

SAMPLE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS BALLOT

Attached is a sample Lincoln-Douglas ballot that has been prepared to assist inexperienced judges in providing helpful written comments for debaters and their coaches. The ballot comments have been written based on a hypothetical Lincoln-Douglas round and are not taken from an actual debate performance. For the purpose of the sample ballot the following resolution has been considered: **RESOLVED: A government's obligation to protect the environment ought to take precedence over its obligation to promote economic development.**

The following considerations should be kept in mind when filling out your ballot.

- Be concise, but be sure to cover all the main points.
- Be specific in your comments. Vague or overly general statements are not useful.
- Keep your comments focused on what was actually said. Your opinions on the subject are not relevant.
- Provide *constructive* criticism. Write your comments in a way that clearly identifies what needs to be done to improve. (don't just tell them what they did wrong).
- Praise the debaters for efforts that are well done, but be sure to clearly state what was specifically successful.
- Press down when you write so that your comments can be seen clearly on all ballot pages.
- Write legibly so that your comments can't be easily read.
- Speaker points should generally be in the range of 25 to 30. Points less than 25 tend to discourage debaters and should be reserved for notably very bad behaviour. A point total of 30 should be reserved for perfection.
- Be sure to check, and then double check, that your entry of the winner is correct.
- In giving comments try to address as many of the points that were raised as possible and explain why they were successful (or not).
- In giving your reasons for the decision, address the value clash and clearly state why one value won out over the other.



Lincoln Douglas Debate Ballot

Tournament Date: 12/25/13			Tournament Location: Maranacook High School		
Round/Flight: 3	Room: 201	Division: JV	Judge Name: John Doe	Judge School: Morse High School	
Affirmative: R22		Name or Code →		Negative: C27	
Aff. Points: 28	← Award speaker points to each debater (based on the range below) →				Neg. Points: 27
	20-21 Below Average	22-23 Average	24-26 Good	27-28 Excellent	29-30 Outstanding
Decision: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affirmative <input type="checkbox"/> Negative		Winning Team/Code: AFF - R22			Low-point win? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

- The resolution evaluated is a proposition of value, which concerns itself with what ought to be instead of what is. Values are ideals held by individuals, societies, governments, etc., which serve as the highest goals to be considered or achieved within the context of the resolution in question.
- Each debater has the burden to prove his or her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle. It is unrealistic to expect a debater to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.
- Students are encouraged to research topic-specific literature and applicable works of philosophy. The nature of proof should be in the logic and the ethos of a student's independent analysis and/or authoritative opinion.
- Communication should emphasize clarity. Accordingly, a judge should only evaluate those arguments that were presented in a manner that was clear and understandable to him/her as a judge. Throughout the debate, the competitors should display civility as well as a professional demeanor and style of delivery.
- After a case is presented, neither debater should be rewarded for presenting a speech completely unrelated to the arguments of his or her opponent; there must be clash concerning the major arguments in the debate. Cross-examination should clarify, challenge, and/or advance arguments.
- The judge shall disregard new arguments introduced in rebuttal. This does not include the introduction of new evidence in support of points already advanced or the refutation of arguments introduced by opponents.
- Because debaters cannot choose which side of the resolution to advocate, judges must be objective evaluators of both sides of the resolution. Evaluate the round based only on the arguments that the debaters made and not on personal opinions or on arguments you would have made.

Comments: provide detailed comments (both positive feedback and constructive criticism) designed to help both the debater and the coach; for example, suggestions on improving case construction, refutation, logic, delivery, etc.

AFF - Your value of "Quality of Life" was strong. It was well supported by your criterion of "maintaining good health". The supporting data in your 1st contention showing the ill health effects of a bad environment was never successfully challenged by NEG. I liked your use of Utilitarianism in your 2nd contention to argue the greater good, but you could have done more with this point to challenge NEG's apparent limited benefits. Good attack on NEG's value showing how it didn't achieve the width and breadth of benefits that are received from your value.

NEG - Your value of "Prosperity" was a bit vague. You could have benefitted from a criterion that gave it some clarity. Your first two contentions had potential but AFF effectively countered in rebuttal by showing that economic development doesn't necessarily mean prosperity for all. Perhaps if you could have shown how wealth for middle and upper classes could lead to better care of the poor you might have been on firmer ground. You needed to address AFF's contentions with bit more thoroughness.

Reasons for Decision (provide a detailed justification, referring to central issues debaters presented in the round):

The round was decided by the value clash. AFF was able to successfully demonstrate that the AFF value of "Quality of Life" applies to all and that it is essential (and can only be had by affirming the resolution). AFF was also able to undermine the NEG value of "Prosperity" by arguing that economic development (as it was presented by NEG) benefits only a few, leaving many of the poor without NEG's value of "Prosperity" being achieved. Both cases had merit but AFF was better able to defend her contentions against NEG's attack, which in part lacked depth. NEG lost ground to AFF's challenge of NEG's first two contentions, which was never adequately made up. NEG's third contention seemed to get lost as an incomplete thought, and so AFF didn't need to address it to any great degree.

Areas to work on:

AFF - Be sure to leave sufficient time in your final rebuttal to give a closing statement to clearly summarize your position. You were a bit rushed at the end.
NEG - Work on formulating a strong attack on your opponent's case. Use more of your prep time to get your thoughts in order (you only used one minute). Never let attacks on your value stand without fighting back!

Areas where you excelled:

AFF - Good passionate delivery of your case. It was very believable. Also, your rebuttal rounds were very organized and clearly presented and easy to follow.
NEG - You did a good job in your case with the use of quotations to support your cause. Also, your statistics on economic development were well researched.

Order/Time Limits of Speeches	
Affirmative Constructive ...	6 min.
Neg. Cross-Ex of Aff.	3 min.
Negative Constructive	7 min.
Aff. Cross-Ex of Neg.	3 min.
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min.
Negative Rebuttal	6 min.
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 min.
Each debater has 4 min. prep used before their own speaking times, at their discretion.	