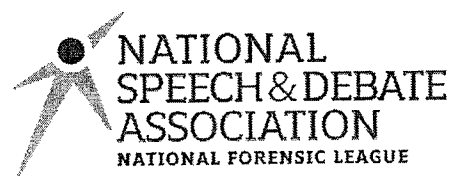


Competition Events – At A Glance

An Introduction to Lincoln-Douglas Debate (LD)



Event Description

In this one-on-one format, students debate a topic provided by the Association. Lincoln-Douglas Debate topics range from individual freedom versus the collective good to economic development versus environmental protection. Students may consult evidence gathered prior to the debate but may not use the Internet in round. An entire debate is roughly 45 minutes and consists of constructive speeches, rebuttals, and cross-examination.

Considerations for Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Lincoln-Douglas Debate typically appeals to individuals who like to debate, but prefer a one-on-one format as opposed to a team or group setting. Additionally, individuals who enjoy LD like exploring questions of how society ought to be. Many people refer to LD Debate as a “values” debate, as questions of morality and justice are commonly examined. Students prepare cases and then engage in an exchange of cross-examinations and rebuttals in an attempt to convince a judge that s/he is the better debater in the round.

Traits of Successful LD Debaters

When considering what event you should choose, or in which direction to point a student when selecting an event, below are some general traits of successful LD debaters to keep in mind:

- Independent
- Thinks logically
- Analytical
- Intrigued by philosophy
- Determined
- Thoughtful

List of Past LD Topics

- Resolved: The United States ought to prioritize the pursuit of national security objectives above the digital privacy of its citizens.
- Resolved: Placing political conditions on humanitarian aid to foreign countries is unjust.
- Resolved: Developing countries should prioritize environmental protection over resource extraction when the two are in conflict.
- Resolved: Targeted killing is a morally permissible foreign policy tool.
- Resolved: Individuals have a moral obligation to assist people in need.
- Resolved: The United States is justified in using private military firms abroad to pursue its military objectives.
- Resolved: In the United States, juveniles charged with violent felonies ought to be treated as adults in the criminal justice system.
- Resolved: The abuse of illegal drugs ought to be treated as a matter of public health, not of criminal justice.

Note: For novices, the Association designates the following topic for districts to use during the first two months of a novice season:
Resolved: Civil disobedience in a democracy is morally justified.

Learn More! The National Speech & Debate Association is the leading provider of competitive and educational resources to aid students and coaches as they explore our competitive events. For Lincoln-Douglas Debate, we provide a number of helpful resources—including live and recorded webinars designed to introduce foundational and advanced concepts in LD; access to LD final round videos; an LD textbook; specific guidance on the annual novice topic; topic analysis; research assistance; and much more! Take advantage of the amazing benefits of being a member by using our resources to help advance yourself in competitive speech and debate activities. Visit www.speechanddebate.org for more information. ✦

Find Your Voice

LD allowed me to question basic assumptions and reevaluate aspects of the world. Despite debating individually, the community is so welcoming. I made friends across the country.

— Jordan Friedman, Association Alum

Competition Events Guide

Lincoln-Douglas Debate (LD)



Basic Understandings

Lincoln Douglas Debate (LD) is a one-on-one event where debaters argue against one another on a specified resolution. Therefore, it is imperative when students begin LD, they know the resolution being debated. If you visit www.speechanddebate.org/currenttopics, you will see the topics assigned by month. Additionally, the Association specifies a separate topic for the first two months of a novice season. It is important to note that not all tournaments use the topic suggested for their competition. Therefore, be sure to check the invitation for complete information.

Once a debater knows the resolution, the student should begin brainstorming arguments on the topic. An argument's basic structure is referred to as claim, warrant, and impact (more details below). The debater should also construct their cases (more details below). Finally, they should consider their opponent's arguments and brainstorm responses. At the end of the round, a debater should also offer summary reasons as to why they should win, which are commonly referred to as "voting issues."



Research

After students do an initial brainstorm session, conduct research. Look in reputable journals for articles written by experts in the field and texts written by philosophers. Additional sources include, but are not limited to, newspaper articles, think tanks, and credible websites. Check with your school's Media Center/Library Services Department for research tips and information on what you have access to through your school.

