



SASKATCHEWAN ELOCUTION AND DEBATE ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION D'ELOCUTION ET DES DEBATS DE LA SASKATCHEWAN

DEBATE HANDOUTS

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SEDA

The Saskatchewan Elocution and Debate Association (SEDA) is a non-profit organization that promotes speech and debate activities in English and French. The Association is active throughout the province from grade 6 through grade 12, and at the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. The Association coordinates an annual program of speech and debate tournaments and other special activities, including a model legislature.

SEDA's staff, along with printed and audio-visual materials, are available to assist any individual or group interested in elocution and debate. SEDA is a registered charitable organization. Charitable No. 11914 0077 RR0001.

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SEDA PATRONS

- Honorary Patron - Hon. Dr. Gordon L. Barnhart, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture, and Recreation
- Saskatchewan Law Foundation
- Celebrate Canada Committee for Saskatchewan
- Luther College High School
- Official Minority Language Office, Department of Education
- Mrs. Morris Shumiatcher
- Mrs. John Archer
- Olivia Shumski

Affiliations

- Canadian Student Debating Federation
- SaskCulture Inc.

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Resources

Saskatchewan Elocution and Debate Association (SEDA) – www.saskdebate.com

Access all of SEDA's resources and other provincial and international debate organizations' resources. The following list is far from exhaustive. Have fun chasing the links!

Debate Specific Resources

Basic Parliamentary - http://142.163.252.69/nlsdu/How_to_parl_style.pdf

Intermediate Parliamentary - http://142.163.252.69/nlsdu/student_parl_guide.pdf

Advanced Parliamentary VERY GOOD - http://142.163.252.69/nlsdu/debater_parl_guide.pdf

"Gesture Guide" - http://142.163.252.69/nlsdu/gestures_guide.pdf

"Gesture Guide" - <http://debate.uvm.edu/NFL/rostrumlib/BergerMay%2701.pdf>

Presence and Ethos basic account - <http://debate.uvm.edu/NFL/rostrumlib/presencebdavis0994.pdf>

CSDF - <http://www.csdf.freesevers.com/parliament.html>

Canadian Debate Links

Canadian Student Debating Federation (CSDF) - www.csdf-fcde.ca/

Debate and Speech Association of British Columbia - <http://www.dsabc.ca/>

Alberta Speech and Debate Association - www.compumart.ab.ca/adebate/

Manitoba Speech and Debate Association - www.sjr.mb.ca/Debate/default.htm

Ontario Student Debating Union - www.osdu.on.ca/

Quebec Student Debating Association - www.qsda.net/

New Brunswick Debate - <http://debatenb.freesevers.com/>

Newfoundland Speech and Debate Union - <http://142.163.252.69/nlsdu/>

International Independent School Public Speaking League - <http://www.iispsl.org/>

General Debate Links

www.schoolsdebate.com/wscd/

www.dav.com.au/home.htm

www.qdu.org.au/

www.debatatabase.org

www.debateinfo.com/

www.debate-central.org

<http://youdebate.com/index.html>

<http://onthatpoint.com/>

<http://capital.net/~bps2/>

<http://peoplesforum.com/>

<http://IPDA.anadas.com/>

<http://debate.uvm.edu/>

<http://actein.edu.au/ACTDU/nabouta.html>

Good Internet Research Habits

www.lesley.edu/library/guides/research/evaluating_web.html

www.virtualchase.com/quality/

<http://gateway.lib.ohio-state.edu/tutor/les1/checklist.html>

www.media-awareness.ca/english/index.cfm

General Research Links

www.religioustolerance.org

www.cnn.com

www.apa.org

www.mindpub.com

www.cbc.ca

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

www.statcan.ca/start.html

www.aldaily.com

<http://bitbucket.icaap.org/dict.pl>

Remember: You must establish the credibility of your Internet sources as you would for any other source. For the purposes of authentication, bring to the debate a hard copy of any email correspondence including the source's e-mail address or a printout of the web page your evidence is from including the URL of the site. (See page 18 of the *Step-by-Step Guide*)

SEDA's Lending Book Library

SEDA has a few books on speech and debate available if coaches are looking for further general information. These books do not contain information specific to SEDA's rules of debate. Please contact the [SEDA office](#) to request a book. Books are on loan for up to three weeks. To ensure the safe return of these resources, requests will only be taken from member coaches.

Art of Reasoning. David Kelley, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1988

Braude's Handbook of Stories for Toastmasters and Speakers. Jacob M. Braude, Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1975

Canada's Founding Debates. ed. Janet Ajzenstat, Paul Romney, Ian Gentles, and William D. Gairdner, Stoddart Publishing Co., Toronto, ON, 1999

Debate: A Survival Guide - U of S Debate Society Handbook. Kylie Head, Corey Neal Henry, Dwight Newman, Beth Quigley, 1997

Debater's Guide. Revised Edition, Jon M. Ericson, James J. Murphy, Southern Illinois University Press, 1987

Democracy and the state: An introduction to politics. Joy Esbrey and Larry Johnston, Broadview Press, Peterborough, ON, 1994

How to be the Life of the Podium. Sylvia H. Simmons, AMACOM, New York, NY, 1982

How to Speak in Public. Alex Mair, Hurtig Publishers, Ltd., Edmonton, AB, 1985

Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. 3rd Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 1980

Practical Speechmaking. Ronald M. Brown & Ralph G. Nichols, Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1977

Saskatchewan: A History. John H. Archer, Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon, SK, 1981

Strategic Debate. 2nd edition, Roy V. Wood, National Textbook company, Skokie, IL, 1980

Successful Speeches & Toasts. W. Foulsham and Co. Ltd, Berkshire, Great Britain, 1990

They Died Talking: The Incomplete Guide to Parliamentary Intercollegiate Debate. Robert Presser, Montreal, QB, 1993

Other recommended books, not in SEDA's Library:

How to Say it with your Voice, Jeffrey Jacobi, 1996, Prentice Hall Press, Paramus, NJ, with CD

Mastering Competitive Debate, Dana Hensley & Diana Carlin www.clarkpub.com

38 Basic Speech Experiences, Clark S. Carlile, Dana V. Hensley. 10th Ed. Baker University, Topeka, KS.

Do you have a web site or book to recommend?
Call the SEDA office and we will add your suggestions to this list.

Reading the Package

Why do I read the package *and further info*:

1. So you know everything most other debaters know
2. So you have facts other debaters don't know
3. So you have primary source material
4. So you encounter the weird arguments – when someone comes up with something off the wall, you are prepared.

How to read a piece quickly and effectively:

1. Always skim first. Close read key info only. You should be able to complete the package analysis in an hour.
2. When you find a strong quote or statistic, write it down on a cue card, and put the complete source information on the bottom or back. On the top of the front, record either the point it clashes with or the point it proves. Label it Aff or Neg unless it could be used for either side.
3. While skimming, keep Aff/Neg flow chart. Record the major arguments you encounter and draw arrows to corresponding arguments on the other sides. All the arguments you see arrows between will be clash points for the debate. Ideas that have no corresponding arguments are either “red herrings” (irrelevant points commonly raised to draw judges away from the real point) or “lynch pin points” (a key and unarguable point). Make note of each.
4. By the time you are finished with your hour in the package, you have the entire basis for your case, and can decide the type of case to run on each side.

