

TAKING THE INITIATIVE

TAKING THE INITIATIVE is the most recent authoritative guide to the conduct and adjudication of Debating and Public Speaking Competitions run by the Department of Education and Communities in New South Wales.

This edition was written by Lloyd Cameron & Tony Davey

Since 1995, this booklet has incorporated Keith Hudson's *An Approach to Primary School Debating*.

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NSW SCHOOLS DEBATING POLICY

1. Refer to entry conditions for each Competition and the relevant sections of Taking the Initiative.
2. In draws for all competitions, the home teams appear underlined. The home teams are responsible for initial contact both with the adjudicator and the other school.
 - Contact the adjudicator as soon as possible and arrange at least three suitable dates for the debate.
 - Contact the other school and arrange a time and date.
 - Confirm the arrangements with the adjudicator and the other school.
3. Once arrangements have been made for a debate, more than 48 hours notice must be given by a school wishing to postpone the debate. The home school should then contact the other school to negotiate an alternate date. If a second cancellation occurs, the Regional Coordinator must be contacted.
4. Please be aware that all competitions run to a tight schedule, and cannot be postponed. All rounds must be completed by the dates specified, so that future levels of the competition can proceed as timetabled.
 - Schools entering any competition are obliged to complete a minimum of three rounds. It is unacceptable to refuse to debate due to the fact that a team cannot win their zone. Any school withdrawing from a competition severely disadvantages the other teams in their zone. As such, teams entering a competition must make every effort to debate.
 - If a debate has not taken place by the date for the completion of the zone, in order to determine a zone winner the Regional Coordinator, in consultation with the State Coordinator, may award the debate to a particular team. The decision will be based on whichever team is deemed to have been disadvantaged due to another team's unwillingness to agree on a suitable time to debate.
 - Any school wishing to withdraw from the competition must negotiate with the State Coordinator who may, as a result, review a school's eligibility for entry in future competitions.
 - Zone winners and results of Inter-zone debates must be faxed through to the Coordinator by the winning team immediately after the debate. A Chairperson Form/ Results Fax will be sent to all teams entered competitions, along with their draws.
5. Metropolitan schools must use the Department-trained adjudicator assigned to their zone. Under no circumstances are schools to appoint their own adjudicator or adjudicate their own debates.
6. The adjudicator's decision is final. Protests will only be considered if the rules of the competition have been broken. Any disputes regarding any aspect of the conduct of a debate must be forwarded in writing to the State Coordinator within one week of the problem arising. Disputes not submitted according to the above instructions will not be considered.

RULES OF ENTRY AND ORGANISATION

THE PREMIER'S DEBATING CHALLENGE

- All levels of the competition are organised by State and Regional Coordinators.
- Teams consist of three speakers and a team advisor.
- Students may participate in a competition for a higher age group, but not a lower one.
- Schools may enter up to two teams in each of the competitions. Students must be assigned to either a Red or a Blue team before competition commences, and may not appear for both teams in the competition.

Premier's Debating Challenge for Years 11&12 for the Hume Barbour Trophy

- Open to government high and central schools statewide.
- For students in Year 12 and below.
- Teams will receive 1 hour preparation time.
- Speaking time 8 minutes, warning bell at 6 minutes, continuous bell at 9 minutes.

Premier's Debating Challenge for Year 11 for the Karl Cramp Trophy

- Open to government high schools in metropolitan regions.
- For students in Year 11 and below.
- Teams will receive 1 hour preparation time.
- Speaking time 8 minutes, warning bell at 6 minutes, continuous bell at 9 minutes.

Premier's Debating Challenge for Years 9&10 for the Teasdale Cup

- Open to all government high and central schools statewide.
- For students in Year 10 and below.
- Teams will receive 1 hour preparation time.
- Speaking time 8 minutes, warning bell at 6 minutes, continuous bell at 9 minutes.

Premier's Debating Challenge for Years 7&8

- Open to all government high and central schools statewide.
- For students in Years 7 and 8.
- Teams will receive 1 hour preparation time.
- Speaking time 6 minutes, warning bell at 4 minutes, continuous bell at 7 minutes.

Premier's Debating Challenge for Years 5&6 for the Hunter Challenge Trophy

- Open to all government primary and central schools statewide.
- For students in Year 6 and below.
- Teams will receive 1 hour preparation time.
- Speaking time 4 minutes, warning bell at 3 minutes, continuous bell at 5 minutes.

RULES OF ENTRY AND ORGANISATION

REPRESENTATIVE DEBATING COMPETITIONS

Combined High Schools

- Open to schools in the metropolitan, Hunter/Central Coast and Illawarra/South East Regions.
- For students in Years 11 and 12.
- A Firsts and a Seconds team will be chosen to represent Combined High Schools in debates against the Greater Public Schools, Combined Associated Schools and Archdale organisations.
- Speaking time 8 minutes, warning bell at 6 minutes, continuous bell at 9 minutes.

Junior State Debating Championships

- Open to Regional representative teams from government schools statewide.
- For students in Years 9 and 10.
- Students may only represent their region at one Championships.
- Speaking time 8 minutes, warning bell at 6 minutes, continuous bell at 9 minutes.

Primary Schools State Debating Championships

- Open to Regional representative teams from government primary schools statewide.
- For students in Year 6 and below.
- Speaking time 4 minutes, warning bell at 3 minutes, continuous bell at 5 minutes.

PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITIONS

The Plain English Speaking Award

- Open to senior students, aged fifteen years and above from government and non-government schools statewide.
- Each school may enter a maximum of two students (for further details see Page 59).

The Legacy Junior Public Speaking Award

- Open to junior students, aged twelve to fourteen years from government and non-government schools statewide.
- Each school may enter a maximum of two students (for further details see Page 60).

Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition

- There are two divisions in this competition: one for students in Years 3 and 4, the other for Years 5 and 6.
- Open to all government primary and central schools students statewide.
- Each school may enter a maximum of two students in each division (for details see Page 61).

CONFLICT DEBATING

Conflict or Initiative Debating is the style used in all competitions organised by the NSW Department of Education and Training and is generally accepted as the standard for the majority of the other competitions throughout the state.

The essence of debating is effective communication and conflict of ideas and arguments. These elements are judged in three categories—**Matter, Manner and Method**.

Matter refers to what is said in the debate and incorporates:

- The Definition and its Justification
- The statement and explanation of the team's line of argument (Teamline) and Allocation
- The various Arguments that make up the team's case
- The factual Examples used to support those Arguments

Manner refers to the way in which speakers deliver their speeches and use their personality to communicate their ideas to the audience. It incorporates:

- Visual elements—hand gestures, eye contact, stance
- Vocal elements—speed of delivery, volume, pitch
- Verbal elements—choice of language

Method refers to the way in which the debate is organised. It incorporates:

- The structuring of individual speeches
- The structuring of the team's case
- The organisation of the response to the opposing team's case

In previous years, weightings were given to each of these categories. This encouraged Adjudicators to focus on individual performances rather than on a team's overall performance. It also placed undue emphasis on particular components of debating. Therefore this practice has been discontinued.

The two teams are called the **Affirmative** and the **Negative**. The Affirmative team supports the topic with factual Arguments and Examples. The Negative team must disprove the Affirmative team's case and present a valid case of their own to disprove the topic. Both teams must prove their own case (Teamline) and disprove the case presented by the opposing team.

The First Affirmative is the only speaker who enters the debate with a fully prepared speech. All subsequent speakers must first disprove the opposing team's case, before further developing their own team's case. Persistent conflict is vital to effective debating. It is through refutation at the beginning of a speech that this conflict is created and the initiative of the debate is captured. In short, conflict is what distinguishes debating from six public speeches on the same topic.

DEFINITION – OVERVIEW

The Definition is the team's interpretation of the topic, and must be carefully considered and designed to **facilitate** argument, not to impede it. As the first to speak in the debate, the First Affirmative has a special responsibility to present a clear Definition. Though the Affirmative does not have the right to insist that their Definition is accepted and is correct just because they are the Affirmative, they do have the first opportunity to define the topic. They should not throw away this opportunity by defining poorly.

A very general, broad Definition by an Affirmative team may leave the initiative for the Negative to seize. A very specialised, narrow Definition may leave a team with an impossible case to argue. These pitfalls can be avoided if teams concentrate on defining in a manner that is **fair and reasonable to both sides**.

The reasons behind the team's interpretation of the topic or choice of Definition must be explained. This is called **Justifying** the Definition. Teams should not rely on a Definition taken straight from a dictionary. Claiming that a Definition is infallible and cannot be challenged because it appears in the Oxford Dictionary is not acceptable. The dictionary may be used to find the meanings of unfamiliar words but the topic should be defined in words that are readily understood by the audience and the adjudicator. Examples of words and phrases from the topic as they are used in everyday speech may help in justifying the Definition and establishing its meaning.

It's generally best to look for phrases in the topic and define them as a whole. Splitting phrases into individual words is unnecessary and often leads to an over-complicated or overly literal Definition. Beware of placing too much emphasis on words such as 'the' or 'a' in the topic.

General or metaphorical topics should not be defined too literally. Again, rather than focusing too closely on the individual words of the topic, teams should use their Definition to hammer out exactly what the crux of the debate should really be. Teams also need to ensure that their interpretation of the topic is more or less **topical** and has **two clearly opposed, concrete sides**. These ideas will be dealt with in more detail in the section dealing with **Issue**.

Affirmative teams should aim to define a topic **reasonably** rather than in a way deliberately calculated to give them an unfair advantage. An unusual Definition which is deliberately chosen to try to surprise the opposing team may work against an inexperienced team. However, if the opposing team successfully attacks this Definition, it could leave the Affirmative team in a difficult or impossible position.