Structural Components

The structure of the round, and corresponding speaker responsibilities, can be found below:

Speech	Time Limit	Responsibility of Debater
Affirmative Constructive	6 min	Present the affirmative case
Negative Cross-Examination	3 min	Negative asks questions of the affirmative
Negative Constructive/ Negative Rebuttal	7 min	Present the negative case and refute the affirmative case
Affirmative Cross-Examination	3 min	Affirmative asks questions of the negative
First Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min	Refute the negative case and rebuild the affirmative case
2nd Negative Rebuttal	6 min	Refute the affirmative case, rebuild the negative case, and offer reasons that negative should win the round, commonly referred to as voting issues.
2nd Affirmative Rebuttal	3 min	Address negative voting issues and offer crystallization for why the affirmative should win.

**Each debater is also entitled to four minutes of prep time during the round.*

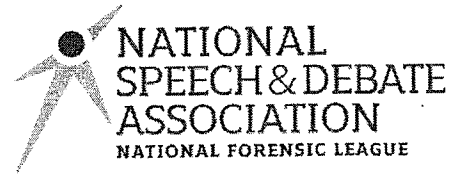
Organizing

Argumentation

First, a debater must clearly establish their claim. This is generally a declarative statement that establishes the point they are setting out to justify. Next, a debater must clearly establish why their argument is valid. This is known as the warrant for an argument. Debaters need to go beyond asserting their claims by backing them up with analysis explaining why the argument is true. The warrant can come in many forms, but is necessary for the

Competition Events Guide

Lincoln-Douglas Debate (LD)



development of the argument. It is important to note that having an author simply make an assertion about a topic is not a warrant. Finally, a debater must provide an impact for their argument. This means the debater establishes why the argument is significant in the round.

Casing

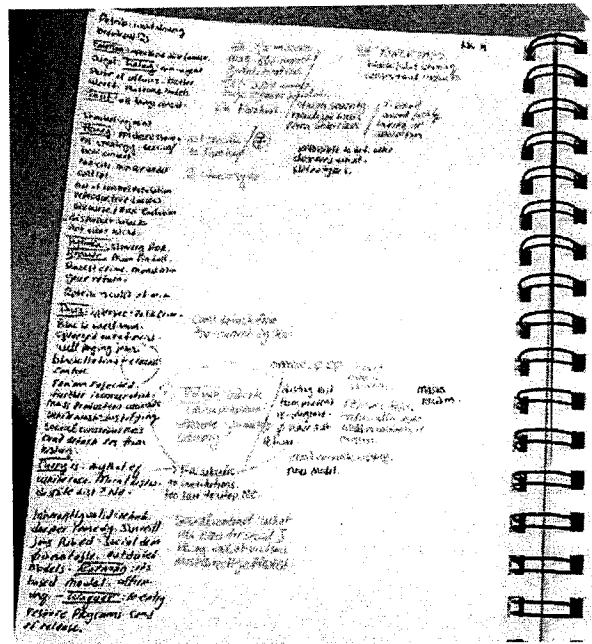
After students brainstorm arguments, it is time to construct cases. While there is no rule requiring a specific structure, there is a traditional approach to constructing a case. Most commonly, LD debaters use a value and criterion model to structure their case. Under this model, the students propose a specific value that they feel is the ultimate goal debaters should be striving for in the round. Subsequently, they offer a criterion which offers a specific mechanism to determine if the value is being achieved by either debater in the round. A common example is offering a value of Justice with a criterion of Rights Protection. A debater should offer definitions of these terms, as well as explain how the value best fits the resolution and how the criterion best measures if the value is achieved. After they establish their value and criterion, they would offer contentions. These are the main arguments of the affirmative or negative and would strive to assert that the value/criterion is being achieved. When developing arguments the arguments should link back to the value/criterion.



Refutations

Lincoln Douglas debate is more than just cases! Debaters engage in refuting each other's arguments. Students may refute cases by denying the validity of the argument, which is most common. Additional strategies include, but

are not limited to, asserting the reverse of the argument, showing the opponent's arguments do not carry as much weight as their arguments, or taking out the link between the opponent's argument and the value/criterion being used in the round. Students can pre-write their answers to arguments they expect their opponents to make. These are commonly known as "blocks."