Types of Reasoning

Generalization: reasoning from facts. This approach assumes that if individual members of a general class of items share a characteristic among them, then the characteristics will apply to all other members of that class. If you draw a general conclusion based on some specific examples, then you have made a generalization.

REASONING: my 1982 Mercedes, a large car, gets about 4 kms to the litre

ASSUMPTION: that all big cars are like mine

Therefore CLAIM: that all big cars are gas guzzlers

Analogy: reasoning from a similar model. This approach makes a comparison between two specific examples. It attempts to show the similarities between one more common example and the one being presented.

REASONING: the Canadian Postal Service is inefficient

ASSUMPTION: by analogy, any new agency run by the government will also be inefficient

Therefore CLAIM: the New Department of Resources will be inefficient

Note: People love to use analogies such as the usual comparison between sports and politics. When responding to this form of reasoning ask:

1. Are points of similarity alike in all crucial ways?
2. Are any differences inconsequential?

Sign Argument: reasoning from related observation. This approach assumes that if one thing occurs then another must necessarily occur. The examples being discussed will be ones that always occur either simultaneously or in succession. The “sign” is the observed example.

REASONING: that because squirrels are gathering nuts, their fur is growing thick, and the birds are flying south this is a pattern

ASSUMPTION: these factors are associated with winter

Therefore CLAIM: winter is coming

Cause-Effect: reasoning from process relationships. This approach probably used by debaters more than any other, assumes that IF one thing occurs THEN another thing will be the result.

REASONING: this is the hottest summer in 100 years

ASSUMPTION: if my air conditioner works more in hotter weather, then my thermostat will cause the air conditioner to come on more

Therefore CLAIM: my electrical bill will be outrageous

Note: A few tests for a valid causal argument might be:

- Is the cause NECESSARY to produce the effect?
- Is the cause SUFFICIENT to produce the effect?
- Is the RELATIONSHIP coincidental, not causal?
- Are there any other INTERVENING CAUSES?
- Is the cause the SOLE CAUSE?
- Is the effect the SOLE CAUSE?
- Is the effect UNIQUE to that particular cause?

Authority: reasoning from source credibility. This approach assumes that if an authority stated something it is true.

REASONING: the President of the USA stated that the United Nations should have a peace keeping force

ASSUMPTION: the President is an authority on such things

Therefore CLAIM: the UN should take such action

Note: The following tests should be used:

- Is the source an EXPERT?
- Is the source TRUSTWORTHY?
- Does the authority AGREE with other authorities?
- Were these RECENT statements?
- Did the authority mean this FIGURATIVELY or LITERALLY?

A Brush up on Tournament Etiquette

SEDA works hard to create a very collegial atmosphere. The following is a refresher on (or for new members, an introduction to) SEDA “etiquette”. These pointers are not aimed at anyone specifically, but are offered for the membership’s general information.

These practices and rules have evolved over the years to increase fair play, participant enjoyment and ease of hosting. Following some of these simple rules can go a long way toward improving everyone’s debate experience, so it’s worth briefly reviewing them here.

This list is not exhaustive -- most coaches could probably add a few points. However, here is some advice on some of our more commonly experienced problems. If you would like more information on these points, call the SEDA office.

1. Try your best to accommodate the host. Every club has hosted something at sometime and we all know how much work it can be. Any assistance you can offer will be appreciated. If you can bring along a judge or two, great! If you know someone in the host community who can judge, call them and put them in touch with the host!
2. If you are running late for a tournament or are unavoidably delayed en route, please contact the host and let them know. It may be best for everyone to begin without you.
3. Scouting is not permitted. Students should not attend their opponents’ debates. The rationale for this rule is that observing your opponent gives you unfair, advance knowledge of their strategy. This rule also applies to parents, coaches, teammates, judges or anyone else who is tempted to watch a debate and then spread that information around. Teams with byes are encouraged to watch and learn from other teams, but if you are going to observe a debate, make sure it is in another division.
4. As interest in debate grows, the size of tournaments grows too. In both North *and* South, this has meant that students sometimes end up on waiting lists. Early notice of cancellations is greatly appreciated by teams waiting to enter the tournament. Also, please be patient with hosts who are managing the waiting list. Pressuring them to get the teams enrolled won’t help anyone. Yes, we know debaters need time to prepare and therefore, need to know if they will be attending the tournament. But remember, the host could have said, “sorry, the tournament is full” rather than going out of their way to manage a waitlist.
5. General complaining should not be done at a tournament. People will overhear your comments and negativity spreads like wildfire. Soon your comment about the cold pizza will find its way to the person in charge of the food. Everyone tries their best, but sometimes problems occur. Please don’t make people feel worse than they already do.
6. Respect the judges, even if you really, really disagree with their decision. These people are volunteers who give up free time for the good of debate. Many are rookies just trying to do their best. Specific judging complaints should be registered with SEDA. Students, coaches and parents (yes, even parents) should not give judges a hard time. Keep a lid on the “rink rage” and let SEDA handle it.
7. Give the earliest possible notice that someone is canceling. Last minute changes equal lots of work and potential tournament delay.
8. Say “thank you” to the organizers. While we all know that participants appreciate the work the host does, it’s still nice to hear it once in a while. So before your head for home, take a minute say thanks. For most hosts, the reason they work so hard is because they care about students. It is very gratifying to have some of these students come up to you and shake your hand.

Remember, at SEDA we don’t just play to win. We play to learn and we play to have fun!

Cross-Examination

Excerpted from *A Debater's Manual* by Lauren Bialystok

The key difference between cross examination and discussion style debate is that after each constructive speech, the debater is questioned by an opponent for 3 minutes. Unlike discussion style, the debater asks a *series* of questions, leading to a point. Cross-examination is a skill that is often practised separately from speech-making. Although it is an integral part of cross-examination style debating, it requires special knowledge and strategy.

Have you ever seen an attorney fire questions at a witness in a heated courtroom scene on TV or in a movie? Although usually less thrilling than this artificial replication, cross-examination is essentially just that. In debating, cross-examination is a tool by which a debater attempts to extract damaging admissions from an opponent, thereby exploiting loopholes in the opponents' case while strengthening his/her own claims.

In cross-examination, one debater, like the attorney, asks all the questions. This person is called the *examiner*. The other debater (the one who has just finished delivering a constructive speech) must answer all the examiner's questions and is known as the *witness*.