If the teams disagree about the meaning of a topic as a whole or words within, they should use the **'Even If' technique**, which will allow them to still pursue a meaningful debate.

DEFINITION – ISSUE

The first thing a team should do in working out their Definition is to decide what the Issue of the debate should be. For some topics, the Issue of the debate is so obvious that teams will not need to dwell on it. For instance, the Issue in the debate 'That we should legalise voluntary euthanasia' is simply whether or not to legalise euthanasia. Since it is unlikely that either team will somehow miss this fact, speakers should move on to deal with the details of the Definition quickly, and not waste time explaining the obvious.

Some other topics with obvious Issues:

- That the UN should have a standing army
- That all drugs should be legalised
- That Australia should become a republic

With all of these debates, the Issue is obvious because the topic is so **concrete**. However, topics are often less concrete and a good deal broader. In these instances, teams need to seize upon **one clear Issue** and in so doing narrow the debate down to make it clear what the two sides should be.

One such topic would be 'That the wolves are at the door.' Teams will need to carefully consider this topic and choose an Issue that is **topical, reasonable** and **clear**. The first thing to realise is that there is absolutely no point in defining the topic literally. It adds nothing to the debate to say that 'wolves' are 'large, wild carnivores from the dog family'. On the other hand, a broad debate about every single possible danger to every individual and nation would be just as pointless.

One possible Issue for the debate 'That the wolves are at the door' would be whether or not refugees or more broadly immigration poses a threat to Australia's security and economy. This Issue takes the idea of an outside threat pressing upon us and turns it into a real, concrete debate with two clear sides. Another Issue might be whether the threat of terrorism on Australian soil is real or imagined.

By narrowing the debate down to a clear, real-world Issue, teams avoid a broad discussion of the various physical and metaphysical dangers that confront the world. Instead, the debate will now be a clear, hard fight between two directly opposed sides. It will take some practise before teams are able to choose the best possible Issue, and occasionally the two teams will choose very different Issues to prepare their cases around. In that instance, teams should use the 'Even if' technique, explained below, to ensure the debate continues. As teams become more aware of what is happening in the world, their ability to pick the best possible Issue improves, and the chance of the two teams disagreeing on the Issue is greatly reduced.

Topics and some possible Issues:

That the carrot is better than the stick

- Issue: Is economic engagement more effective than sanctions or military action?
- Issue: Specifically, how should the world approach alleged human rights abuses in China?
- Issue: Should corporal punishment be reintroduced to schools?

That we should keep off the grass

- Issue: Should we maintain the ban on marijuana?
- Issue: Should we preserve the environment at all costs?
- Issue: Should we always obey the law, or is civil disobedience an effective agent of change?

DEFINITION – SIMPLE WORDS

Having identified the Issue of the debate, teams need to work out the details of the Definition. The simplest thing to do is to identify the key words and phrases in the topic and then have a close look at each of them. It is important to note that the actual dictionary Definitions of these words and phrases will not be helpful. Rather, teams should try to talk about the words and phrases of the topic in relation to the Issue they have chosen. Most importantly, their main task with most words will not be to explain what they mean, but to **explain what they include and what they exclude for the purposes of the debate to follow**.

For example, in the topic 'That school should be longer', inexperienced teams will often waste their time explaining that 'school' means 'a place where people learn.' This description does not add anything to the understanding of the topic. Words like 'school' do not need to be defined in the traditional sense at all. Teams should instead explain what counts as 'school' for the purposes of this debate and what does not. For example, is it fair to include pre-schools in the debate? Is it fair to talk about private schools as well as public schools? Should the debate be limited to high schools, or should primary schools be included? These are the kinds of details teams must clarify with their Definition of the word 'school' before the debate proper can commence. Perhaps it would be fairest to exclude primary schools because younger children could not possibly work any longer. Or perhaps there are perfectly valid Arguments for extending primary school hours, in which case they should be included in the Definition of 'school.'

The teams themselves will need to decide these details, based on what they think will result in **the most reasonable Definition** and the most interesting debate. Importantly, teams will also need to **justify** their decisions when they present the Definition. For instance, if they exclude primary schools, they might justify this by explaining the impossibility of arguing that a 6 year-old should work an eight-hour day and then walk home in the dark in winter. Justification is covered in more detail below.

Some other topics with simple words:

That computers have changed life for the better

- What kinds of computers is it fair to include in the debate?
- Should this be limited to PCs and laptops?
- Should Arguments about super-computers be valid?
- Should anything with a microchip in it count as a computer?

That the country gets a raw deal

- What counts as the country?
- Should anywhere outside of the capital city be included?
- What sized towns is it valid to talk about?

DEFINITION – SCOPE

As part of dealing with some of the simple words in the topic, teams also need to define the Scope. The Scope of the debate is simply the part of the world which should be included in the Definition. For instance, in the topic 'That school should be longer', the Definition of 'school' should exclude overseas schools because they have such different hours and circumstances. In fact, the Scope of this debate might best be limited to New South Wales, as it is a question of education policy and such policies are determined by the state government.

Often, the Scope of a debate will be the Definition of a word like 'we' or 'us,' but even if the topic does not have such a word, teams still need to clearly set down the Scope. As with all elements of the Definition, teams must choose a scope that is as fair as possible to both sides.

Topics and some possible Scopes:

That we should become a republic

- Scope: The debate only makes sense if the Scope is limited to Australia.

That we should get tough on drugs

- Scope: Different countries have very different drug policies, so clearly the debate needs to be limited to a specific nation. The Scope is probably best set to Australia, though some might even chose NSW, given that law enforcement is a predominately state issue.

That women are still second class citizens

- Scope: Obviously women enjoy very different working and living conditions throughout the world, so the Scope should probably be narrowed to exclude countries where it would be impossible to claim women have achieved equal status. A fair Scope might be the western world, or possibly Australia if the teams wanted to argue very specifically about government policy.

That computers are good for us

- Scope: Some teams would prefer to limit the Scope to the western world, where computer use is fairly widespread and consistent. However, one possible Argument for the negative would be the growing divide between technology-rich and technology-poor nations, and it would be unreasonable to simply exclude that Argument.

Teams should be careful not to get caught up in squabbling over the Scope of a debate. Simply put, the Arguments proving a topic for New South Wales are likely to be very similar to the Arguments Australia-wide, so there is probably no point in disagreeing. Where teams do disagree, they should **justify** their own choice of Scope and then attempt to deal with the other team's Arguments as well. The team with the narrower Scope will need to rebut the Arguments introduced under the broader Scope, not by just excluding them, but by actually engaging with them wherever possible. This is essentially the same as using the 'Even if' technique, which is generally used to resolve more difficult definitional differences. The team with the broader Scope will obviously be able to rebut as usual.

It is important to realise that setting the Scope is about limiting the area for which a topic must be proven, and not about limiting the material that can be introduced. In a debate limited to Australia, teams can still talk about overseas Examples in as much as they relate to the Australian situation. For instance, in the topic 'That we should reintroduce the death penalty', the Scope should probably be narrowed to Australia, but teams can still look to policies in countries which have the death penalty to demonstrate what might happen if it were reintroduced here.

DEFINITION – MODEL

A debate which asks the affirmative to argue for a change in the way any aspect of the world works is often described as a 'policy debate'. Such debates require the Affirmative to present a Model as part of their Definition. A Model is simply the outline of the various changes that the Affirmative believes should be put in place. Simply put, the Model is the policy for which the Affirmative stands.

Returning to the topic 'That school should be longer', it is clear that the affirmative will need to argue for a change in the way schools are run, so they will need to present a Model that clarifies exactly what they stand for. Defining the phrase 'be longer' as simply 'go for more time' leaves it unclear what the debate is actually about. 'Be longer' might mean adding hours to the school day, going to school on Saturdays, shortening school holidays, or even adding a year to school. The team needs to choose the single most reasonable and practical proposal as their Model. The most common suggestion to lengthen school is to bring school hours into line with normal working hours, thus adding a little under two hours to each day. This then is the Model that the affirmative should opt for.

The best Models have a good deal of detail. Many times the Model will include an idea of how much the changes will cost and where the money might come from, as well as explaining the details of any new procedures that will need to be put in place, and setting out a timeframe to implement the changes. Thus a good Model for 'That school should be longer' might include a proposal to add an afternoon tea break of 15 minutes to the school day and reduce the recommended amount of homework by half an hour a day. Note that these changes are entirely reasonable and arguable—it's important that the Model be both a realistic proposal and something which leaves both sides room for argument.

Sometimes debates will centre round changes which have already been implemented elsewhere. In this case it is useful to base the model on a real life example. If the topic were 'That marijuana should be legalised', the team might base their Model on A.C.T. law, incorporating elements such as limiting the number of bushes to two per person, restricting to personal use, instituting a minimum age of 18 years, and so on. This ensures the Model is workable.

Topics and ideas for the Model:

That we should legalise voluntary euthanasia

- Available only to patients over 18 years with a terminal illness who are in considerable pain
- Mandatory psychological evaluation and counselling sessions to be provided
- Injection to be delivered by means of a computer which the patients themselves control

That we should put the environment first

- Australia to immediately cease all old-growth logging

Once the Affirmative have made it clear what they stand for in the debate, it becomes the negative's chief task to prove that the Model is unworkable, or more detrimental than beneficial. The Negative will typically choose to argue for the status quo, and should make very clear the details of that status quo (the current policy). Occasionally, Negatives will opt to introduce a brief Model of their own. In the debate 'That we should get tough on drugs', the negative might reject both the affirmative's Model and the status quo, and argue for a more lenient proposal of their own that includes more injecting rooms, methadone programs and education. Whether they choose the status quo or their own Model, what matters is that the Negative, like the Affirmative before them, explains the details of what they stand for.

