

## DEBATE STRUCTURE

As far as the debate structure is concerned, each of the debates follow the format laid out in the following chart. The aim is for this arrangement of the debates to make the most use of the approximately fifty minutes of class time available

"Pro" Team	"Con" Team
Final debate preparations <b>(5 minutes)</b>	Final debate preparations <b>(5 minutes)</b>
Opening Statements – Pro <b>(3 minutes)</b>	
	Opening Statements – Con <b>(3 minutes)</b>
Arguments and Rebuttals #1 – Pro <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>	
	Arguments and Rebuttals #1 – Con <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>
Arguments and Rebuttals #2 – Pro <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>	
	Arguments and Rebuttals #2 – Con <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>
Arguments and Rebuttals #3 – Pro <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>	
	Arguments and Rebuttals #3 – Con <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>
Arguments and Rebuttals #4 – Pro <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>	
	Arguments and Rebuttals #4 – Con <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>
Arguments and Rebuttals #5 – Pro <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>	
	Arguments and Rebuttals #5 – Con <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>
Arguments and Rebuttals #6 – Pro <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>	
	Arguments and Rebuttals #6 – Con <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>
Arguments and Rebuttals #7 – Pro <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>	
	Arguments and Rebuttals #7 – Con <b>(1.5 minutes)</b>
Closing Statements – Pro <b>(3 minutes)</b>	
	Closing Statements – Con <b>(3 minutes)</b>
<b>Conclusion of the debate</b>	<b>Conclusion of the debate</b>
Discussion about the debate <b>(10 minutes)</b>	Discussion about the debate <b>(10 minutes)</b>

The five minutes available for each team's preparation would be one five-minute period, not one five-minute period per team. Likewise, the ten minutes open for class discussion about how the debate went constitute a single ten-minute period, not ten minutes per team.

During the opening statements, each team should lay out its central arguments and whatever points the team members think would be wisest to highlight at the start of the debate to strengthen their side's position. As the other team is speaking, the team whose turn it is to remain silent should be listening actively to the other team's arguments and perhaps should be keeping notes of them in order to be able to understand what the other side is saying as well as how to refute the other side's arguments. The teams should use this approach during the phase of the debate in which each team will have seven periods of 1.5 minutes in which to articulate their arguments and their rebuttals (responses) to the arguments that the other team makes. The closing statements should offer each team the opportunity to summarize its arguments and the most important takeaways from the debate that would strengthen its position with respect to that of the other team.

In each of these sections of the debate, the teacher can keep track of time for the teams and can display how much time is left in each section for the students by means of an online clock. <https://www.online-stopwatch.com/> Although the students on a team may not interrupt the other team while that other team is speaking, they may cut off the other team if they continue to speak beyond the time allotted to them during a particular section of the debate. For example, if the Pro Team continues to speak past the time frame for one of the Arguments and Rebuttals sections, the Con Team could begin to speak anyway, seeing as the time would now be within the Con Team's period of time to present more of its arguments.

Any student on a team will be able to speak during the time periods allotted to that team, as long as the students do not speak over one another. The members of a team can share ideas with each other and discuss them briefly and in low voices during their speaking periods before presenting those ideas to the class, but the teams should be advised to not take up too much time in discussion before they present their arguments to the class.

Lastly, the final ten minutes or so of class will be an opportunity for each team to voice its members' ideas about how the debate went, what strategies went well or poorly for their team, and what arguments and strategies from their team and the other team struck them as most convincing or most effective. Also, this period of time could serve as an opportunity to analyze how the teams worked together and how to improve this cooperation during future debates, as well as what the teams would have done differently if they had the chance to do the debate over again. The students could mention ways in which they feel the debating process went particularly well and how they would like to see the structure revised in the future, if they desire any such revision. This feedback from the students should prove helpful in planning for and implementing more effective debate structures and debates in general during future class sessions.