THE EXAMINER

ROLE: to ask questions of an opponent following his/her speech

GOAL: to extract damaging admissions from opponent using a crafty progression of questions

TECHNIQUES: short, straightforward, specific questions, yielding an answer about 5 seconds in length, often just "yes" or "no"

- a series of short questions leading to a self-evident conclusion
- a series of questions, each of which yields the same answer
- offensive attack of witness's speech through questioning on its inconsistencies and logical flaws
- maintaining control of cross-examination by questioning on more obscure information, such as specific surveys or statistics
- questioning on points that will be brought up in examiner's speech, but are as of yet unknown to witness, thus resulting in confusion as to the desired response of the examiner

DESCRIPTION: polite, patient, confident and knowledgeable

WOULD NEVER:

- deliver a speech
- ask a question to which he/she does not know the answer
- ask personal questions, or questions that are irrelevant to the debate
- converse with partner or opponent
- demand a "yes or no" answer from witness

THE WITNESS

ROLE: to answer examiner's questions as honestly and reasonably as possible

GOALS: to defend position and avoid admitting to damaging concessions

TECHNIQUES:

- qualify an answer with reasonable information
- use up full 30 seconds allotted to each answer
- surprise the examiner by remaining unflustered at all times, even when offering damaging information

DESCRIPTION: calm, cool and collected

WOULD NEVER:

- refuse to answer a question, unless it be of an uncomfortably personal nature
- ask any questions of the examiner, other than clarification of the question
- be evasive by deliberately stalling or talking around the question instead of providing a direct answer
- deny obvious truths or dispute accepted facts for the sake of irritating the examiner
- formulate an answer longer than 30 seconds

THE EXAMINER

How To Formulate Cross-examination Questions

Okay — you know your mission. But it's not always easy to accomplish, especially when debating opponents who are uncompromisingly stubborn or evasive in their answers. Here are some suggestions on how to formulate user-friendly questions:

1. Start Friendly, End Up Aggressive

When you're cross-examining, your opponent is in a defensive position. You want to extract statements that will be anything but defensive. Therefore, starting with an aggressive, accusatory question is simply counter-intuitive, and invariably results in a hostile witness. Start with friendly questions, such as "*Is it true that you stated in your speech...?*" or other questions that are not easily contestable. Guide your opponent through a series of increasingly specific and contestable questions before posing the climactic finale.

2. Brevity is the Soul of Wit

Being the cross-examiner is all about keeping the floor. [In Ontario] your opponent is allowed up to 30 seconds to answer each of your questions. Since you're interested in furthering your own case and not in hearing your opponent make another speech, your job is to design questions that will cut off your opponent well before the 30-second mark. The best way to keep the floor is by phrasing questions that will yield brief answers. Follow two rules for designing such questions:

i) Make the Question short and to the point.

Long, convoluted or multi-pronged questions invite lengthy answers. Divide your points — never tackle more than one detail in a given question — and phrase each question as concisely as possible. This technique should result in more questions that might be shorter in length.

ii) Make the questions specific.

Avoid asking your opponent about large topics or vague concepts because they, too, invite lengthy answers. Never ask your opponent for his/her opinion on something — for all you know, they may have memorized a 2-hour long lecture on the topic. Avoid any questions that resemble the following:

**What do you think of...?
Why did World War II start?
Was Socrates right?**

Rather, look for opportunities to use questions that resemble the following:

**Do you agree that some historians attribute the start of World War II in part to the Arms race?
Are you aware of the study performed by _____ in which _____ showed that _____?
Did you know that Article 3 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights states that...**

3. Avoid Absolutes

The best way to encourage agreement with your points is to make them moderate enough to be palatable. Witnesses are very reluctant to agree with absolute statements. It is much more difficult for an opponent to disagree with words like

**Is it reasonable than Is it true
Some Canadians believe than Canadians believe
Better/more than The best/most**

If you avoid using such absolute terms, you are more likely to succeed in coaxing your opponent into providing the desired answers.

Examples of an Opening Cross Examination Question

While debating daycare, your opponent asserts that daycare enriches the lives of all toddlers. You want to ask about a study showing that toddlers enrolled in daycare are more susceptible to pneumonia. What is the best way to open your series of questions?

1. Aren't all toddlers enrolled in daycare more susceptible to pneumonia than those who aren't?

This opening is hostile. It welcomes denial from your opponent because of its obvious clash against his/her case. Since it's not furnished with specific evidence, it also invites a speech from your opponent instead of the brief answer you are seeking. Your opponent would have no cause to agree with this damaging assertion unless you convince them that it is true. Who says that toddlers in daycare are more susceptible to pneumonia? Certainly not your opponent.

2. Were you aware that a 1994 study showed that toddlers are 29% more likely to acquire pneumonia if they are enrolled in a daycare program?

This opening is specific, and chances are your opponent will not have heard of your particular study. The specificity of your evidence gives you credibility and might shock your opponent initially. At the same time, this question leaves you little or no room to manoeuvre. Supposing your opponent concedes to being unfamiliar with your damaging study — then what? It is very difficult to follow up an opening like this with questions about daycare's adverse affects on children. Since you've already played your aggressive card, your opponent is much more likely to argue with your subsequent questions; he/she already knows what you were trying to prove, and will do the utmost to resist letting you get away with it.

3. Is it true that in your speech you mentioned that daycare enriches the lives of toddlers?

This question is both friendly and specific. By opening with a quote or paraphrase from your opponent's speech, you are guaranteed to receive your desired answer to at least one question (it would be ridiculous for a debater to deny something he/she said just a few minutes earlier). The question is innocuous, since your direction is unclear and your opponent therefore can't spot your trap. The question will also allow you to continue nudging your opponent toward the damaging concession you desire. Consider the questions that might constitute the remainder of this series:

Is it reasonable to say that being exposed to health hazards would not enrich the life of a toddler?

[“Yes”]

Would you say that pneumonia is a rather serious health hazard?

[“Yes “]

Were you aware that a 1994 study proved that toddlers enrolled in daycare are 29% more likely to contract pneumonia than toddlers not enrolled in daycare?

[..... no... I mean, er.. .]

Voila- trapped!

THE WITNESS

How To Answer Questions

As a witness, you must be able to avoid forfeiting your case when an examiner asks a crafty series of questions. This is also a difficult task, because part of your job description is to answer questions honestly. You don't want to lose marks for not fulfilling your role as a witness — but you also don't want to lose the debate for being too compliant with your examiner. To help avoid falling into both traps, follow these guidelines:

1. Don't be in denial

Many debaters mistakenly believe that they are most successful as witnesses when they deny everything that the examiner asserts to be true— even obvious facts. Remember that you do not gain points for being argumentative, or lose points for conceding to certain facts. The tactic of denying everything generally makes fools out of witnesses rather than increases their credibility. When asked a direct, simple question, it is best to give the direct, honest answer that the examiner desires. Most questions of that nature are usually innocuous anyway, so denying them for the sake of being argumentative only makes you look defensive and hostile. For instance, if an examiner asks you what year it is, giving a false or sarcastic answer is counter-productive. It makes you look either ignorant or impudent, and insecure because you are afraid that your case will be

lost by telling the examiner something trivial such as the current calendar year. Confident witnesses will pleasantly agree to obvious facts, rather than make a point of giving the examiner anything but the desired answer.

2. Don't be evasive

Another tactic frequently used by nervous witnesses is constant evasion of the question. Overly-concerned with the defence of their own case, many witnesses refuse to answer even the most direct questions, sometimes without even realizing it. Cross-examination depends on both debaters giving each other a fair chance. The examiner is expected to give the witness a fair chance to defend his/her stance, and the witness should return the favour. Being evasive, by jumping ahead to a later question, or delivering a speech, or providing off-topic information, rather than simply answering the question, deprives the examiner of an opportunity to extract admissions from you. Therefore, dodging the question is another tactic that ultimately makes you look hostile and insecure. The idea behind being a good witness is answering the questions so that the examiner has a *chance* at succeeding, but answering them in such a way that the examiner is unsuccessful overall.