Flowing

It is important for debaters to learn how to keep track of arguments in the round. Typically debaters "flow" the debate round—making note of the arguments that are presented and refuted in the round. This note-taking approach requires students to abbreviate terms, phrases, and ideas so that they can get as much of the debate written down as possible. Here are some tips:

- Two sheets of paper. One page will be for anything said about the affirmative, the other for anything said about the negative. Each speech in the round will receive its own column on these pages.
- At least one pen, but we recommend two, in different colors.

Competition Events Guide

Lincoln-Douglas Debate (LD)



- If your opponent is speaking, you should be writing (do not try and determine what is or isn't important—just get as much down as possible)
- Orient both pieces of paper vertically, as in a book. Fold (or draw lines) on the sheet of paper into 5 columns of equal width. This can be achieved by folding an initial 1.5" column from either side. Flip the paper and fold in another column to match; continue until the piece of paper has 4 folds to produce 5 columns. This is your affirmative flow.
- Fold the other sheet of paper into 4 columns of equal width. This is your negative flow.
- Label the top of each column on the affirmative flow with the names of the speeches, in chronological order from left to right.
- Label the top of each column on the negative flow with the names of the speeches, in chronological order from left to right.

Standing it Up/Practicing

It is a great idea to do practice rounds before going to your first tournament. At first, it may seem that you do not have enough to say to fill up the speech times. However, that will change with practice. The first round could be a stop and go round where a coach or observer stops you when there's a missed opportunity or confusion about what you are saying. During these rounds, you may re-give speeches until you or the observer/coach are satisfied with the speech that is delivered. Additionally, since your cases are prepared in advance, students should spend time working on the delivery of that speech. A student should work on emphasis, eye contact, and fluidity.

Performance Tips

It is important to remember that you are communicating to your judge. The decision rests solely in the hands of the judge! You must focus on persuading them, which means that you should be directing your speeches and cross-examination questions and answers to the judge, and not to your opponent.

When at your first tournament it is important to keep in mind that it gets easier with more practice. The goal

is not about where you begin, but where you end. If you get better from round to round or tournament to tournament—you're successful. Focus not only on what you could improve upon, but also on what you did well. Celebrate what worked and try and emulate that in future rounds or tournaments. Take feedback from judges as opportunities to improve. If judges provide oral feedback, take notes on what they share to review with your coach. Finally, do not fixate on the outcome of a round—focusing on wins and losses won't lead to greater success!



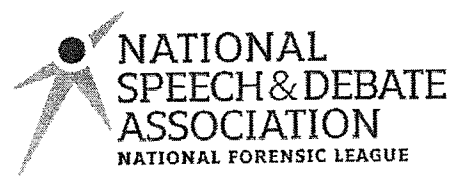
Resources

The Association offers great resources to our members. These include lesson plans for introducing Lincoln-Douglas Debate to novices, recorded videos on casing, flowing, and drills, written topic analyses, research guides, a textbook, and more!

Once you join and register on our website, you can access these and other materials at www.speechanddebate.org/resources. Use the filter function on the left hand side of the page to find resources specific to Lincoln-Douglas Debate.

Competition Events — At A Glance

An Introduction to Public Forum Debate (PF)



Event Description

Public Forum Debate involves opposing teams of two, debating a topic concerning a current event. Proceeding a coin toss, the winners choose which side to debate (PRO or CON) or which speaker position they prefer (1st or 2nd), and the other team receives the remaining option. Students present cases, engage in rebuttal and refutation, and also participate in a “crossfire” (similar to a cross-examination) with the opportunity to question the opposing team. Often, community members are recruited to judge this event.

Considerations for Public Forum Debate

As a team event, students who compete in Public Forum need to be able to work well with a partner. Balanced teams, both in terms of preparation before debates and contributions within a debate, helps provide a competitive advantage during tournaments. PF is the newest form of debate in the Association and looks at current event topics. Students who do Public Forum must be prepared to debate in front of judges without any formal debate training. Being able to persuade a range of judges is a central component to this event. Additionally, PF is focused upon debating varying resolutions that change frequently, which exposes students to a variety of topics during a singular competitive season.