DEFINITION – YARDSTICK & BURDEN OF PROOF

After establishing an Issue and determining the details of the Definition, teams need finally to develop a Yardstick/Burden of Proof. These concepts are practically interchangeable, and simply refer to setting up the criteria by which the debate will be judged. The Yardstick or Burden of Proof (B.O.P) is essentially the goals set for each team in a debate. The clearer those goals are, the easier it will be to decide which Arguments are truly relevant to the case.

Returning to the debate 'That school should be longer', the Definition of the phrase 'should be' will lead to a Burden of Proof. Teams often define 'should be' in debates as meaning 'moral and practical benefits' without pausing to consider what this actually means. In fact, 'should be' suggests that the affirmative need to prove firstly that their idea is a good one (moral obligation), and secondly that it will actually work (practical obligation). Thus the goals for the affirmative would be to prove that schools would be better off under their plan to lengthen school hours, and that the plan can be implemented successfully. The first affirmative should articulate this B.O.P as part of the Definition. They might also choose to briefly outline a possible B.O.P for the negative if they deem it necessary.

Advanced teams will be able to go a little further and explain the criteria for deciding whether on not school is better off. They should ask themselves questions like 'Better for whom?', 'Better in what way?', and 'How can we tell if a school is improving?' A good Burden of Proof might therefore be to prove that the lives of students, teachers and parents would be benefited, and more specifically, that both the education and the general well-being of the students would be positively affected. The negative's Yardstick would be the opposite; that is, to prove that making school longer would be of detriment to the education and well-being of students and the lives of their teachers and parents.

Many topics will revolve around the question of benefits versus detriments, and the basic Yardstick in those debates will be to prove that one exceeds the other, depending on which side of the debate you are on. It will always be a good idea to go a little further and explain exactly what kinds of benefits we should be testing for, and which are irrelevant to the debate. Teams will need to ensure that the Arguments and Examples which they bring up are relevant to the criteria they have settled upon. For instance, in the debate 'That school should be longer', the negative might argue that this would increase traffic at peak hours and so disadvantage the average commuter. That Argument would be irrelevant to a Burden of Proof that only embraces students, teachers and parents, and should therefore be excluded from the case or rephrased to be specifically relevant to those groups.

Topics and some possible Burdens of Proof:

That Australia should withdraw troops from Afghanistan

- Criteria: 1) Australian Economy 2) Australian Security 3) Afghan Economy 4) Afghan Security
- Affirmative B.O.P: Improve the economy and the security of Australia and Afghanistan.
- Negative B.O.P: Damage the economy and security of both Australia and Afghanistan. Note that both these Yardsticks tell us exactly what kinds of benefits we should be measuring and for whom we should be measuring them. Teams will now need to relate all their Arguments to one of these four criteria.

That Australians are too concerned with sport

- Affirmative B.O.P: The amount of sport in the average Australian's life is detrimental to their physical health and their general well-being. This topic requires the Affirmative to prove two things—firstly that there is a lot of sport in our lives and secondly that the level is detrimental.
- Negative B.O.P: The amount of sport in the average Australian's life is either not very much or not detrimental or both. The negative could take any of these approaches as their case. Note that the Definition of 'sport' will need to include watching it as well as playing it to be fair.

DEFINITION – JUSTIFICATION

Each decision that a team makes in setting up the Definition needs to be justified. Put simply, teams need to have a good reason for every choice they make in putting together the Definition, and they need to explain that reasoning to the audience at each step of the process.

To start with, each part of the Definition will need to satisfy three basic criteria:

- It must be fair and arguable for both sides
- It must be topical and relevant to the present day
- It must be the most reasonable interpretation of the words of the topic.

Example: 'That the wolves are at the door'

If a team decides that the Issue of this topic should be whether or not terrorism poses a genuine threat, they could justify that decision by claiming that it is the most current and topical interpretation possible. Some teams might also go on to explain that their Issue is a reasonable interpretation of the words of the topic by explaining that wolves are first and foremost a symbol of danger pressing upon us, so it is only fair to equate them with terrorism in this debate.

All the smaller decisions relating to Scope, Simple Words, Yardstick and the like that we have examined above will also need to be justified. Justification comes down to ensuring the Definition is as fair as it can be and then explaining to the audience exactly why it is so fair.

Example: 'That school should be longer'

A team might think it fairest to exclude primary schools from the debate, and explain to the audience that it would be unreasonable to try to extend school hours for 6 year olds, and that while there is some topicality in a look at improving our high schools, there is very little community dissatisfaction with the education children are currently receiving in primary schools.

Inexperienced teams will often refer to a dictionary in trying to justify their Definition of a particular word in the topic. This is never useful. Justification is about explaining your interpretation of words **specifically in relation to the topic at hand**—something with which the dictionary cannot help. Dictionaries are only provided to teams in the unlikely event that they do not know the meaning of a word in the topic.

Another common mistake in presenting the Justification is to finish giving the Definition and then justify afterwards with a blanket expression like “We justify this Definition because it’s what the person on the street would think.” Speakers should instead present their Justification at the same time as they are laying out the Definition. Each definitional decision should be explained and then justified as the Definition is developed. Simply asserting the Definition is correct at the end does not amount to a real Justification.

PROBLEMS WITH DEFINITION – OVERVIEW

It is not unusual for teams to differ in their interpretation of the topic, and there are a number of ways to deal with these disagreements. Some smaller differences are best dealt with through negotiation and compromise, while broader differences are typically best dealt with in a Definition Debate using the 'Even If' Technique. Before tackling these concepts, it is important to understand how the role of the Definition has evolved and how it is viewed currently.

The Affirmative team used to have **divine right of Definition** and the Negative team was expected to accept it and argue on the Affirmative's grounds. This ensured that both teams argued on common ground but gave the Affirmative an unfair advantage because there was no compulsion for the Affirmative to define the topic correctly, reasonably or even logically. This meant that Negative teams were forced to enter the debate with a case largely unprepared and were forced to develop a purely responsive case to whatever they heard from the Affirmative. This effectively resulted in the Affirmative having one hour in which to prepare while the Negative had ten minutes (this method of debating is still practised in many countries overseas).

The attitude then shifted so that if the Affirmative did not give a correct, reasonable Definition, the Negative was entitled to amend or change the Definition as long as the flaws in the Affirmative's Definition were explained.

This led to the problem of **parallel cases**, where both teams entered the debate with their own Definition and their own case and were unwilling to argue anything else. Often there was no need for real argument because the two teams were talking about two entirely different issues. Instead of developing their case, teams put their efforts into strengthening their Definition. Instead of rebutting the other team's Arguments, they refused to engage with those Arguments on definitional grounds.

A technique to overcome this problem was introduced. Known as the 'Even If' Technique (outlined on pages 14-15), this allowed two teams with different Definitions and cases to come into conflict and actually debate issues. In a debate where both teams have correct and reasonable Definitions that differ significantly and where both teams apply the 'Even If' Technique correctly, there will be a meaningful conflict of skill and argument. This is not always the case however, and the words Definition Debate have become rather unpopular with debaters, adjudicators and audiences alike.

This situation has developed because too often debaters lack the skill and understanding required to apply the 'Even If' Technique effectively and, more importantly, because their approach to Definition is inflexible.

The current attitude, therefore, is that debates should be arguments about issues, not about semantics. Affirmative teams are now expected to define the topic correctly and reasonably and Negative teams are expected to accept Definitions that are correct and reasonable. Negative teams are expected to attack an Affirmative Definition that is unreasonable or incorrect and replace it with the correct Definition.

A correct and reasonable Definition should be established early in the debate so that the real issues can be argued. This is the aim of all the rules of Definition outlined in this section.

This does not mean that Definition Debates and the 'Even If' Technique should be buried and forgotten. In many cases two teams can have two different interpretations that are both equally correct and reasonable. In such cases, the Negative are quite justified in amending or changing the Affirmative Definition and using the 'Even If' Technique.

PROBLEMS WITH DEFINITION – FLEXIBILITY

The main aim of the Definition is to ensure that the Affirmative and the Negative can meet each other on fair and common ground and build an interesting, relevant case that can be proved or disproved. It follows that the best thing to do when faced with minor definitional differences is to resolve them as quickly as possible and move on with the real substance of the debate.

Both the Affirmative and Negative teams need to come up with a Definition before the debate commences. Even when they follow the guidelines above and try to be as fair as possible, they will rarely come up with exactly the same Definition. Most commonly, the Negative team will have the same basic Definition as the Affirmative, but will have used different words and explanations. There is absolutely no point in introducing a new Definition if this is the case. The Negative should closely examine the Affirmative's Definition as it is presented and determine whether it is roughly the same as their own, even if the wording is different. Where the only difference between the Definitions is a matter of semantics, the First Negative should simply accept the Affirmative's Definition, perhaps clarifying their position if necessary.

Often, teams will agree on the basic Issue of the debate, but disagree on some smaller element of the Definition. A difference over the Scope, for instance, should be dealt with as quickly and simply as possible, as outlined in the section on Scope above.

As long as the Affirmative and Negative agree on the Issue of the debate, most irrelevant definitional arguments can be eliminated. This approach makes it easier for both teams to be more flexible in the debate, especially the Negative. Once a Negative team knows what they should be discussing (the Issue) they can decide what they can and cannot accept from the Affirmative rather than expecting a perfect match on Definition.

Example: 'That heroin should be legalised'

Having settled upon the obvious Issue of whether or not prohibition of heroin works, the Negative can decide what it can and cannot accept as a Definition from the Affirmative.