3. Qualifying Answers

At this point, you may be wondering how you can possibly answer questions honestly without giving up ground. One tactic witnesses can use to defend their stance under cross-examination is to qualify the answers they give. In most situations, an examiner's question will not require a direct, one-word response that you must provide without hesitation, as described earlier. Many questions will allow you to *slant* your answer with commentary or evidence that enforces your own stance. By incorporating such information, you can answer the question honestly without conceding as fully as the examiner would like you to.

When qualifying answers, it is important to present the qualification before providing the exact answer. To illustrate this tactic, think of always answering “*But... yes*” instead of “*Yes, but...*.” If you first explain where you can reasonably disagree with a point and then concede that you agree with the examiner's point overall, you are unlikely to be interrupted before completing your response. If you first concede that you agree — thus immediately giving the examiner the desired answer — and then attempt to embark on an explanation of where disagreement may be reasonable, the examiner can politely cut you off before you have a chance to complete your response.

Examples of Answers to Cross Examination Questions

How should you answer the following questions under cross-examination?

1. You're opposing a resolution that proposes the redistribution of funds to educational programs.

“Should we look for ways to reduce the cost of providing special needs programs in high school?”

[Yes, we should always be looking for ways to save money.]

This answer is indeed honest and reasonable. However, it may give your examiner too much ground. He/she may be able to prove that a certain method of redistributing funds would be more cost-effective for special needs programs.

[Only so long as we remember that our first priority is to provide quality programs that meet students needs.]

This answer is reasonable and protects you from being forced to make dangerous concessions. Your cross-examiner may be able to prove that it is possible to save money on special needs programs, but you will have already indicated that saving money is secondary if education suffers as a result.

2. “Which organism is more complex, something like a tomato or a potato or a human being?”

[It’s quite judgmental to say that one organism is necessarily more complex than another one. A chimp has 98% of the DNA of a human.]

This answer attacks the premise of the question with a biological example. The answer is nevertheless unreasonable because the question was simple and uncontroversial; even biologists would agree that a human is more complex than a vegetable.

[I’d have to say the human being is more complex]

This answer is reasonable and honest. In this case, it makes more sense to agree with the examiner unconditionally than to look for ways to twist the question.

3. You’re opposing the resolution BIRT that no principle justifies the taking of a human life.

“Don’t you think that we should stop euthanasia, because — well, don’t you believe that it’s wrong to let people kill each other and isn’t that in our Charter of Rights?”

[Could you clarify that question please?]

Although the witness’s duty is to answer all questions honestly, exceptions are made when the examiner does not formulate a comprehensible question. A witness is allowed to respond with a request for clarification whenever this occurs.

[It’s not wrong to let someone take another’s life when that person has asked the other one to do so. Euthanasia is not addressed in the Charter of Rights — murder is. Euthanasia is different from murder.]

This answer attempts to address all aspects of the examiner’s confusing question. Although the answers are all reasonable, it is easy for answers to be misinterpreted when the exact question is incomprehensible. In this case, it’s better to ask the examiner to narrow it down so that your own words aren’t equally vague.

4. You’re opposing the resolution BIRT that the ownership of personal automobiles be outlawed in all urban centres.

“Do you want your children to face the increased health hazards associated with the pollution caused by urban life?”

[I’m not going to have any children.]

This answer is purely evasive and sarcastic.

[No, but we must remember that the causes of the health hazards, such as the exhaust from automobiles, provide all kinds of benefits as well, such as quick and convenient transportation.]

This answer is well-qualified. However, by starting with the word “no—— the examiner’s desired response —— you allow the examiner to cut you off before you are able to qualify your stance. After you say no the examiner could easily say “thank you” and move on to the next question.

[We benefit greatly from pollutants such as automobiles. While I don’t want my children to face health hazards in the future, I wouldn’t trade the benefits of modern transportation to protect them.]

This answer provides the same information as answer b), but in a safer order. The evidence is presented first, and the answer next. The examiner is therefore unable to cut you off before you’ve completed your response.

Cross Examination is a technique that can never be fully mastered. The success of your questions always depends on several factors that are beyond your control, such as the mood of your witness. It is nevertheless important to start practising cross examination early on, for two reasons, First, cross examination arguably requires more experience to grasp than other debating skills. Second, even if you don’t debate extensively in the cross examination style, the understanding of logic and argument that you develop by practising cross examination is equally beneficial in parliamentary debating.

“Grab-and-Go” unit - Getting a debate started templates

Teaching students to debate is easier than you may think!

SEDA has developed a set of “grab-and-go” debate worksheets to use in the classroom or in a debate club.

Included are:

- Evidence cards
- Affirmative constructive speech worksheet
- Negative constructive speech worksheet
- Flowsheets
- Speech templates
- Skill-building activities

Preparing for Debating**The Coach’s/Teacher’s Role**

- Begin topic discussion and provide research time at the resource centre
- Facilitate brainstorming sessions and skill building activities
- Help students organize information (taking notes, preparing Worksheets, reviewing)
- Provide practise time prior to the debates using the Speech Template
- If having a formal debate, ask parents, administrators or other honoured guests to judge

The Student’s Role

- Receive topic, begin research, interview experts from both sides of the resolution
- Look up government reports and books, magazine articles, internet sources
- Review material and mark it Affirmative or Negative, weeding out irrelevant material
- On the Worksheet, establish needs for change and develop a defensible plan
- Review the Affirmative case from the Negative point of view and on the Worksheet prepare Negative responses and evidence. At the same time, test the Affirmative case.
- Plan questions, and using the Speech Template, practise presenting arguments

EVIDENCE CARDS

Can also be used in developing persuasive essays

<p>Evidence Card Argument # ____: Example: Quote: " Source:</p>	<p>Evidence Card Argument # ____: Example: Quote: " Source:</p>
<p>Evidence Card Argument # ____: Example: Quote: " Source:</p>	<p>Evidence Card Argument # ____: Example: Quote: " Source:</p>

Affirmative Constructive Speech Worksheet

1. State the resolution:

"Be it resolved that _____

2. Define the terms of the resolution.

This must be done so that everyone uses the main terms of the resolution in the same way. The 1st Affirmative defines the key terms for everyone, but it is wrong to define the terms in a way which gives you an unfair advantage.

1st term – Definition: _____

2nd term – Definition: _____

3rd term – Definition: _____

3. State the Needs for Changes

As the Affirmative you are presenting a resolution which always calls for a big change to the present system or status quo. Before presenting your change you must explain why we need this change. Your change must be significant; otherwise you fail your job as Affirmative. You are required to change serious ills in the system, not make changes within the existing system.

The needs for change are

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

4. Introduce the Plan

Part of the Affirmative case is to introduce a plan which will solve the need for change. The 1st Affirmative must present at least an outline of the plan for the Negative. The 2nd affirmative expands and defends the plan. (Policy Debate only. Not needed for Values debates.)

We will:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Negative Constructive Speech Worksheet (Step-by-Step Guide, pages 11, 28)

Strategies to pursue:

- A. Shoot down all reasons for change and proposed plan – find all the flaws
- B. Suggest system would be even better with Minor Changes (without agreeing)
- C. Agree system needs fixing, but suggest a better Counterplan

1. Clash with the Definitions

Accept the definitions – **or** – Dispute the terms if unfairly defined.