Traits of Successful PF Debaters

When considering what event you should choose, or in which direction to point a student when selecting an event, below are some general traits of successful PF debaters to keep in mind:

- Thinks logically
- Organized in both presentation and thought
- Simplifies concepts
- Engaging personality that is persuasive to a variety of people
- Big-picture thinker
- Professional

List of Past PF Topics

- Resolved: NATO should strengthen its relationship with Ukraine in order to deter further Russian aggression.
- Resolved: Single-gender classrooms would improve the quality of education in American public schools.
- Resolved: Immigration reform should include a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States.
- Resolved: The benefits of domestic surveillance by the NSA outweigh the harms.
- Resolved: The continuation of current U.S. anti-drug policies in Latin America will do more harm than good.
- Resolved: On balance, the rise of China is beneficial to the interests of the United States.
- Resolved: Congress should renew the Federal Assault Weapons Ban.
- Resolved: The benefits of post-9/11 security measures outweigh the harms to personal freedom.

Learn More! The National Speech & Debate Association is the leading provider of competitive and educational resources to aid students and coaches as they explore our competitive events. For Public Forum Debate, we provide a number of helpful resources—including live and recorded webinars designed to introduce foundational and advanced concepts in PF; access to PF final round videos; a PF textbook; a starter file for beginning debaters; research assistance; and much more! Take advantage of the amazing benefits of being a member by using our resources to help advance yourself in competitive speech and debate activities. Visit www.speechanddebate.org for more information. ✨

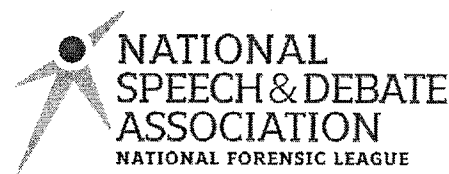
Find Your Voice

Public Forum played a large role in who I am today. It taught me to be persuasive. At its core, the event's structure and audience forced me to shape and mold my thoughts into concise, simple, yet elegant arguments.

— Danny Rego, Association Alum

Competition Events Guide

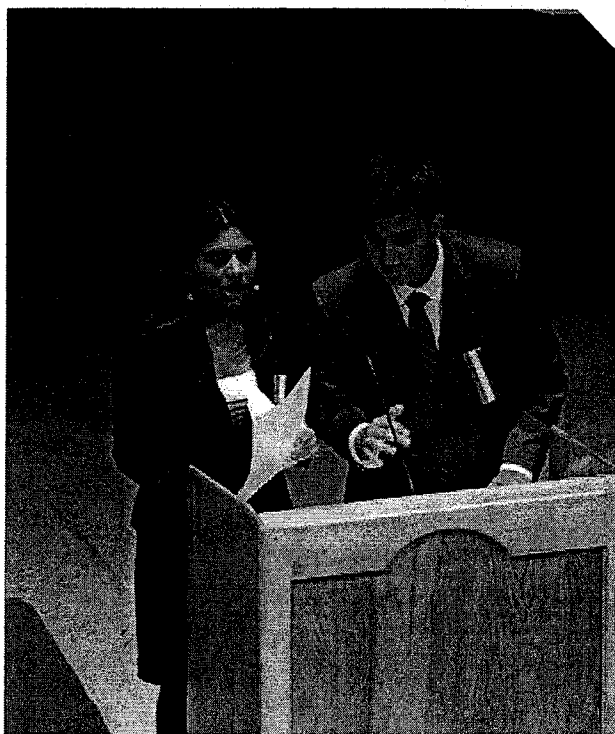
Public Forum Debate (PF)



Basic Understandings

Public Forum Debate (PF) is a two-on-two event where teams argue against each other on a specified resolution. Therefore, it is imperative that when students begin PF, they know the resolution being debated. If you visit www.speechanddebate.org/currenttopics, you will see the topics, which are assigned by month of competition. It is important to note that not all tournaments use the topic suggested due to the timing of their tournament. Therefore, be sure to check the tournament invitation for complete information.

Once a debater knows the resolution, s/he should begin brainstorming potential arguments on the topic. An argument's basic structure is referred to as claim, warrant, and impact (more details below). A debater will also construct their positions, referred to as cases (more details below). Finally, s/he should think through potential arguments by their opponent and brainstorm responses. As the round progresses, a team should also offer reasons why they should win the round to the judge.