- Heroin—**Will accept** all Heroin derivatives. **Will not accept** Heroin to mean 'all drugs' because the topic refers specifically to one type of drug
- Legalised—**Will accept** any Definition from 'freely available' like cigarettes to government programs to supply addicts. **Will not accept** administered to the terminally ill, as this is unreasonably simple for the Affirmative to prove, and therefore unfair.

As long as the Affirmative defines the topic so that they are talking about making heroin available in society, the Negative can accept the Definition and prepare a case to prove that heroin should not be available in society **instead** of arguing over the technicalities of the differences between legalisation and decriminalisation or the types of heroin or how it is to be administered.

Example: 'That school should be longer'

As outlined in the section on 'Simple Words', the Affirmative might prefer to exclude primary schools, while the Negative had planned to include them. The Negative might not be willing to drop the primary school matter from their case. While both teams need to deal with the disagreement and explain their own justifications, Affirmative and Negative are still arguing about basically the same Issue, with the majority of their Arguments likely to be valid under either Definition. The Negative should explain its reasons for including primary schools, and continue to include that matter in their case. The Affirmative should explain again why they felt it fairest to omit primary schools, but deal with the primary school matter the Negative introduces on its own merits, not simply dismissing it because it is outside the Affirmative Definition.

PROBLEMS WITH DEFINITION – DEFINITION DEBATES

Definition Debates are fought over more important definitional disagreements. They occur most commonly where the Affirmative and Negative cannot agree on the Issue of the debate. It is in these Definition Debates that teams are expected to use the 'Even If' Technique.

Before a true Definition Debate takes place, the Negative has a decision to make. Where the Affirmative's Definition is substantially different from their own, but nonetheless reasonable, they should first consider going **Reactive Negative**. This means simply accepting the Affirmative's Definition in its entirety and attempting to come up with a case on the spot. The Negative's matter in this case will largely be a reflection of the Affirmative's, and they will be allowed to concentrate more on rebuttal than would normally be acceptable. This route allows for more concentration on actual Arguments, and so is preferable to a Definition Debate. Where possible, experienced teams should consider going Reactive Negative.

Most teams when faced with a definitional conflict would prefer to employ the '**Even If Technique**'. This technique is a formal expansion of the kind of negotiation that goes on in more minor definitional disputes. The Affirmative in the previous example on 'That school should be longer' pursued a version of the 'Even If' Technique when they rebutted the Negative's matter on primary schools, not by dismissing it as outside the Definition, but by dealing with the merits of the Arguments themselves. The central idea of the 'Even If' Technique is to continue to fight over the Definition while still rebutting the opposing team's case on its own grounds.

The basic steps of the 'Even If' Technique should be pursued at the outset of every speech from the First Negative onwards as follows:

- **Analyse the opposition's Definition** and explain what is wrong with it (i.e. attack their Justification)
- **Substitute your Definition** and show how it is more reasonable and appropriate in the context of the debate (i.e. build up your own Definition and Justification)
- **Show what is wrong with the opposition's case on their own grounds**. This essentially means accepting their Definition for a few minutes and rebutting. The idea is to say 'Even If' their Definition was correct and justifiable, the Arguments they are using to prove their case are incorrect. Basically, rebut their Arguments and Examples as if the definitional dispute didn't exist.
- **Finally, outline your own Arguments** based on your own Definition and substantiate them with the appropriate Examples.

It is important to note that, as always in debating, it will not be enough to simply reject a team's Definition without reason. Nor is it enough to give a brief reason like 'it's too broad' or 'it's unreasonable'. Debaters need to carefully explain in detail why the opposition's Definition is unworkable. Likewise the rebuttal they present as part of the 'Even If' Technique needs to be well explained and thoroughly analysed, and not just a dismissal of the other team's Arguments.

In essence, the 'Even If' Technique is about recognising that the debate has fractured into three separate debates—the debate the Affirmative were expecting, the debate the Negative were expecting, and the debate over whose debate is the right one. The team that best uses the 'Even If' Technique will be able to win all three, and so take the overall debate. In short, address the opposition on their own terms while maintaining the supremacy of your own Definition.

Teams should finally beware of neglecting their own case in the rush to pursue the 'Even If' Technique. The team needs to be careful to devote an appropriate amount of time to each part of the Definition Debate. Teams often concern themselves too much with the opposition's Definition and case and fail to adequately develop their own. While they may gain ground by attacking the other team's Arguments, they will lose ground by neglecting their own case.

PROBLEMS WITH DEFINITION – AN ‘EVEN IF’ EXAMPLE

Topic ‘That we are going the wrong way’

The Affirmative interpret the Issue of the debate to be morality. They argue that Australians are pursuing the wrong moral values and point to the crime rate, drug abuse and so forth as proof. The Negative believe the Issue of the debate should be an analysis of Australia’s international relations, and specifically whether or not Australia’s close relationship with the United States is unhealthy.

Consider how the Negative might present the ‘Even If’ strategy.

- **Show why the Affirmative Definition is inappropriate:** Morality is too subjective. Right and Wrong are difficult concepts to agree upon, a difficulty only increased by the sweeping breadth of the Affirmative’s Definition. Rather than argue over every conceivable sin and every view of it, the debate should focus on something more concrete, like politics.
- **Establish the Negative’s interpretation:** When discussing ‘we’ as Australians, political orientation is the most obvious national characteristic and so it is the most obvious aspect to discuss. While moral values are fluid throughout the country, Australia’s international politics has a clear direction (i.e. towards the United States). This is also a more topical interpretation.
- **Examine the Affirmative case on its own grounds:** Even if the morality Definition was the correct one, there is nothing to suggest that Australia is in moral decline. While there might be some increase in recreational drug use, there is evidence that serious and violent crime is declining. A broader look at the nation shows the general standard of living is improving and the economy is solid, which in turn alleviates the causes of such crimes. The majority of people in Australia are heading in the right direction morally, even if a small minority are not. Therefore, the Affirmative are wrong on their own grounds.
- **Establish the Negative case:** This debate is actually about Australia’s ties with the United States, and we on the Negative would say that our relationship is in fact a healthy one with a good many benefits for our nation’s economy and security. We are not going the wrong way.

Now consider the Affirmative’s ‘Even If’.

- **Show why the Negative Definition is inappropriate:** Far from being a clear-cut Issue, Australian political orientation is multidirectional. We are indeed close to the United States, but we are also closer to South East Asia than at any point in our past history. It is not feasible to say whether, on the whole, we are going the right or wrong way because some allegiances may be right and some wrong. Morally, however, actions and ideas can be said to be right or wrong.
- **Re-establish the Affirmative’s interpretation:** Unpopular though it is to talk about morality, is the most appropriate interpretation of this topic precisely because it is possible to say whether something is right or wrong based on the current moral standards. Moreover, the phrasing of the topic itself suggests a more personal, ethical question is at stake.
- **Examine the Negative case on its own grounds:** Even if this were a debate about our relationship with the United States, Australia is going the wrong way because the closeness of that relationship is starting to damage our relationships with other parts of the world. Following America to war in Iraq has damaged our standing in the world and our own security as a nation, while economic dealings with America seem to be loaded in their favour.
- **Return to the Affirmative case:** Returning to the real debate about morality in Australia, we would say that our harsh and uncaring attitude towards refugees coming to our shores is proof of a moral decline, as is the rise in violent race crimes like the race riots we saw on Sydney’s beaches in 2005.

PROBLEMS WITH DEFINITION – THE INVALID CASE

As we have seen, defining should be about ensuring that a proper and fair debate occurs, not about outsmarting the opposition in order to secure an unfair advantage and restrict the debate. When a team defines a topic so unfairly that it denies the other side any room in which to argue, they have set up what is called an Invalid Case.

The basic feature of an Invalid Case is that it begins by assuming that one side of the argument (their opponent's) is wrong because **it cannot be right**. As such it assumes that the argument could only ever be won by their own side because the other side of the topic cannot exist. This means that teams end up arguing what is called a **Truism**, that is, arguing a case that is unavoidably true under the Definition they have chosen, while asking the other side to argue something absolutely impossible to prove.

Invalid Cases and Truisms occur most often where teams have chosen an unfair Issue.

Example: 'That we should break the rules'

Obviously this is a very broad topic that needs to be pinned down to a concrete Issue. If the Negative chooses as its Issue whether or not violent crimes are socially acceptable, and then argues that of course they are not, all the while expecting the Affirmative to mount a defence of rape and murder, they have set up an Invalid Case and are arguing a Truism. Likewise an Affirmative which chooses to argue about whether or not we should break entirely unjust laws, like those still in existence in some countries that are openly racist or sexist, is tipping the scales too far in the opposite direction. The Issue needs to be set so that both sides have a fair chance. Perhaps an Issue about the efficacy of civil disobedience in promoting change would be best for this topic.

Invalid Cases commonly occur when a team takes a metaphorical topic literally. This almost always leads to an unfair Issue and a truistic case.

Example: 'That the fish are eating the sharks'

If the Negative tries to define 'fish' and 'shark' literally, then the fish cannot by Definition be eating the sharks. The topic is literally untrue, and so should be defined metaphorically instead. Perhaps a debate about the competition that small local businesses present to multinational corporations would be better, or an Issue that dealt with whether or not the economies of the developing world were overtaking the developed world.

It should be noted that teams do not lose automatically for setting up an Invalid Case. **The other side still needs to identify the Truism for the audience, explain why the Definition is so unfair, develop their own fairer Definition, and finally pursue their own case and Arguments.** Oppositions also need to be certain that they are dealing with an Invalid Case before making the accusation. It is not acceptable to simply brand a team's case as Truistic or Invalid because it seems at first glance to be unassailable. They might just have excellent, well-supported Arguments.