Reasons why unfair: _____

New definitions:

1st term – Definition: _____

2nd term – Definition: _____

3rd term – Definition: _____

2. Clash with the Needs for Change

Be prepared with your counter-arguments from the evidence cards and flowsheet.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. Clash with the Plan

Pick a strategy and use the negative constructive evidence cards. If you choose a Minor Changes or Counterplan your 3-4 points are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

4. Negative Point of View

The Negative can build its own constructive case as well.

1. _____

2. _____

FLOWSHEET
(to help me clash affirmative and negative)

Resolution: Be it resolved that: _____

Them	Us

Debate Speeches Templates

- **Discussion Style** (4-5 minute constructive speeches, followed by a 6-10 minute discussion period, a 5 minute break, and 3 minute rebuttal speeches)
- **Cross-Examination Style** (5 minute constructive speeches, each one followed by a 3 minute cross examination period, a 5 minute break, and 3 minute rebuttal speeches)
- **Parliamentary Style** (details available from the Step-by-Step Guide and the web site)

First Affirmative Constructive Speech (5 minutes)

Mr./Madam Chairperson, honourable judges, worth opponents, ladies and gentlemen:

(INTRODUCTION)

The resolution before us today is that ... *from worksheet*

We the affirmative define ... *from worksheet*

The affirmative has # _____ needs for change (or contentions)
... *from worksheet*

My partner will go into the last # _____ needs for change.
... *from worksheet*

(MAIN BODY OF THE SPEECH)

Our first needs for change is ..., evidence

The second is ..., evidence

I will now outline our plan which has # _____ points which will address each of these needs for change.
... *from worksheet*

I will now discuss the first # _____ points, while my partner will discuss the last # _____ points in greater detail.

(CONCLUSION)

In conclusion, the affirmative has shown clear needs for change (summary)... and a workable solution (summary) ... that will have convinced you that you must support the resolution in this debate.

Concluding observation, or quotation, relating to your case.

I now stand for cross-examination. (3 minutes, by 1st Negative)
Or in Discussion Style, the next constructive speech.

First Negative Constructive Speech (5 minutes)

Mr./Madam Chairperson, honourable judges, worth opponents, ladies and gentlemen:

(INTRODUCTION)

EITHER We the Negative accept the definition of the resolution offered by the First Affirmative.

OR We the Negative challenge the Affirmative's definition of the resolution, which is designed to give the Affirmative an unfair advantage. We urge the judges to accept our more reasonable definition:

We define ... *from worksheet*

OR As the Affirmative failed to define the resolution, that task falls to the Negative, according to the rules. We therefore define ... *from worksheet*

Apart from the definitions, the Negative team is unable to accept the contentions put forward by the first Affirmative. I will refute them now. *Touch on the weakness of each contention, and mention logical weaknesses revealed by your cross-examination of the First Affirmative.*

The Affirmative had # _____ needs for change.

1. The points are wrong/illogical/weak because... *from worksheets*

The Affirmative plan had # _____ points.

Points of the plan will not work because... *from worksheets*

The Negative case has # _____ contentions.

I will begin the Negative case with # _____ contentions: ... *from worksheet*

My partner will continue our case with # _____ contentions: ... *from worksheet*

(MAIN BODY OF THE SPEECH)

My first contention is that ..., evidence ... *from worksheet*

And that leads into our second contention, that ..., evidence ... *from worksheet*

(CONCLUSION)

In conclusion, I have begun the negative case by clashing with the Affirmative case and by making # _____ strong points for the negative:

1. that

etc.

Concluding quotation or observation about the Affirmative case.

I am sure that the judges will agree that their case must fall.

I now stand for cross-examination. (3 minutes, by 2nd Affirmative)

Or in Discussion Style, the next constructive speech.

Second Affirmative Constructive Speech (5 minutes)

Mr./Madam Chairperson, honourable judges, worth opponents, ladies and gentlemen:

(INTRODUCTION)

As the 2nd speaker of the Affirmative, I will begin by refuting and clashing with the arguments of the First Negative; having done that, I will continue with the Affirmative case.

The First Negative made # _____ contentions. I will demonstrate how none of them serve to shake the contentions put forth by my partner, and how they are based on inadequate evidence. *Clash thoroughly with each contention of the First Negative, include weaknesses in the Negative case revealed by your cross-examination.*

Negative point refuted

Negative point refuted

(etc.)

So much for the Negative case so far.

I will complete our case with the last # _____ contentions that my partner referred to earlier.

1. that

2. that (etc.)

(MAIN BODY OF THE SPEECH)

For my first contention, that ...

Which brings me to my second contention, that...

(etc.)

(CONCLUSION)

In conclusion, my partner and I have proved the resolution with # ____ contentions. I will briefly remind you of our case.

List your partner's and your own contentions.

We feel that our case is certainly proven on the balance of the evidence presented.

Concluding observation or quotation, relating to the negative case.

I now stand for cross-examination. (3 minutes, by 2nd Negative)

Or in Discussion Style, the next constructive speech.

First Affirmative Official Rebuttal (3 minutes, last speech of the debate)

The Negative has put forward # _____ contentions. Not one of them serves to disturb the affirmative case.

Deal with negative contentions one by one.

In addition, our contentions that ...were not challenged by the negative.

I would like to remind you that the Affirmative contentions ...

List them, dealing with negative challenges to the Affirmative case.

Finally, as the Affirmative has met its responsibility to prove its case and the Negative has not managed to shake our proof, I am sure that the judges will wish to award the debate to the Affirmative.

Second Negative Constructive Speech (5 minutes)

Mr./Madam Chairperson, honourable judges, worth opponents, ladies and gentlemen:

(INTRODUCTION)

As the last Negative speaker, I will begin by refuting and clashing with the arguments of the Second Affirmative; having done that, I will complete the Negative case.

The Second Affirmative made # _____ contentions. I will demonstrate that they are based on inadequate evidence to support the resolution; and that the 2nd affirmative's attempt to shake the first part of the Negative case was not successful.

Clash thoroughly with each contention of the Second Affirmative, include weaknesses in the Affirmative case revealed by your cross-examination.

Affirmative point refuted

Affirmative point refuted

(etc.)

Moving from the weaknesses of the Affirmative case to the completion of the Negative case, I will discuss the last # _____ contentions:

3. that

4. that (etc.)

(MAIN BODY OF THE SPEECH)

My first contention is that ... And that leads to my second contention, that... (etc.)

(CONCLUSION)

In conclusion, the Negative has demonstrated that, so far, the Affirmative case is not proven; and we have supported our case with # ____ contentions, which I will briefly summarize:

List your partner's and your own contentions.

We feel confident that our case has successfully challenged the Affirmative case, and that the judges will wish to award this debate to the Negative.

Concluding observation or quotation, relating to the Affirmative case.

I now stand for cross-examination. *(3 minutes, by 1st Affirmative)*

Or in Discussion Style, the next constructive speech.

First Negative Official Rebuttal (3 minutes, second last speech of the debate)

The Affirmative has attempted to prove the resolution with # ____ contentions. The evidence that they have presented is inadequate to establish these contentions, as I will demonstrate.

Deal with major Affirmative contentions, one by one.

The Negative case contained # _____ contentions.

List them, countering Affirmative challenges as you go.

Finally, as the Affirmative has clearly not met its obligation to prove its case, and as the rules prevent it from introducing new contentions or evidence in its rebuttal, I'm sure that the judges will wish to award the debate to the Negative.

Debate It Up!

Look It Up! Researching the arguments.