Research

After students do an initial brainstorm session, they should conduct research. Evidence can come from anywhere—newspapers, journal articles, studies, books, primary documents, etc. When gathering research, a student should ask four questions:

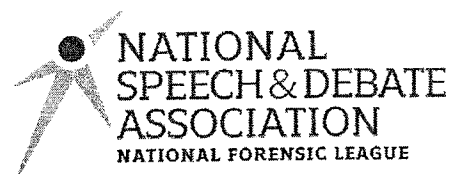
1. Is the source reputable? Sources should have a good reputation for 'getting it right'—newswires such as the AP and Reuters tend to be less credible than newspapers.
2. Is the source verifiable? This refers to the ability to verify the data and claims made by the source. If a source is based on a personal interview or some other insider knowledge, that generally cannot be verified through independent means.
3. Is the source authoritative? Different sources are expert at different fields. The Office of Budget and Management is an authority on budget policy on the US, but may not be the ideal source for a resolution about foreign policy in the Middle East.
4. Is the source recent? While not every source must be up-to-the-minute, generally, a more recent source is better.

Structural Components

One team advocates for the resolution, known as the PRO, and one team advocates against the resolution, known as the CON. Before the debate begins, the teams conduct a coin flip. The winner of the flip chooses either the side of the debate OR the speaking order. The team losing the

Competition Events Guide

Public Forum Debate (PF)



flip makes the other choice. For example, Jonesville High School wins the coin flip and chooses CON. Smithtown High School, who lost the flip, chooses the speaking order. If they choose 2nd, Jonesville would speak 1st on CON and Smithville will speak 2nd on PRO. Note that unlike other forms of debate, the CON may speak first. The structure of the round, and corresponding speaker responsibilities, follow:

Speech	Time Limit	Responsibility of Debater
Team A Speaker 1 - Constructive	4 min	Present the team's case
Team B Speaker 1 - Constructive	4 min	Present the team's case
Crossfire	3 min	Speaker 1 from Team A & B alternate asking and answering questions
Team A Speaker 2 - Rebuttal	4 min	Refute the opposing side's arguments
Team B Speaker 2 - Rebuttal	4 min	Refute the opposing side's arguments
Crossfire	3 min	Speaker 2 from Team A & B alternate asking and answering questions
Team A Speaker 1 - Summary	2 min	Begin crystallizing the main issues in the round
Team B Speaker 1 - Summary	2 min	Begin crystallizing the main issues in the round
Grand Crossfire	3 min	All four debaters involved in a crossfire at once
Team A Speaker 2 - Final Focus	2 min	Explain reasons that you win the round
Team B Speaker 2 - Final Focus	2 min	Explain reasons that you win the round

**Each team is entitled to two minutes of prep time during the round.*

Organizing

Argumentation

First, a debater must clearly establish a claim. This is generally a declarative statement establishing the point they are setting out to justify. Second, a debater must clearly establish why their argument is. This is known as the warrant for an argument. Debaters need to go beyond asserting their claims and back them up with analysis explaining why the argument is valid. The warrant can come in many forms, but is necessary for the development of the argument. Debaters may use logic or research to back up their claims. It is important to note that having an author make an assertion about a topic is not on its own a warrant. Third, a debater must provide an impact for their argument. This means the debater establishes why the argument is significant in the round.



Casing

After students have brainstormed arguments, it is time to construct cases. While there is no rule requiring a specific structure, there is a traditional approach to constructing a case. Often, a case starts with a well thought out thesis statement as an introductory lead-in to the position. Next, the case would define key terms. Following this introduction the debater would offer contentions, or main arguments.