Realistically, teams who present Invalid Cases may still present some more appropriate matter along with their Truism. In this case, the opposition should point out the Truism, explain which parts of the case it affects, and then rebut the more credible Arguments that have been presented. For instance, a Negative in the topic 'That we should break the rules' might run an Invalid Argument about preventing murder as well as a perfectly debatable Argument on the foolishness of civil disobedience. The opposition should respond separately to each Argument.

Finally, it must be remembered that debates with an Invalid Case are not Definition Debates, and the 'Even If' Technique must not be employed. The 'Even If' is only for use where teams disagree with a fairly reasonable Definition. Where a team disagrees with a Definition because it is truistic and impossible to argue, it would be foolhardy to then try to momentarily accept the Definition and rebut any case the opposition has presented.

MATTER – TEAMLINE

The Teamline or Caseline is simply a sentence which sums up the team's Arguments. Teamlines are an important tool for organising the team's case and linking the various Arguments therein to a single over-arching argument. Properly used, a teamline will ensure that all the team's speakers and Arguments are heading in the same direction, and clarify for the audience and adjudicator the exact position the team is taking in the debate.

Once a team has decided how to interpret the topic, it needs to then ask why the topic is true (Affirmative) or false (Negative). The answer to this question will be the Teamline. The Teamline should then take the form of a simple, straightforward sentence. Most Teamlines will be in the form of the words of the topic followed by the word 'because' followed by a short, overall reason why.

Topics and some possible Teamlines:

That school should be longer

- Affirmative: School should be longer because it would make students smarter and happier.
- Negative: School should not be longer because students' lives are already busy enough.

That we should ban religious clothing in government schools

- Affirmative: We should ban religious clothing in public schools because it disrupts education.
- Negative: We should not ban religious clothing because it would further victimise the victims of bullying.

Special care should be taken to ensure that the team line is not a simple restatement of the Definition. It must always offer a reason explaining why the topic is true or false.

All members of the team must support the Teamline, and as such it will be the keystone of each speech. This will give a sense of focus and uniformity to the three speeches as well as warning teams when they have wandered off track and are no longer arguing the right thing—Arguments which aren't fitting in with the Teamline probably need to be altered or dropped from the case altogether. While settling upon a Teamline early on in preparation can help to focus the team's efforts, less experienced teams would be well advised to develop their Arguments and Examples first, and only then write a Teamline that sums up all those Arguments.

After the First Speaker has introduced the Teamline, all the speakers should use it from time to time to emphasise the team's unity and remind the audience and the adjudicator where the case is heading. While there are no precise rules about when the Teamline should be repeated, a good Teamline works well as a way of ending a specific Argument and linking it back to the overall case. Teamlines are also a strong way of ending a speech. However, speakers should be warned against using the Teamline too often—it should not end *every* Argument and *every* speech.

Since the Teamline is the basic Argument of a team affirming or negating a topic, it follows that it should be rigidly followed throughout the debate to maintain consistency and logic. Any **shift in the Teamline** illustrates a loss of unity within the team. The other side can take advantage of this shift to point out the inconsistencies in their opponent's case. To do so, they must not only state that a change in the Teamline has occurred, but must explain where and how this change has occurred and show how this has led to inconsistency between speakers.

However, teams need to be careful to distinguish between a **change** in the case and a **development** in the case. If the Arguments of different speakers within a team are different but logically consistent, there has been no shift in the Teamline. Only where speakers are in fact pursuing fundamentally different Arguments has there been a case shift. At times, the distinction may be uncertain and must therefore be viewed in terms of the debate as a whole. Teams should also be aware that the words in their opponent's Teamline may change occasionally. This is of no consequence if the team's basic overall direction remains, and should not be attacked.

MATTER – ALLOCATION

The team's case in its entirety will consist of around six Arguments which will be divided between the First and Second Speakers. Rather than split up the case randomly, it should be divided into two logical subsets, with similar Arguments grouped together. This process is known as Allocation.

The Allocation is an important structural device, providing a framework for the team's matter. It should function much as the chapters in a book do, grouping together similar material and Arguments under a heading. This grouping ensures that the case is well organised and allows the similar Arguments to work together and strengthen each other. Speakers will therefore be able to concentrate on one clear group of Arguments and will also be able to save time explaining the backgrounds and necessary premises of those Arguments. Furthermore, by outlining the structure of the matter at First Speaker, its relevance is clear even before it is introduced and its place in the overarching development of the case is identified.

The Allocation must come in the First Speaker's speech so as to explain what is to follow. It should occur after the Teamline has been explained and before the matter is developed. First Speakers should simply and briefly state which subject areas have been assigned to themselves and to the Second Speaker. Most will allocate by saying "I, the First Speaker, will be talking about...., while our Second Speaker will be covering...."

Allocation is a general classification of matter, **not a list of the Arguments and Examples** to be discussed by each speaker. It is also inappropriate to allocate to Third Speakers and to state that they will "sum up our case and rebut the Arguments presented by our opponents". This is a description of the Third Speaker's role in the debate, not the matter to be presented in their speech.

Where possible, it is often a good idea for teams to allocate the more concrete or smaller scale grouping to the First Speaker and the larger, broader grouping to the Second Speaker. This ensures that the matter involved grows throughout the case.

Some common Allocations:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • First Speaker: Australia | Second Speaker: The World |
| • First Speaker: Economic Factors | Second Speaker: Social Factors |
| • First Speaker: Physical Health | Second Speaker: Mental Health |

It will not be possible to separate all cases with such a neat Allocation. Teams should develop their Allocation based on the various Arguments they are looking to present, and not simply try to jam them into a formulaic, well-worn split. It will often be the case that more than one Allocation is possible, or that an Argument might fit in either the First or Second Speaker's speech equally well. Teams should choose an Allocation which ensures both speakers have their share of strong Arguments and Examples, not leaving one speaker with the majority of the work to do. Finally, teams should keep in mind that some excellent Arguments might not fit particularly well with any Allocation they can devise. In this instance, they should simply do their best to include the Argument at the appropriate point, and not neglect it simply because allocating it is problematic.

Example: 'That the USA is an Evil Empire'

Depending on the case the team settles on, they might group their Arguments as follows (note that these splits would work for both the Affirmative and the Negative):

- | | |
|--|---|
| • First Speaker: Economic Influence | Second Speaker: Military Intervention |
| • First Speaker: Effect on the 1 st World | Second Speaker: Effect on the 3 rd World |
| • First Speaker: The Political Sphere | Second Speaker: The Cultural Sphere |

MATTER – THE HUNG CASE

Successful Allocations separate the team's case into **two logical subsets**. A Hung Case occurs when Allocations instead separate the team's case into **two logical steps**. The First Speaker is assigned the task of taking the first logical step in proving the team's case, merely establishing principles, but the actual proof is not introduced until the Second Speaker builds upon those principles. Hung Cases are problematic, in that they postpone the real conflict of the debate until after the second speech, when the case can be viewed and rebutted as a whole.

Put simply, Hung Cases occur where neither the First nor Second Speaker does enough on their own to prove the team's case.

Example: 'That we should save the Third World'

The Affirmative would need to carefully consider the Issue of the debate and define exactly what they mean by 'save', but essentially they would argue that we have a duty to help people in need.

They might conceivably allocate as follows:

- First Speaker: The Third World is in trouble
- Second Speaker: We have a duty to help those in trouble

This is a Hung Case in that the First Speaker has not proven their side of the argument at all. The Negative can simply agree with everything the First Affirmative speaker says but still disprove the topic by arguing that that assistance should come from within the Third World itself, or that such assistance would amount to interference and inevitably do more harm than good. As a result, real conflict within the debate is postponed until after the Second Affirmative.

Example: 'That a carrot is better than a stick'

However the Affirmative chooses to define, only a comparison of the benefits of 'carrots' and 'sticks' will meet their Burden of Proof. Often teams with such a topic will allocate as follows:

- First Speaker: The benefits/detriments of carrots
- Second Speaker: The benefits/detriments of sticks

Since only an examination of carrots and sticks together can determine which is better, this is a Hung Case. The Negative could conceivably agree with everything the First Affirmative says and then explain that a stick is even better. Again, at the end of the First Speaker's speech, little or nothing has been achieved.

True Hung Cases are in fact quite rare. Often a team will allocate for a Hung Case, but then essentially ignore that Allocation and develop a perfectly acceptable case. In the example above, for instance, the First Speaker might refer consistently to the failings of 'sticks' despite it not really being their job. On such occasions, the debate should continue as usual.

There is a difference between each speaker proving the team's overall case and each speaker proving the Teamline in its entirety. If the Affirmative presents the Teamline: 'School should be longer because it would improve students' education and well-being' and then allocates 'Education' to the First Speaker and 'Social Development' to the Second, **they have not hung their case**. Both speakers are proving an aspect of the case, and their Arguments make sense in isolation.

Teams presenting a Hung Case do not lose automatically. However, if the other side notices the problem and points out that the First Speaker has in fact proven little or nothing, they will have an overwhelming advantage in the debate that follows.

MATTER – ARGUMENTS & EXAMPLES

Arguments are the six or seven basic reasons that a team presents to prove their case. Examples are the real-world case studies which support those Arguments and establish them as credible and practical. The team needs a balance of theoretical Arguments and practical Examples to support them. Relying too heavily upon one or the other leaves the case open to easy attack.

Example: 'That our sports stars make good role models'

The Negative might present a myriad of Examples chronicling the poor behaviour of Australian sporting personalities, but each Example really only does the same work as the Example presented before it. The various transgressions and tantrums of our footballers, tennis players and leg-spinners might make a long, impressive list, all very similar, which can be easily and quickly rebutted as a whole by the Affirmative. Better to present a number of different Arguments, each supported by its own detailed Example.