Name: _____
Name: _____
Name: _____
Name: _____

Course: _____
Section: _____

In a Nutshell:

Write a summary of the issue (2 to 3 sentences):

Be it resolved that...

The motion:

What's the big idea? Write an outline in point form.

Arguments for:

Big idea #1:

-
-
-

Big idea #2:

-
-
-

Big idea #3:

-
-
-

Arguments against:

Big idea #1:

-
-
-

Big idea #2:

-
-
-

Big idea #3:

-
-
-

Our sources:

Argument: For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Who is the author/creator? _____

What is the title? _____

What is the format (book, website, CD-ROM, magazine, etc.)? _____

When was it created (year of publication or creation)? _____

Where did I find it?
(if website, write the address) _____

Argument: For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Who is the author/creator? _____

What is the title? _____

What is the format (book, website, CD-ROM, magazine, etc.)? _____

When was it created (year of publication or creation)? _____

Where did I find it?
(if website, write the address) _____

Argument: For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Who is the author/creator? _____

What is the title? _____

What is the format (book, website, CD-ROM, magazine, etc.)? _____

When was it created (year of publication or creation)? _____

Where did I find it?
(if website, write the address) _____

Great Websites:

This site relates to argument:

For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Title: _____

Address: Http:// _____

Specify the address for the page on the site where you found information

This site relates to argument:

For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Title: _____

Address: Http:// _____

Specify the address for the page on the site where you found information

This site relates to argument:

For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Title: _____

Address: Http:// _____

Specify the address for the page on the site where you found information

Great quotes:

Argument: For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Quote

Source:

Author: _____

Title: _____

Argument: For Against Big idea: 1 2 3

Quote

Source:

Author: _____

Title: _____

Nasty fundamental questions to ask the “For” side:

Nasty fundamental questions to ask the “Against” side:

Key vocabulary to understand the debate:

Term: **Definition:**

Term: **Definition:**

Term: **Definition:**

Term: **Definition:**

Symbols and Images

What is called? Title:

Who made it? Artist:

Where is it from? Source:

What does it look like? Paste symbol or image below:

Plan It! Laying out the arguments***Introduction***

1) Key terms in the motion are defined as:

2) This proposed motion is to be supported / rejected because of these important facts:

3) Supporting evidence for these facts:

4) However, the following limitations are recognized:

Main Arguments

The main arguments giving proof for / against the motion are:

1. a

b

2. a

b

etc.

Conclusion

This motion should be accepted / rejected because [sum up your main arguments]:

Speak Up! Scripting my speech

Introduction Mr. / Madam Chairperson / Moderator, ladies and gentlemen, we are for/against this motion which says

Our arguments are [summarize the arguments]

Main Body Moving to my first argument [give hard evidence]

Turning to my second argument [give hard evidence]

Third / fourth arguments [??]

Conclusion My main arguments were [summarize what was said]

Quote [Place at introduction or end]

Consequently for these reasons and for my partner's arguments, I ask you to support/reject the motion.

Listen Up!

Listening is arguably the most important part of a debate. Listen then critique what has been said.

Speaker 1: _____

Speaker 2: _____

Speaker 3: _____

Speaker 4: _____

Cast doubts on the speakers':	Question
a) Evidence, Facts and Quotes	1. Is the evidence/fact/quote reliable?
	2. Is their interpretation correct? Do the facts really mean that?
	3. What is the origin of the evidence – Does it come from a biased source?
	4. Are the facts and quotes used in a proper context?
b) Arguments/ Ideas	5. Is the evidence sufficient to justify the arguments?
c) Conclusions	6. Is there a key flaw in the ideas presented?
	7. Can I reach the same conclusions using their facts and evidence?

Think Up! Defending your arguments.

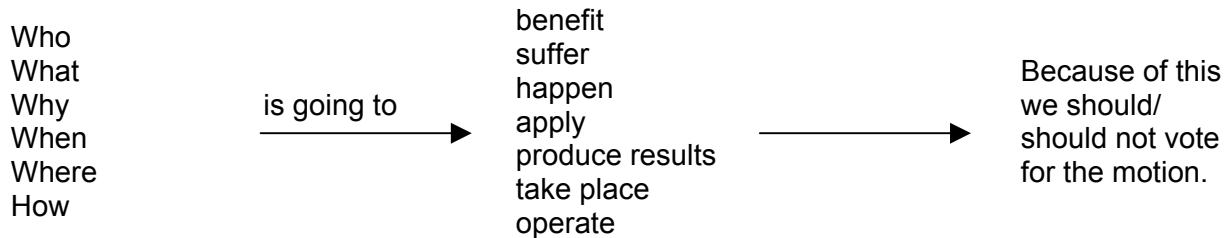
You assume that your side is right and has the good, positive ideas while the other side has on the whole, flawed ideas.

Place your arguments on the balanced, reasonable and moderate side of the issue. Seldom say “all,” “every,” “none,” or “nobody.” Say “many,” “most,” “few,” or “less.” Question opponents’ statements when they use “all,” “every,” or “nobody.”

Thinking strategies that are useful in debates

Select the idea that fits your side of the issue.

1. Long run vs. short run effects of the motion. (Say the long run favours you because...).
2. Question your opponents’ statements and say that they have not explained the advantages/disadvantages arising from:



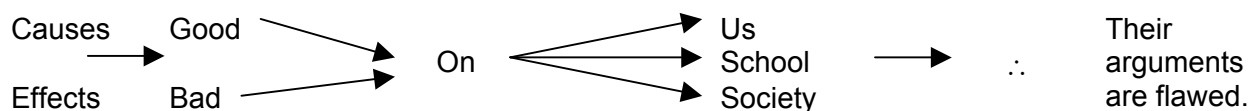
3. Explain the **advantages** of **your** views and the **disadvantages** of your **opponents’** views on:

- a - Individual Family → Community → Province → Country → World
- b - Micro (Small scale situation) → Macro (Large scale situation)

4. Compare and contrast your side to the other side by saying:

We want / Advocate	They bring / advocate
A community	Mere association of individuals
Freedom/ Democracy	Oppression / Tyranny / Slavery
Family / National unity	Divorce / Disunity
Fine motives / High moral tone	Suspect motives / Poor moral climate
Improvements/ Benefits	Decay / Decline
Advantages for most	Disadvantages to many
Harmony / Success	Conflict / Failure
Sound investment / Saving	Risky spending / Extravagant spending
Facts	Opinions

5. The opponents’ have failed to explain/justify this motion’s:



Plan Killing

When you hear your opponents' plan, ask the following questions:

- ❑ How much will it cost? Where will the funds come from?
- ❑ Does it solve the needs for change?
- ❑ Could the problem be more easily solved with some minor change?
- ❑ What proof is there that the plan will work?
- ❑ What protections are in place to monitor the success of the plan and remove it if it fails?
- ❑ How will the public be educated regarding the plan?
- ❑ Does the plan duplicate existing programs?
- ❑ Will the plan be consistent with Canada's legal system (*not is it legal*)?

