**Debate Project**

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| ***EQs****:* How do writers utilize logic to convince and/or distract their audience from their true purpose? How does one construct a logical argument that is persuasive? |

***Goals:***Your goal in this **Debate Project** is to hone and practice your logic and argumentation techniques in an authentic way, while demonstrating your progression in the Argumentation standards. In particular, you will be concentrating on practicing using logic effectively, and practicing identifying logical fallacies in other people’s arguments.

You will be able to…

* Identify examples of logic-based rhetorical devices in complex texts/speeches/etc.
* Explain why logical fallacies are illogical/misleading
* Explain how to lay out a logical argument Use logical (syllogism) arrangements in your own arguments

**What *is* debate?** Debating is a structured contest of argumentation in which two opposing individuals or teams defend and attack a given proposition. The procedure is bound by rules that vary based on location and participants. The process is adjudicated and a winner is declared.

***The Task:***Working in a group of 4 with one person on your team, your task is to prepare to argue and support a position assigned to you by your teacher. You will need to do the necessary research to support your ideas,prepare to both pose and answer questions and practice your presentation so that it’s well polished. **This debate will take place** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. You will have time in class to coordinate with your partner and group, but you will most definitely need to plan to do work on this outside of class.

***How do we win?*** Your goal is not necessarily to win, but to prepare to defend your side as best you are able. You will be marked on the quality of your evidence, your ability to defeat your opponent’s arguments (logical fallacies, quality of evidence,etc.), adherence to rules, and the confidence of your presentation. Nevertheless, your teacher, along with some fellow students will determine a “winner”. You will need to present a more coherent, logical, and forceful set of arguments in a polished manner to prevail over your opponent.

***How do we prepare?***

* In a group of 4, you will decide upon a partner to be on your team – you and your partner will be assigned a position on a given topic (for or against). *Note: You may be arguing a position you do not personally support – this is a learning opportunity!*
* Once assigned a side in the debate, it is your task to research the topic. You will gather evidence that will be used to support your group’s position. Using this evidence as an aid, the team prepares a set of persuasive arguments designed to sway the judges to your side. Use the best of what you have found and house it in rhetorically effective, confident delivery. *Practice makes perfect*. It is the combination of solid evidence and polished delivery that leads to success.

\*It is also critical to consider what the opposition will say. Think through all the possible arguments your opponents will make. Success in a debate hinges on the ability to show that the opposing team’s reasoning is weaker than yours. Use the preparation document to organize your findings.

***The Format:*** You must follow a strict set of guidelines that tell you when you may speak. Main speeches will be limited to 5-7 minutes. Below is a general outline of the Debate. There is a short break before rebuttals begin. Rebuttal speeches are shorter (3-4 minutes).

1. **Affirmative:** The affirmative team presents their proposition (resolution). The group defines the situation, presents proposed alternatives, explains the plan for change and provides a brief summary.
2. **Negative:** The negative team presents their position. The group may be directly arguing that there is no need for change as is being proposed by the affirmative team. The negative team states their reasoning for the status quo. They may, only if necessary, argue the definition of the situation as defined by the affirmative team. The team raises questions about the affirmative position.
3. **Affirmative:** The second affirmative speaker will summarize the arguments on both sides noting where the positions conflict. The speaker will try to demonstrate the superiority of their reasoning. The speaker also has the task of answering any questions raised by the first negative speaker. It’s important to address any particularly difficult questions. The answers should leave the audience satisfied. Present a plan.
4. **Negative:** The second negative speaker restates the position of the team. He or she will address important questions raised. The main task however is to attack the plan as proposed by the affirmative team. The speaker may show that the plan is unworkable or expose unconsidered negative implications.The goal of this speaker is to demonstrate that the proposed resolution is uncalled for and/or unneeded and/or unworkable.
5. **1st Rebuttal** – Negative
6. **1st Rebuttal** – Affirmative
7. **2nd Rebuttal** – Negative
8. **2nd Rebuttal** – Affirmative

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| **Rebuttal speeches** are shorter(3-4 minutes) and **may not** present new evidence. Their sole purpose is to defend your case and defeat the case of the opposition. |

***Points of Note:***

* Address comments/questions to the “chair”. This is likely your teacher who is responsible for running the debate. Ex. Mr./Madame Chairperson, at this time I wish to address the issue of fairness….
* Take care with the amount of time you have. Practice beforehand. Use recipe cards to record important notes.
* Appearance may be evaluated. Dress properly.
* Complete each speaking opportunity with a brief summary. Listen carefully to the opposing team. They may make a significant point your team had not thought of during your preparation. You will want to address them in your rebuttal. A strong point left unchallenged makes your side appear all the weaker.
* Back up your statements/assertions. Anybody can have an opinion but rationale wins the debate.
* Take notes during the debate

***Timetable – summary****Below is a timetable for the debate. There are strict rules for this in formal competitions but they may not be used in a classroom.*

1. *Affirmative* – *5 min*
2. *Negative* – *5 min*
3. *Affirmative* – *5 min*
4. *Negative* – *5 min*
5. ***Break*** – ***3 min (use this time to make last minute changes to your rebuttal)***
6. *Rebuttal negative* – *3 min*
7. *Rebuttal positive* – *3 min*
8. *Rebuttal negative* – *3 min (with concluding statements)*
9. *Rebuttal positive* – *3 min (with concluding statements)*

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| *\*Please incorporate technology in some way in your final presentation. (Powerpoint, prezi, video recording, voice recording, etc.)* |

\*\*\*A Debate Terminology handout is available