- Argument: Sports stars model poor social behaviour
- Argument: Sports stars use performance enhancing drugs
- Argument: Sports stars over-emphasise competitiveness
- Argument: Sports stars encourage unattainable goals
- Argument: More specifically, sports stars can encourage an unhealthy body image

Each Argument should be explained, developed, and then supported by a different Example explored in depth.

Just as list of very similar Examples does little to develop the case, a list of Arguments unsupported by Examples is easily refuted as being unrealistic and imaginary. Moreover, Examples need to be carefully chosen and well-developed. It will not be enough to explain the Argument and then briefly mention an Example. All the relevant details of the Example should be explored and explained in full. In some instances, the explanation may take some time, but the audience is more likely to be convinced by a few well explained and developed Examples than by merely mentioning lists of Examples fleetingly.

Arguments need to be carefully chosen and developed to fit the Burden of Proof that the team has established in their Definition. Often teams will need to cull some Arguments in order to give each one the time it deserves. In this situation, the team will need to choose the Arguments which they believe are most relevant to their Burden, and go the furthest to proving their case. It is worth remembering that total and complete proof is not required. Affirmatives are mostly required to show that a topic is generally true, i.e. true in most cases. The Negative is required to show that the topic is generally false, i.e. false in most cases. Teams don't need an Argument to cover every single facet of the topic at hand.

Put simply, the **quality** of the matter presented will always be more important than the **quantity**.

Inexperienced speakers are often best served by adhering to a strict framework in presenting their substantive matter.

- Present and fully explain a theoretical Argument
- Move on to detail an Example or small case study to support the Argument
- Summarise the Argument and Example and tie it back in to the overall case (often just returning to the Teamline will accomplish this).

The same pattern repeated three or four times in a speech should result in well developed Matter.

MATTER – CHOOSING EXAMPLES

Examples need to be generally known, factual and explained in some detail. Examples are probably best thought of as small case studies, chosen from recent events in the news and related to the team's Arguments.

There are a number of things to be avoided in choosing Examples to support the case:

- **Hypothetical Examples** based on fictitious people or situations. Often these take the form of 'Little Johnny' stories, or begin with 'Imagine that...'
- **Personal Examples** that include details from the speaker's own experience. These are easily rebutted as being too specific, irrelevant or simply invented. For instance, teams in education debates are particularly prone to talking solely about their own school and their own clique's experiences there.
- **Historical Examples** largely irrelevant to current Arguments. These should generally be replaced with up to date, relevant Examples. For instance, teams often prefer to use Examples from World War II, which they are studying in their History course, rather than focusing on current international conflicts and relations.
- **Religious/Cultural Examples** that are only meaningful to people of the same beliefs. For instance, speakers will occasionally try to show a moral decline in society by pointing to a decline in people attending religious services. Any Example that is likely to alienate sections of the audience is a poor one.
- **Invented Examples** made up to support an Argument. These are of little value in proving the case, even where a team gets away with it.

The use of statistics as Examples to prove an Argument can also be problematic. It can be impossible to prove that the statistics are real, even where a speaker goes to the trouble of citing their source. The best statistics to use in a debate are the ones that work in broad strokes. 'More than half of people...' tends to be more convincing than a percentage to three decimal points. Average hours spent on particular activities or percentages of budgets also tend to go down well, and are easy to work out roughly. Still, teams should not shy away from using more complex statistics if they happen to know them. Debates are, after all, about various aspects of the real world and statistics are a good way of measuring those aspects. Such statistics should be presented with a careful explanation in the pursuit of a well-developed Argument, and should be strongly defended. Statistics on their own are unlikely to win an Argument, but they are a valuable way of coming to grips with situations in the world and adding weight to an Argument.

MATTER – REBUTTAL

Rebuttal or Refutation is the act of attacking the opposing team's case. It includes addressing factual errors, explaining logical flaws in Arguments, and identifying weaknesses or inconsistencies in the opposition's debate. It can also mean pointing out unsupported assertions and sweeping generalisations in the opposition's case. Teams should bear in mind that **Rebuttal of the opposition's case and the development of one's own case are of equal importance**. As such, all speakers after the First Affirmative should aim to spend roughly half their time on Rebuttal.

Basic Rebuttal includes three simple steps:

- Isolate the Argument or section of the other team's case which you are about to attack, and summarise it briefly.
- Attack that Argument or section, explaining why it is misleading, irrelevant or factually incorrect. Essentially, this means presenting a brief counter-argument.
- Use an Example to support your counter-argument. This might mean referring to an Example you plan to use later in your own case, taking an Example from the opposition's case or introducing a new Example.

Example: 'That TV is good for us'

The Affirmative would more than likely present an Argument extolling TV's power to inform the audience of news and current events. One possible avenue of Rebuttal might be:

- Explain the Affirmative's Argument briefly, including any Example they used to support it.
- Point out that the vast majority of shows on TV are not at all educational or informative, and are in fact relatively mindless and unhelpful. Moreover, those shows that do claim to be informative tend to be presented in a flashy, exaggerated manner designed more to grab the viewer's attention than to inform them.
- Analyse briefly the relative hours TV stations devote to news compared to entertainment, focusing on prime time shows, to support the first part of your Rebuttal. Then briefly look at a case study where TV has exaggerated or sensationalised a news story for the sake of ratings.

Rebuttal should always focus on the opposition's Arguments. Nitpicking Rebuttal that focuses on correcting minor factual errors in the opposition's Examples is unlikely to succeed. Only larger factual mistakes should be addressed. In fact, Rebuttal of isolated Examples is generally not useful, unless that Example is of overwhelming importance to the opposition's case. Speakers likewise need to be wary of wasting their time attacking Arguments that are only marginally relevant to the debate (often called 'red herrings').

Debaters should also remember to aim their Rebuttal only at the opposition's case, **never at the opposition speakers themselves**. With this in mind, Rebuttal should always be addressed to the audience, and never to the opposing team. This means saying "The opposition are incorrect in arguing..." rather than "Opposition, you are incorrect in arguing..."

MATTER – ORGANISING REBUTTAL

The basic aim of Rebuttal is to tear down as much of the opposition's case as possible. It is acceptable to achieve this by simply going through their Arguments one by one and attacking them. However, better speakers will organise their Rebuttal, at the very least attacking the opposition's more important matter first. This means evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their case as you hear it, deciding which Argument (or set of Arguments) is the most important to their debate, and beginning Rebuttal with a strong attack on that Argument. Only after the opposition's most important Arguments have been addressed should the speaker move on to the matter that has been deemed less vital. **Prioritisation of Rebuttal** is the first step to putting together a well-organised attack, and ensures that time is not wasted rebutting frivolous Arguments only to skip over more critical ones if the speaker finds themselves running short of time.

At a higher level still, speakers should practice **Thematic Rebuttal**. This can be as simple as classifying the opposition's Arguments and Examples into a few categories and dealing with each category one by one. For instance, attack everything the opposition has said about the politics of a situation first, then move on to attack any economic Arguments they have presented, and so forth.

Thematic Rebuttal at its best sorts the opposition's Arguments into groups which share a logical flaw, and then explores that logical flaw with reference to all the Arguments in the group at once. Put simply, where the Rebuttal for two or more Arguments is essentially the same, it deals with those Arguments together, rather than repeating the same Rebuttal for each separate Argument.

Example: 'That TV is good for us'

A Negative team might easily present the following list of Arguments to highlight TV's downside:

- TV shows are full of violence that encourages violent behaviour in viewers
- TV shows present substance abuse as attractive and rebellious
- TV shows desensitise children to swearing and sexual situations

Rather than deal with each Argument individually, the opposition could explain how all three Arguments are flawed because they rest upon an unsupported assumption, namely that viewers will mindlessly and uncritically ape the behaviour modelled on television.

In order to achieve this level of structure in their rebuttal, teams need to organise themselves more carefully during the debate itself. An approach which sees each team member scrawling their own thoughts on a palmcard which is then thrown at the next person on their feet very rarely works. At best, it tends to result in the same Argument being rebutted four different times where one good piece of Rebuttal would have been better. Far more commonly it results in speakers standing before the audience and struggling to read exactly what their team mates have written.

Teams should instead try to organise themselves around one single summary of the other team's Arguments and the Examples they have used to support them. The summary would generally be kept by the Fourth Speaker, on a sheet of paper that everyone on the team can refer to and if necessary add comments to. Speakers can then discuss in a whisper what the team's approach should be, sort their Rebuttal so that they deal with the most impressive opposition material first, and even try to draw out flaws shared by some of the Arguments. Most significantly, teams can use such a summary to ensure that no important Argument of the opposition's goes unrebutted.

This approach obviously leaves less time for actually jotting down Rebuttal notes, and requires speakers to think and act a good deal faster, but it is in the end preferable to the more random, palmcard-based approach, and can be mastered if teams are willing to practice it and make the odd stumble along the way.

METHOD – OVERVIEW

Method refers to how matter is organised within an individual speech and throughout the team.

Debaters often find it difficult to think of good matter, and nervousness can detract from manner, but it should always be possible to get the various elements of method correct. There is no excuse for an experienced debater to make basic errors in method. New debaters should learn exactly what is required of them in their role as First, Second or Third Speaker and in their team's approach to debates. Method is something every debater can get right every time.

Internal Method is the organisation of a speech in its own right, including elements like timing and development. **External Method** is the organisation of the team's case as a whole. It includes ensuring the speeches work together, keeping the team's Arguments cohesive from speaker to speaker, and coordinating the team's approach to Rebuttal as outlined above. Most importantly, it involves ensuring that each speaker knows and performs the task assigned to them.