Refutations

But, PF is more than just cases! After presenting cases, students engage in refuting each other's arguments. Students commonly refute cases by denying the validity

Competition Events Guide

Public Forum Debate (PF)

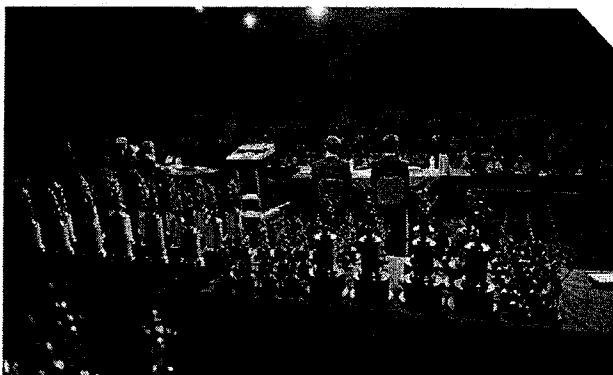


of the argument. Additional strategies include, but are not limited to, justifying the reverse of the argument, showing the opponent's arguments do not carry as much weight as their arguments, or taking out the link between the opponent's argument and the priority they establish in the round. Students can pre-write their answers to arguments they expect their opponents to make. These are commonly known as "blocks."

Flowing

It is important for debaters to learn how to keep track of arguments in the round. Typically debaters "flow" the debate round—making note of the arguments presented and refuted in the round. This note-taking approach requires students to abbreviate terms, phrases, and ideas so that they can get as much of the debate notated as possible. Here are some tips:

- Two sheets of paper. One page will be for anything said about the affirmative, the other for anything said about the negative, regardless of which debater is saying it. Each speech in the round will receive its own column on these pages.
- At least one pen, but we recommend two, in different colors.
- If the opponent is speaking, write (don't try to determine what's important at the outset—just write as much as you can)
- Orient both pieces of paper vertically, like a book. Note that columns will be narrow, which will increase the need for accurate/efficient abbreviations.



Standing it Up/Practicing

It is a great idea to do practice rounds before going to your first tournament. At first, it may seem you do not have enough to say to fill up the speech times. However, that will change with practice. The first round could be a stop and go round where a coach stops you when there's a missed opportunity or confusion about what to do during the speech. During these rounds, you may re-give speeches until you or the coach are satisfied with the speech. Additionally, students should practice delivering prepared speeches focusing on emphasis, eye contact, and fluidity.

Performance Tips

When at your first tournament it is important to keep in mind that it gets easier with more practice. The goal is not about where you begin, but where you end. Improving from round to round, and tournament to tournament, is the true mark of success. Focus not only on what you could enhance, but also on what you did well. Take feedback from judges as opportunities to improve. If they provide oral feedback, take notes on what they share to review with your coach. Finally, do not fixate on the wins and losses—it won't lead to greater success!

Resources

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Competition Events – At A Glance

An Introduction to Congressional Debate (CD)



Event Description

A simulation of the U.S. legislative process in the Senate and the House, students generate a series of bills and resolutions for debate in Congressional Debate. Debaters (also referred to as Senators and Representatives) alternate delivering speeches for and against the topic in a group setting. An elected student serves as a presiding officer to ensure debate flows smoothly. Students are assessed on their research, argumentation, and delivery skills, as well as their knowledge and use of parliamentary procedure.

Considerations for Congressional Debate

Students who do Congressional Debate are typically interested in learning about issues that are significant to the legislative process within the United States. Students are exposed to a deeper application of *Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure*. Students must prepare for debate on numerous topics in any given competition and be able to extend a long-lasting debate with unique and fresh ideas, as well as by refuting previous speakers on a specific topic.


Traits of Successful Congressional Debaters

When considering what event you should choose, or in which direction to point a student when selecting an event, below are some general traits of successful Senators and Representatives to keep in mind:

- Interested in legislative process
- Networker
- Analytical thinker
- Interested in varied issues
- Persuasive
- Enjoys research

List of Past Legislation Titles

- Bill to Regulate E-Cigarettes
- Resolution to Recognize the Republic of Somaliland
- Resolution to Amend the Constitution to Legalize Same-Sex Civil Unions
- Bill to Update the Clean Air Act
- Bill to Increase Development in Space
- Bill to Regulate Three-Dimensional Printing to Prevent the Production of Private Firearms
- Bill to Lift the Ban on Crude Oil Exports
- Bill to Alter Agricultural Subsidies
- Bill Concerning Raising the Federal Minimum Wage
- Resolution to Repeal Zero Tolerance Policies in Public Schools

Learn More! The National Speech & Debate Association is the leading provider of competitive and educational resources to aid students and coaches as they explore our competitive events. For Congressional Debate, we provide a number of helpful resources—including live and recorded webinars designed to introduce foundational and advanced concepts in Congress; access to Congress final round videos; a Congress textbook; sample Congress dockets; and much more! Take advantage of the amazing benefits of being a member by using our resources to help advance yourself in competitive speech and debate activities. Visit www.speechanddebate.org for more information. 