Remember SPLEEEEM

Social, Political, Legal, Economic, Environmental, Ethical, Educational, Moral

When Your Opponents do the Unexpected

Areas for clash focus

- ❑ Is the definition legitimate?
 - » Truism/Tautology (if yes, redefine — if no, ignore)
 - » Inherent advantage to Affirmative (if very strong, redefine — otherwise ignore)
- ❑ Does this match our values?
- ❑ What practical problems will be associated with this?
- ❑ How much will this cost?
- ❑ Is this a significant change?
 - » What is the key point and how can it be attacked?
 - » How is there no change?
- ❑ Follow the argument to the extreme — what are the ramifications?
- ❑ Apply the Slippery Slope and do some fear mongering.

Opportunities for SEDA Debaters
 (please see Constitution & Policy Manual for details)

**Division III Junior
Grade 6**

Weekend workshop
 One-day workshops
 Tournaments
 Provincials

**Division III Junior
Grade 7**

Weekend workshop
 One-day workshops
 Tournaments
 Provincials

**Division III Junior
Grade 8**

Weekend workshop
 One-day workshops
 Tournaments
 Provincials
 Debate Camp

**Division III Senior
Grade 9**

Weekend workshop
 One-day workshops
 Tournaments
 Provincials
 Model Legislature
 Junior Nationals (3 teams)

Division IV Novice
Grade 10 (experienced)
Grade 10, 11, 12 (no experience)

Weekend workshops
 One-day workshops / Advanced workshops
 Tournaments / Pro-Am
 Provincials
 Model Legislature / Mock Trials

Division IV Open
Grade 10, 11, 12 (experienced)

Weekend workshops
 One-day workshops / Advanced workshops
 Tournaments / Pro-Am
 Bilingual & French Debate (French Senior)
 Westerns (1 per each of the four regions)
 National High School Debate Championships (top two teams)
 Speech Nationals (1 North, 1 South)
 Provincials
 Model Legislature / Mock Trials
 World's Qualifier delegate (top 2)
 National Seminar (1 English/4 regions, 2 French, 2 bilingual)
 Canada Day Televised Final (1 North team, 1 South team)

REFUTATION CHART

Method of Refutation	Points
<i>Challenging the Problem</i>	Opponent doesn't understand the real issue
	Opponent doesn't deal with the real issue
<i>Challenging the Analysis</i>	Opponent overlooked important parts of issue
	Opponent doesn't understand consequences of issue
	Opponent looking at issue from the wrong angle
	Opponent's argument based on false/fatal assumptions
<i>Problem with authority of evidence</i>	Person is not specialized in the topic
	Person's bias is questionable
	Person's research is not conclusive in results
	Person's research methods is questionable
<i>Problem with statistic</i>	Statistic of too small sample group
	Statistic of too narrow sample group
	Statistic inconsistent with others
	Statistic used biased questions
	Statistic of different group of people
	Statistic is irrelevant
<i>Corollary Argument</i>	Demonstrate opposite results from argument of opponent
	No relationship --> no cause and effect
<i>Minimization/Mitigation</i>	Opponent used extremes to prove case
	Opponent only used isolated incidents
	"So what" - benefits outweigh consequences
	Impact actually good not bad
<i>Special arguments</i>	Opponent is using circular reasoning
	Opponent is appealing to prejudice
	Opponent is appealing to habit/ritual
	Opponent is contradicting previous argument/speech
	Opponent's principles lead to unwanted precedent
	Opponent's actions will inevitable lead to bad results
	Opponent's suggestions of 2 options false, 3rd available

Activities during club meetings

Work on research skills:

- * skim the research package for information, quotations and statistics
- * brainstorming, independent research, internet, library, etc
- * guest speaker on the topic, etc
- * develop evidence cards (quote, source)
- * divide information into Aff/Neg arguments

Developing speech structures/speech template

- * opening remarks, scene setting (quote, story)
- * defining definitions
- * outlining needs for change
- * outlining plan
- * sign posting - point 1, 2, 3, etc.
- * clash
- * rebuttals and closings

Plan building

- * building a plan as a group
- * learning to attack a plan
- * preventing canned negatives
- * plan killing cards

Developing arguments

- * learning how to make a flow sheet
- * preparing clash cards (our argument, counter argument)
- * teaching elements of a good argument, logic, and connecting arguments and evidence

Developing questioning techniques

- * Review purpose of question period
- * Question trees and practicing lines of questioning

Speech mechanics

- * Review good/bad habits
- * Give practice speeches, identifying a couple of areas to work on each time: gestures, tone, pacing, etc.
- * eye contact game: You give a speech to a partner. If they go more than 10 sec. without looking at you, you say eye-eye until they do.
- * mirror activity: One partner stands and talks while the other one mimics how they look. Helps students to see gestures
- * practice impromptu speeches on random topics

Practice debates

- * two person speeches with clash/rebuttals: aff (2 min); Neg (4 min); Aff (4 min); Neg (2 min)
- * yak back: two teams face each other in a line, aff starts with one argument, neg responses or gives new argument, each person has a turn, sits down if can't think of a new argument or defense
- * group debate: each team member assigned a role (team leader; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. constructive; questioners, rebuttals) structure is the same, but shorten speaking times
- * regular debates and in-house mini tournaments: teams of two face off for full length

Debate Related quotes

Information, usually seen as the precondition of DEBATE, is better understood as its by-product.
Christopher Lasch 1932-, American Historian

Freedom is hammered out on the anvil of discussion, dissent, and DEBATE.
Hubert H. Humphrey 1911-1978, American Democratic Politician, Vice President

It is better to DEBATE a question without settling it than to settle it without DEBATE.
Joseph Joubert 1754-1824, French Moralist

Silence is one of the hardest arguments to refute.
Josh Billings

The sounder your argument, the more satisfaction you get out of it.
Edward W. Howe

He who establishes his argument by noise and command shows that his reason is weak.
Michel de Montaigne

de·bate

transitive and intransitive verb (past **de·bat·ed**, past participle **de·bat·ed**, present participle **de·bat·ing**, 3rd person present singular **de·bates**)

1. talk or argue about something: to talk about something at length and in detail, especially as part of a formal exchange of opinion **2. think about something:** to ponder something carefully

noun (plural **de·bates**)

1. public meeting for discussion: an organized or public discussion of something

2. consideration: a prolonged consideration of something

3. argument: argument or prolonged discussion *The matter is not open to debate.*
[13th century. Via Old French *debat* from, ultimately, Latin *battere* “to fight.”]

debate noun [C or U] (a) **serious discussion of a subject in which many people take part:** *Education is the current focus of public debate. How we proceed from here is a matter for debate. Over the year we have had several debates about future policy.*

debate verb **1** [I or T] **to discuss a subject in a formal way:** *In Parliament today, MPs debated the Finance Bill. They had been debating for several hours without reaching a conclusion.* [+ question word] *The authorities debated whether to build a new car park.* **2** [T] **to try to make a decision about something:**
[+ question word] *We debated whether to take the earlier train. I'm still debating what colour to paint the walls.*

Main Entry: ¹**de·bate**, Pronunciation: di-'bAt, dE-, Function: *nou* : a contention by words or arguments: as **a** : the formal discussion of a motion before a deliberative body according to the rules of parliamentary procedure **b** : a regulated discussion of a proposition between two matched sides

de·bate

VERB: Inflected forms: **de·bat·ed**, **de·bat·ing**, **de·bates** INTRANSITIVE VERB: **1.** To consider something; deliberate. **2.** To engage in argument by discussing opposing points. **3.** To engage in a formal discussion or argument. **4. Obsolete** To fight or quarrel. TRANSITIVE VERB: **1.** To deliberate on; consider. **2.** To dispute or argue about. **3.** To discuss or argue (a question, for example) formally. **4. Obsolete** To fight or argue for or over. NOUN: **1.** A discussion involving opposing points; an argument. **2.** Deliberation; consideration: *passed the motion with little debate.* **3.** A formal contest of argumentation in which two opposing teams defend and attack a given proposition. **4. Obsolete** Conflict; strife. ETYMOLOGY: Middle English *debaten*, from Old French *debatre* : *de-*, *de-* + *battre*, to beat;

Sample Club Welcome letter

Welcome to the “current” Debate Season

Coaches: Ms... , room #, contact at ...
Mr.... , room #, contact at ...