Basically, Method is about following all the rules of debating as closely as possible, and doing everything that needs to be done at the appropriate point in the speech or case. Far from being arbitrary, the rules of debating have evolved over time as the most efficient way of building a case. While debates are generally decided by the quality of the Rebuttal and Arguments presented, correct Method helps to ensure that that Rebuttal and those Arguments are as effective as possible.

More broadly, Method is about team work. A team must be consistent in the presentation of their Definition and Teamline and must adhere to the case division outlined in the First Speaker's Allocation. As the debate progresses, speakers may have to alter the thrust of what the team is saying or extend their Arguments to answer challenges presented by the opposing team, but there should be no shift in Definition or change in the Teamline. Any change in these areas is a definite sign of weakness and should be attacked strongly by the opposing team.

The team's case should be developed in the Second Speaker's speech. A mere recapitulation of the First Speaker's Arguments, using different Examples, will not be enough. A Second Speaker may need to briefly re-establish the team's Definition or major Arguments if they have been questioned by the opposing team but there should be evidence of growth in the team's case in the Second Speaker's speech. The Third Speaker's speech must contain an accurate summary of the Arguments presented in the debate to reinforce and conclude the team's case.

Fourth Speakers should take overall responsibility for the team's organisation, both before and during the debate. This means taking a leading role in the preparation room while keeping an eye on the time. Disputes over the team's direction should be settled by the Fourth Speaker if they threaten to drag on. Fourth Speakers should also take responsibility for the structuring of the team's Rebuttal, ensuring at the very least that every important Argument on the opposing side is addressed, and keeping careful notes on everything that is said for the whole team to refer to.

Clearly then, each speaker in a debate has a specific and different task to perform. The table that follows outlines in order the various jobs that each speaker is expected to perform. As to the relative times speakers should devote to each step, it should be remembered that Rebuttal and **Substantive Matter** (Arguments and Examples) should be roughly balanced in every speech. The First Affirmative (who obviously does not rebut) may spend anything up to half their speech on setting up the case by explaining the Definition, Teamline and Allocation. The First Negative will typically be able to deal with those steps more swiftly, and should be able to devote roughly half of their speech to Rebuttal and half to Substantive Matter, as should both Second Speakers. Third Speakers should aim to spend a little more than half of their speech on Rebuttal, but must be careful not to neglect the summary of their team's case.

METHOD – SPEAKERS’ ROLES

1st Affirmative	1st Negative
<p>1. Contextualisation: Very briefly open the speech by explaining how the topic is relevant to the wider world of the day.</p> <hr/> <p>2. Definition: This may include presenting–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Issue • A Scope • A Model • A Burden of Proof • Justification <hr/> <p>3. Teamline: Introduce the Affirmative Teamline and if necessary expand on it.</p> <hr/> <p>4. Allocation: Allocate the Affirmative’s Arguments to the 1st and 2nd Speakers (never the 3rd).</p> <hr/> <p>5. Substantive Matter: Present the Arguments and Examples allocated to the 1st Speaker.</p> <hr/> <p>6. Summary: Very briefly go over the Affirmative’s position.</p>	<p>1. Definition: Address the Definition presented by the 1st Affirmative. This may include–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting the Definition • Clarifying the Definition • Modifying the Definition • Rejecting the Definition <hr/> <p>2. Rebuttal: Attack the 1st Affirmative’s Arguments as well as the Affirmative’s overall position.</p> <hr/> <p>3. Teamline: Introduce the Negative Teamline and if necessary expand on it.</p> <hr/> <p>4. Allocation: Allocate the Negative’s Arguments to the 1st and 2nd Speakers (never the 3rd).</p> <hr/> <p>5. Substantive Matter: Present the Arguments and Examples allocated to the 1st Speaker.</p> <hr/> <p>6. Summary: Very briefly go over the two sides of the debate to date.</p>
2nd Speakers	3rd Speakers
<p>1. Rebuttal: Attack the opposing team’s case, focusing on the previous speaker.</p> <hr/> <p>2. Substantive Matter: Present the Arguments and Examples allocated to the 2nd Speaker.</p> <hr/> <p>3. Summary: Very briefly go over the two sides of the debate to date.</p>	<p>1. Rebuttal: Attack the opposing team’s case in detail.</p> <hr/> <p>2. Summary: Summarise your own team’s Arguments.</p>

Please note: Where some definitional dispute occurs, all speakers should open by addressing it. In a Definition Debate, all speakers must begin by disputing the other team’s Definition, defending their own, and presenting an ‘Even if’. These steps will take the place of rebuttal.

METHOD – INTERNAL METHOD

One of the most important things speakers can do to improve their Internal Method is to ensure their speech is properly **Signposted**. This means constantly but briefly explaining to the audience which part of the speech they are listening to, and letting them know when the speech is moving into a new section or on to a new Argument. When a First Speaker presents the Definition, for instance, they should use statements like “I’d now like to detail our Model for the debate” or “Today we believe the Scope of the debate should be...” Speakers should also let the audience know when they are moving from Rebuttal into their own material, by simply saying so. Good speakers will be able to separate their Arguments and Examples to help the audience follow the case, using statements like “For my first Argument...” and “In support of this Argument, I’d like to take a look at the Example of...” followed by “Moving on to my second Argument today...” The best speakers will typically introduce all their Arguments immediately before they begin the first one, and number their Arguments to help structure the speech: “Today I have three main Arguments to present—One on...The second on...and a final point about...” It is also a good idea to outline and enumerate the various points of Rebuttal in the same fashion before beginning: “I have three main problems with what the other team has tried to tell us today—The first is...”

Signposting works best where it acts as a simple reminder for the audience as to where the speech is up to and where it is going. However, speakers need to be careful not to become formulaic and clichéd in Signposting their speech. The same sentences shouldn’t be used every time a new Argument or Example is introduced. In the same manner, speakers should avoid signposting their Rebuttal by using hollow pronouncements like “Before I begin, I would like to point out some of the misleading flaws in the other team’s case...” It would be far better to begin the Rebuttal with a simple list of points, or just state that you are starting to rebut.

More Tips for Internal Method:

- Address the Chairperson and audience before the speech begins. “Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen” and “Chairperson, members of the audience” are both acceptable.
- A good **Introduction** should capture the audience’s attention. Most speakers would be best served by leaping straight into their Rebuttal, and so showing how ready they are for a fight.
- Proper **case development** requires that each point follow naturally and purposefully from the one before. No material should be inserted inappropriately, such as fresh material after a final summary.
- The **Conclusion** of the speech should focus the thoughts of the audience on the speaker’s central theme and purpose, leave the audience in agreement with the speaker and convey a sense of finality. Often returning to the Teamline will achieve this for younger speakers.

The use of time is also important. A speech which is seriously over time, (concludes well after the final bell or while the bell is being rung continuously) or under time (before the warning bell has sounded) shows poor Method. Accurate timing comes with practise, but from the outset each speaker should devote a suitable amount of time to each task. For example, a lengthy and detailed Allocation at the expense of actually developing the team’s Arguments will obviously hamper the case. Likewise, overly long and detailed Rebuttal at the expense of furthering the team’s case is a mistake. Basically, speakers need to make sure the most important parts of their speech (typically their Arguments and Rebuttal) receive the most attention possible.

Finally, speakers should be reminded to **always present their Rebuttal at the beginning of their speech** in order to capture the initiative in the debate. This way the Arguments being rebutted will still be fresh in the audience’s mind. The First Affirmative is the only speaker who should begin their speech with their own material.

METHOD – THIRD SPEAKERS

Third Speakers are responsible for pressing home the team's case in summary and presenting the most detailed response to the opposition's Arguments. First and Second Speakers alone are responsible for developing the team's Substantive Matter. This should never be done by the Third Speaker.

Third speakers are active participants within the debate. They should bring to the debate original ideas in Rebuttal. It is, however, the duty of the first two speakers to provide the case development for their side. Further case development by the Third Speaker exposes a failing by the previous two speakers on their side, and is therefore methodologically unsound. However, a previously unmentioned concept or Example raised by a Third Speaker is not considered new material if it goes directly to disproving the opposition's case.

The test for new material will always be one of substance, not form. That is, the fact that a topic area has been previously discussed will not preclude it from being considered new material in a third speech, if raised to prove a different point.

Example:

- Second Affirmative says: "The Korean political system is riddled with corruption..."
- Third Affirmative says: "My Second speaker has mentioned Korea. This is a country with a booming economy..."

Here the topic of both points is Korea, but despite the Third Speaker's attempt to relate the Argument back, the point raised is clearly a different one, and thus new material.

With regard to introducing new Examples Third Speakers should look to the specific purpose of doing so. A Third Speaker may introduce new Examples to directly contradict ideas or Examples of the opposition.

Example:

- Second Negative says: "Overall, military intervention has a beneficial effect – look at the way East Timor has improved."
- Third Affirmative may say: "Look at how destructive military intervention has been in Iraq..."

The Third speaker's new Example is directly responsive and therefore not new material.

Basically, it is bad Method for either Third Speaker to raise new material because, as discussed above, it exposes an earlier failing of their team. On the Negative, the error will be compounded by the fact that the Affirmative will have no chance to respond, which is manifestly unfair.

Material judged to be new will be simply ignored by Adjudicators, who might also begin to wonder why the material was not introduced earlier, and judge more harshly the Matter presented by the first two speakers. If the Third Negative rebuts new material presented by the Third Affirmative, this will be considered to be adding to the weight of the Negative's Rebuttal, even though the Argument itself did not add weight to the Affirmative's case.