Find Your Voice

Congressional Debate is an exercise in leadership. It's a political game where your fellow students can have as much influence on the outcome of the round as your judges. You're rewarded for taking risks; one cannot simply fade into the background and expect to succeed. It's these exact skills that translate into success later in life—those who think a little bit differently are those who make permanent change in the world."

— Christina Gilbert, Association Alum

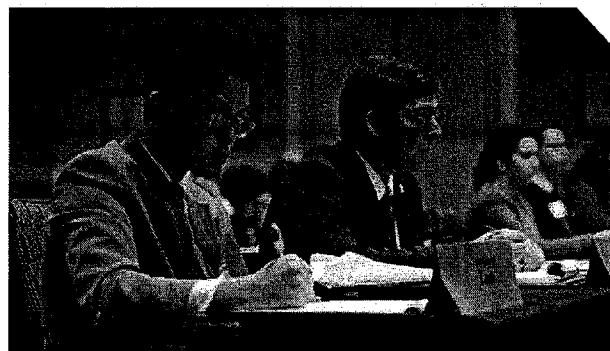
Basic Understandings

Congressional Debate is like a simulation of the real United States legislature. A group of 10-25 students, called a Chamber, will compete in a legislative session. A series of bills and resolutions will be proposed by students from various schools. Students in turn will be selected by a presiding officer—a student elected to conduct the business of the round—to give speeches both advocating for and encouraging the defeat of the measure in front of them. Following each speech, competitors will be able to pose questions of the speaker. Once debate is exhausted on a particular item, the chamber will vote either to pass or fail the legislation, and debate moves on to the next item.

Legislation comes in two types—a bill and a resolution. A bill is a plan of action, detailing how a particular policy proposal will be implemented. A resolution, meanwhile, is a statement expressing the opinion of the chamber. Passing the resolution does not change anything about the world around us, it merely states the preference of the chamber. For example, let's say a school had a dress code. The student body may pass a piece of legislation expressing their displeasure with the dress code (a resolution) or legislation modifying the colors and styles of the school uniform (a bill).

At the beginning of the session, the students will elect a presiding officer, otherwise known as the PO. The PO's job is to select speakers to give speeches, select questioners, maintain decorum in the chamber, and facilitate a fast and smooth debate for all.

Typically, one session of Congress lasts about 2-3 hours. During that time, students typically give speeches 3 minutes in length. The first two speeches on a piece of legislation are known as the first advocacy, or first pro, and the first rejection, or first con. These speeches are followed by 2 minutes of cross examination. After the first pro and con speech are established, each additional speaker is subject to one minute of cross examination by the chamber. The PO selects the members of the chamber to ask the questions of the speaker.



Research

Congress arguments generally have solid evidence supporting their claims. Evidence can come from anywhere—newspapers, journal articles, studies, books, primary documents, etc. The type of evidence varies based on the topic being debated, but when gathering research, you want to ask yourself four questions:

1. Is the source reputable? Sources should have a good reputation for 'getting it right'—newswires such as the AP and Reuters tend to be less credible than newspapers. Wikipedia is good background reading to get an overview of a topic, but doesn't have a reputation of being a credible source.
2. Is the source verifiable? This refers to the ability to verify the data and claims made by the source. If a source is based on a personal interview or some other insider knowledge, that generally cannot be verified through independent means.
3. Is the source authoritative? Different sources are expert at different fields. The Office of Budget and Management is an authority on budget policy on the US, but may not be the ideal source for a resolution about foreign policy in the Middle East. Think about whether the source in question is an expert on the field the legislation is about.
4. Is the source recent? While not every source has to be up-to-the-minute, generally, the more recent the source, the better. As current events evolve, older sources may become outdated or irrelevant, but the nature of timeliness will vary based on the topic.