes or minimal eye contact with an audience.

Speech Structure

- "Road-mapping", reasoning, creativity, logic, validity of facts, refutation of opponents' arguments, decorum.
- Only 1st Affirmative delivers pre-prepared speech; all other debaters must incorporate refutation based on information heard in debate.
- Begin or end speech with refutation? How much of each subsequent speech should be devoted to thorough refutation? 30-50%.

Rubric for a Content Mark

Content (Out of 20)

Affirmative team has more responsibility to establish the case and prove its merits.

Range: 12.0-13.9

- Makes little or no claims; has little supporting evidence
- Gives few examples to illustrate arguments
- Little understanding of the overall issue
- Case is not clearly outlined; arguments are difficult to follow; not coordinated with partner's case
- Little or no awareness of opponents' arguments with reference to specific details
- Fails to refute opponents' arguments
- Speaker makes poor use of allotted time

Range: 14.0-15.9

- Makes some claims; has some supporting evidence
- Gives some examples to illustrate arguments
- Shows basic understanding of one side of the issue
- Case is somewhat outlined without limited detail; case may not be coordinated at times with partner's case
- Demonstrates some awareness of opponents' arguments with reference to specific details
- Seldom refutes opponents' arguments
- Speaker makes some good use of allotted time

Range: 16.0-17.9

- Makes considerable claims; has lots of supporting evidence
- Gives numerous examples to illustrate arguments
- Understands both sides of the issue well
- Case is clearly outlined with some very good insights; case is coordinated with partner's case
- Demonstrates very good awareness of opponents' arguments with reference to specific details
- Regularly refutes opponents' arguments
- Speaker makes very good use of allotted time

Range: 18.0-20.0

- Makes impressive claims; supporting evidence is compelling
- Gives varied examples to illustrate arguments
- Understands all aspects of the issue completely
- Case clearly outlined, summarized and coordinated with partner
- Structure and pacing of speech enhance arguments presented
- Demonstrates excellent awareness of opponents' arguments with reference to specific details
- Impressively refutes opponents' arguments
- Expert handling of allotted time



Marks for Questioning

- Are questions logical, relevant, concise, pointed, precise, and politely-worded? Does examiner avoid speech-making?
- Examiners cannot force simple "yes or no" answers.
- If examiners abruptly interrupt witnesses before they have had time to answer properly, then penalties will result; 30 second allowance for responses.
- Examiner must not be discourteous or "badger the witness"; cannot interrupt witness.
- Witness must answer all questions as asked; penalized for evaded questions or perceived as "hostile witness".
- Witness cannot ask questions; can only ask examiner for clarification.

Rubric Levels for Questioning

Category	Level 1 (60-69%)	Level 2 (70-79%)	Level 3 (80-89%)	Level 4 (90-100%)
Questioning (Out of 6) The way examiners ask questions of the witness.	Range: 3.5-3.9 <input type="checkbox"/> Line of questioning, does not cohere, make logical sense or challenges opponent's arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Never addresses weaknesses in opponent's case	Range: 4.0-4.9 <input type="checkbox"/> Line of questioning, demonstrates some logic and coherence in challenging opponent's arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally addresses weaknesses in opponent's case	Range: 5.0-5.4 <input type="checkbox"/> Line of questioning, demonstrates very good, consistent attack of opponent's arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Often addresses weaknesses in opponent's case	Range: 5.5-6.0 <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent line of questioning that consistently, effectively challenges opponent's arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently addresses weaknesses in opponent's case

- Cross-examination is not a time in the debate for "speech-making"; only questions can be asked.
- Usually, in the heat of this exchange, the examiner and witness must always remain courteous to each other.

Answering

- Witness allowed approximately 30 seconds to answer each question.
- If response exceeds this, penalize witness for impeding examiner.
- However, if examiner asks open-ended questions, witness can take as much time to respond as examiner will allow.
- Witness cannot ask questions, except for clarification.



Rubric Levels for Answering

Category	Level 1 (60-69%)	Level 2 (70-79%)	Level 3 (80-89%)	Level 4 (90-100%)
Answering (Out of 6) The way in which witnesses answer questions from the examiner.	Range: 3.5-3.9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely gives direct, honest answers; may concede obvious points but often yields to opposition arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely answers directly; looks insecure, frustrated and intimidated <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely ever qualifies answers 	Range: 4.0-4.9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally gives direct, honest answers; may concede obvious points but often yields to opposition arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally answers directly; looks confident and cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally qualifies answers 	Range: 5.0-5.4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Often gives direct, honest answers; may concede obvious points but occasionally yields to opposition arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Often answers directly without being evasive; looks very confident and cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> Often qualifies answers with detailed responses 	Range: 5.5-6.0 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Always gives direct, honest answers; concedes obvious points but never yields to opposition arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Always answers directly; always looks confident and cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> Always qualifies answers with detailed responses

- Ultimately, it is the judge's impression or sense of this exchange that will determine who has performed best, the examiner or the witness.