Saskatchewan is very fortunate to have a provincial association (SEDA) with staff in Regina and debate clubs from Grade 6 to University throughout the province. The “Your School” Club welcomes new debaters whether they debated in elementary school or not. New and experienced debaters are strongly encouraged to attend the Weekend Workshop (see enclosure) along with the coaches.

Expectations of debate club members:

Attend weekly meetings (or let a coach know if you can't)
Return parent permission forms and pay registration promptly
Have debate binders (supplied by club) and research at all meetings
Return debate binders at end of season
Be considerate of partner and tournament host (only cancel if no other choice – reimbursement depends upon host)
Coaches will usually drive debaters to in-town tournaments but parents must pick up after tournament

Costs:

Vary according to participation
September workshop \$40.00 (transportation costs will be covered)
Club membership \$20.00 (please pay by October 30)
In-town tournaments \$12.00-\$15.00
Out-of-town tournaments (usually includes bus) approximately \$30.00

Schedule:

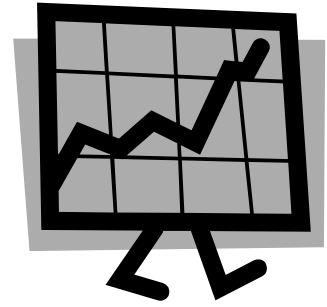
Be aware of the tournament schedule to prevent conflicts – let a coach know if there is a conflict
Visit the SEDA web site at www.saskdebate.com for schedule details

Late September – Weekend workshop (leave noon Friday – return after 7 pm Saturday)
Early October – One-day workshop in Regina/Saskatoon
Late October – Round I
November/December – Round II
January – Round III
February – Round IV
March – Provincials (must attend two tournaments with same partner to qualify)
April or May – Model Historical Legislature (optional)

Throughout the year we will give debaters information on various speech and essay contests. These provide great experience and unique opportunities for students.

Please contact us if there are any questions or concerns.

Statistics – What Do They Really Mean? By Jacqueline Roy



Every day we are bombarded with stats – they’re in newspapers, on the radio, in our textbooks...

So many decisions seem to be made based on them! But are all stats based on sound science?

Which ones can we trust? Are some stats being spin-doctored by the media? If so, how can we tell?

Here are some sure-fire ways to distinguish a super stat from a phoney one.

When examining any stat, always ask yourself:

A. Who collected this data and for what purpose?

Is your information coming from a “think tank” or some other unreliable source? To be safe, ask a teacher or parent if they know anything about this organization. Remember: Some statistics companies thrive on hiding their biases under a professional façade!

B. Do you understand the definitions and science behind the data?

Think about each term used in the statistic. If we are talking about “adults,” who are they exactly? Ten of someone’s closest friends? People between the ages of 18 and 25 in Alberta? A large sample of adults of all age groups from all over North America? How might these definitions influence the outcome? Talk to your friends for ideas.

C. Is this data being spin-doctored?

Even if the data is sound, a newspaper or group could be using it to infer something that stretches the truth, or simply is not true at all. Once again, ask around to see what people’s views are. Is a paper known to often push a certain point-of-view?

9 out of 10 doctors recommend using Sensogel for sensitive teeth. If you have problems eating ice cream, you better get yourself a tube!

Let’s say you heard the statement above during a commercial break while watching your favourite TV show, The Simpsons.

Let’s use the three questions above to determine if it is reliable:

A. Sensogel probably collected this data themselves. Their goal is to sell their product; we better keep our eyes open for biases!

B. Who are these “doctors?” Are they ten private doctors that get paid to endorse the product, or are they a large, reliable sample of all the dentists in the world?

C. Even if Sensogel didn’t collect their own data, they might be leaving things out on purpose. What is meant by “recommend?” That Sensogel was recommended over other toothpastes for sensitive teeth, or over regular toothpastes only? For all we know, it could be recommended over brushing with sugar!



Lots of stats are sound and reliable; others are just plain rotten. Be a smart consumer: think before you swallow something whole. Always subject statistics to the questions above, no matter how sound they seem at first.

THINK CRITICALLY: ACCURACY & AUTHORITY?**Questions to Ask About a Web Page to Determine Authority and Accuracy:**

Note: The greater number of questions listed below answered "YES", the more likely it is you can determine that the source is of high information quality.

1. Is it clear what company or individual is responsible for the contents of the page?
 2. Is there a link to a page describing the goals of the company/organization?
 3. Is there a way of verifying the legitimacy of this company/organization? Example: is there a phone number or postal address to contact for more information? (email address is not enough).
 4. Is it clear who wrote the material & are the author's qualifications for writing on this topic clearly stated?
 5. Are the sources for any factual information clearly listed so they can be verified in another source?
 6. If the material is protected by copyright is the name of the copyright holder given?
 7. Is the information free of grammatical, spelling and other typographical errors?
- TOTAL YES'S = _____

THINK CRITICALLY: FACT OR OPINION?**Questions to Ask About a Web Page to Determine Fact or Opinion:**

Note: The greater number of questions listed below answered "YES", the more likely it is you can determine that the source is of high information quality.

1. Are the organization's biases (particular view point and opinion) clearly stated?
 2. If there is any advertising on the page, is it clearly differentiated from the informational content?
 3. Is the site's purpose clear and does the content reflect the purpose, be it to entertain, persuade, educate or sell?
- TOTAL YES'S = _____

THINK CRITICALLY: CURRENCY & COVERAGE?**Questions to Ask About a Web Page to Determine Currency and Coverage:**

Note: The greater number of questions listed below answered "YES", the more likely it is you can determine that the source is of high information quality.

1. Are there dates on the page or at Page Info to indicate:
 - a. when it was written
 - b. when it was first placed on the Web
 - c. when the page was last revised?
 2. Are there any other indications that the material is kept current?
 3. If material is presented in graphs and/or charts, is it clearly stated when the data was gathered?
 4. Is there an indication that the page has been completed and is not still under construction?
 5. Is it clear what topics the page intends to address?
 6. Does the page succeed in addressing these topics, or has something significant been left out?
 7. Can you follow link(s) to find further coverage of content elsewhere?
- TOTAL YES'S = _____

Adapted with permission from: Alexander, Jan and Marsha Ann Tate, "Evaluating Web Resources," Wolfgram Memorial Library, http://www.widener.edu/Tools_Resources/Libraries/Wolfgram_Memorial_Library/Evaluate_Web_Pages/659, (accessed October 2000).

Source: Statistics Canada web site <http://www.statcan.ca/english/kits/hae2000/globe2.htm>