Rebuttals

- No new information allowed.
- Rebuttal speech not simply as summary of team's points.
- Teams should *rebuild* their case by *contesting* opponent's criticisms of their arguments during speeches, cross-examination.



Scoring a Rebuttal Using the Rubric Categories

<p>Rebuttal (Out of 8) Negative team has more responsibility to counter the Affirmative team's case and cast doubt on its validity.</p>	<p>Range: 5.0-5.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Refutes few or none of opponents' arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to rebuild case following refutations raised by opponents <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely casts doubt on opponent's case 	<p>Range: 5.5-6.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Refutes some of opponents' arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilds case competently following refutations raised by opponents <input type="checkbox"/> Casts doubt on some of opponent's case 	<p>Range: 6.5-7.0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Refutes most of the arguments of the opponent <input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilds case strongly following refutations raised by opponents <input type="checkbox"/> Able to cast doubt on opponents' case 	<p>Range: 7.1-8.0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Refutes all of opponents' arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilds own case convincingly <input type="checkbox"/> Finds the crux of the debate, summarizes key themes clearly, compellingly
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- When debaters refute each other's arguments effectively, they often include pointed, precise and accurate references to the arguments they have been clashing with from their opponents.



Scoring Chart

Score	Description	% of Scores
50	Impossible	
48 - 49	Incredible, astounding	0.5
45 - 47	Excellent, superlative	4
40 - 44	Very good	25
36 - 39	Good, average	45
33 - 35	Satisfactory	15
30 - 32	Below average	7
26 - 29	Poor	3
25 and under	Unprepared, violates rules	0.5

Impromptu Round Ends Debate Tournaments



- Uses modified times: 4-minute speeches, 2-minute cross-ex; 2-minute rebuttals.
- Emphasizes *agility of thought*, wit, humour, creativity and clash.
- Depth, breadth of factual evidence of less importance but...
- In Pro-Con, topics are of a more light-hearted nature.
- No electronic devices, help from coaches, or supervisors allowed.

General Tips

Team Total

73

	Pts	1 st Aff	2 nd Aff
Delivery	10	7	6
Content	20	16	15
Questioning	6	4	4
Answering	6	5	5
Rebuttal	8	6	5
Total	50	(38)	(35)

Judge's Comments: (First Affirmative)

¹Delivery

- do NOT read your speech - at least your definitions + intro should be freely spoken!

¹Content

- reading detracts from easy understanding + acceptance of your main content
- persuade me - do not read a lecture to me!

⁴Questioning

- be sure your questions are short - do not turn a question into a speech or explanation!

²Answering

- Well done!

¹⁰Rebuttal

- The rebuttal is so important! Why are you still reading to me? Speak to me - persuade me to agree with you!

Team Total

87

	Pts	1 st Neg	2 nd Neg
Delivery	10	9	9
Content	20	17	18
Questioning	6	5	5
Answering	6	5	5
Rebuttal	8	7	7
Total	50	(43)	(44)

Judge's Comments: (First Negative)

³Delivery

- Wonderful to finally see a debater who does not read a speech! Good use of small note cards!

³Content

- good, clear - well organized idea!

⁶Questioning

- Well done - but try to keep your witness from using your time by such long answers (stay in control)

⁴Answering

Excellent answers!

⁹Rebuttal

Well done! Very persuasive rebuttal summary!

General Tips

Team Total

73

	Pts	1 st Aff	2 nd Aff
Delivery	10	7	6
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¹⁰Rebuttal

- The rebuttal is so important! Why are you still reading to me? Speak to me - persuade me to agree with you!

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Answering	6	5	5
Rebuttal	8	7	7
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Judge's Comments: (First Negative)

³Delivery

- Wonderful to finally see a debater who does not read a speech! Good use of small note cards!

³Content

- good, clear - well organized idea!

⁶Questioning

- Well done - but try to keep your witness from using your time by such long answers (stay in control)

⁴Answering

Excellent answers!

⁹Rebuttal

Well done! Very persuasive rebuttal summary!

After the debate ends...

- Comments on ballot considered enough. Be detailed, descriptive, focused.
- Avoid signs of inattentiveness like reading, texting or sleeping. Fill the ballot as completely as possible.
- Consult "Judges' Comments Sheet" and "Judges' Rubric" for further information.



Thank You Again for Your Support