PREPARATION – ONE HOUR LIMITED

How a team prepares its case is obviously vital to its chances in the debate. As such, teams need a strategy to use their time effectively in a limited preparation debate. The following is one suggestion for a preparation strategy that teams could use to structure a one hour preparation and ensure that their time is used efficiently. These times can easily be adapted for longer preparations.

Step One: Brainstorm – 5 minutes

Each speaker should analyse the topic privately, making notes on any ideas, Arguments, possible interpretations, important words, Examples, possible problems – **anything** that comes to mind.

Step Two: Case Foundation – 30 minutes (up to 40 minutes for experienced teams)

As a group, pool ideas and analyse the topic in the following steps:

- Decide the Issue of the debate.
- Decide upon all the elements of the Definition as a team (don't simply leave this up to the First Speaker)
- Develop a single list of Arguments and Examples to be used in the debate. This list should usually be kept by the Fourth Speaker.
- Discuss specific Examples and clarify facts.
- Organise the list of Arguments into two logical groups to serve as the Allocation.
- Develop and settle upon the wording of a Teamline that summarises all the Arguments.

Step Three: Case Development – 15 minutes (less time for experienced teams)

Speakers should prepare their own speeches, ensuring that they understand and use effectively their Definition and Teamline. The Third and Fourth Speaker should assist the First and Second Speakers in their preparation, clarifying points where necessary. They might also spend time thinking of possible lines of argument from the opposing team and possible lines of Rebuttal, but should **be very careful to not pre-prepare their Rebuttal**.

Step Four: Case Evaluation – 5 minutes

The team should examine its case with each speaker giving a summary of their speech. The Fourth Speaker should look for weaknesses, points needing clarification and consistency of material with Definition, Teamline and Allocation.

Step Five: Individual Reflection – 5 minutes

Speakers should spend the last few minutes calming themselves, going over their speeches and preparing themselves mentally for the debate.

Remember:

- Speakers should not attempt to write their speeches in full. Points should be noted on palm cards with some important details, facts and words.
- Each speaker should leave the preparation room with the Definition and Teamline written in full and easy to locate when needed.
- The team as a whole is responsible for every element of every speech. Teams should therefore spend as much time as possible working together, and as little time as possible working separately.

PREPARATION – UNLIMITED TIME

Even when no time restriction applies, it is still very important to develop a team strategy for preparing a case. Often the more time a team has to prepare a debate, the more time it wastes searching for the 'perfect' Definition and Teamline, so that the final preparation is rushed. Another common mistake is to spend far too much time researching the topic only to use a fraction of the material gathered. Finally, teams will often spend so much time discussing the topic that they lose sight of the basic elements of meaning and structure.

Step One: Decide what is suggested in the topic as its central issue.

Discuss both sides of the topic during the first meeting before the team is told which side they are on. Look at the possible interpretations of the topic and discuss which are reasonable and correct and which should be rejected and why.

Take notes on all discussions and keep them. It is a good idea to look back over how the case has developed and to make sure that important ideas are not forgotten.

Discuss possible Teamlines and Arguments and Examples most closely related to the topic. Some research will be necessary so that all speakers are familiar with the factual material appropriate to the topic.

Step Two: The team can now begin preparing their own case with a broader understanding of possible approaches to the topic.

The Definition, Teamline and Allocation should be carefully considered and discussed by all speakers. All elements should be settled upon before speakers start preparing their own speeches.

Step Three: The team should meet for each speaker to present the Substantive Matter section of their speech.

This allows for any weaknesses and inconsistencies to be identified and explanations clarified or improved. Particular attention should be given to the organisation of individual speeches and the team case as a whole.

Step Four: Discussion of possible lines and Arguments for the opposing team is important so that strategies for Rebuttal can be devised.

Teams should be wary of over preparing. While it is a good idea to have some concept of what the other side might argue and how you might respond, Rebuttal must be a specific response to the case that is actually presented. Some teams have Rebuttal so well prepared that they present the Rebuttal to what they want their opponents to say and not what is actually said. Such Rebuttal will never be useful in a debate.

Remember:

- If the Teamline and Definition are overcomplicated, then it will be harder to explain and support them during the debate and they will be more easily confused and changed. A simple, straight forward case and Definition may seem easier to refute but it will be much easier for the team to explain, prove and present consistently.
- Do not over prepare the case. As with every debate, the preparation **during** the debate is just as important as the work done **before** it begins. If a team is over prepared, speakers tend to be too concerned with delivering their prepared material and neglect important Rebuttal.

PREPARATION – DURING THE DEBATE

Teamwork and preparation during the debate are just as important as what is done before the debate. It depends on a team's ability to listen carefully, isolate key issues, organise incisive rebuttal, analyse the opposing team's case and cooperate.

No speaker should relax after they have delivered their speech. The entire team must play an active part in listening to the opposing case, analysing it and developing Rebuttal for other members of their team.

Some tips:

- **Concentrate** on what is said and divorce yourself from the manner in which it is being delivered.
- **Make notes.** This is a valuable aid to comprehending and recording the ideas in a debate. It helps to ensure that an accurate record of what is being said is taken so that the misquoting and misinterpretation of the opposing team's Arguments is kept to a minimum. While all speakers should keep their own notes, the team should have a central list of the opposition's Arguments and Examples to which they all refer. This list should be kept by the Fourth Speaker.

It is very important for a team to have a 'word perfect' record of the opposing team's Definition and team line so that any shift or change in these can be identified quickly and attacked strongly.

- **Analyse** the opposing team's Matter. Look for the way the ideas are structured, not merely what facts are used. Concentrate on the main ideas and the logic of their development. Evaluate the evidence on which the case is built.
- **Share ideas.** Pass ideas to other speakers on paper and through quiet discussion and explain your point carefully. Just flinging scribbled palmcards at each other will not help.
- **Isolate key issues.** A debater must not only listen and perceive the errors made by the opposing team but must take the next step to **separate the important issues** from all that is being presented. When this isn't done, debaters spend time on minor points and issues, confusing themselves and losing the direction of the debate as a whole. The team should ask itself "What has the other side emphasised most?" and "How important are these Arguments to their case as a whole?" The more important the issue, the more attention it should receive.
- **Organise Rebuttal.** Teams should use the structures outlined in the section on Rebuttal above to ensure that they do not needlessly repeat themselves or concentrate on the wrong areas of the opposition's case.
- **Be flexible.** The amount of time spent on Rebuttal is determined according to the needs of the moment and will vary. It is very important for debaters to answer the challenges presented by the opposing team when they occur, to determine where the attack is needed and to regain the initiative at the beginning of their speech.

MANNER – OVERVIEW

Manner relates to the way in which speakers deliver their speeches and use their personality to communicate their ideas to the audience.

Speakers should present their speeches in a way which is convincing and sincere. It is the overall impact of the speaker's presentation on the audience which is important. Speakers are expected to **be natural and to deliver their speeches in a conversational manner** avoiding slang and colloquialisms. The level of language should be appropriate to the audience and to the topic of the debate.

The outcome of the debate will not be decided by the Manner with which it is presented, but Manner is still an important part of ensuring the team's message is delivered as effectively as possible. Poor Manner can undermine a team's case to the point where it is difficult to understand, making it unlikely the team will succeed in the debate. Put simply, poor Manner will adversely affect the team's Matter, while good Manner can improve the case.

More broadly, developing good Manner helps speakers feel more confident, which will allow them to concentrate upon the other more important aspects of the debate.

The fundamental rule of Manner is to not do anything which distracts from the speech. It should be noted that an overly polished and stuffy Manner is just as likely to distract the audience from the material being developed as a stumbling, uncertain style. Again, a down-to-earth, matter-of-fact Manner will always be preferable. Speakers should also be wary of repetitious Manner. **Variety in all aspects of Manner is preferable.**

Finally, speakers and audiences should be aware that developing good Manner takes time, and that smaller mistakes and stumbles in a speech should be forgiven as part of the learning experience. There are some strategies that can be used to improve Manner, but in the end, practice in front of a live audience is the most effective way to develop good Manner. All speakers will make fools of themselves in front of the audience one day. As long as the speech gets finished and the basic Arguments get presented, the speaker should be considered to have done their job well.

The basic elements of Manner are:

- **Visual presentation:** This includes things like gestures, stance, eye contact, facial expressions and good use of palmcards.
- **Vocal qualities:** This includes elements like speed, clarity, volume and expression.
- **Verbal skills:** This involves using effective grammar and an appropriate level of discourse.

MANNER – VISUAL PRESENTATION

There are a number of facets to putting together an effective and unobtrusive visual presentation. The most important things for speakers to remember are that they should be natural, conversational, use variety, and do nothing that distracts the audience.

- **Facial Expression:** The face is an extremely valuable asset because it can be used to express so many emotions without speaking a word. Speakers should show the emotions (anger, joy, sincerity, humour etc.) associated with the Matter and the situation in the debate. This will hold the interest of the audience, make the speaker more convincing and entertaining and above all impress the audience with the speaker's own personality.
- **Eye contact:** Speakers need to look at their audience as often as possible, glancing only occasionally at their notes, and never gazing about the room or at their own shoes. Speakers should cast their eyes around the entire audience, ensuring they do not stare at one section while neglecting another. When speakers look at the audience, they communicate confidence and almost compel the audience to listen.
- **Palmcards:** Notes should be kept to a minimum, remain unobtrusive and be well organised. **Speakers must avoid reading at all costs.** A speaker who has the entire speech written on cards will be tempted to read it. This will be avoided if only the important headings, words, phrases and ideas are written on cards. Reading an entire speech will be penalised by an adjudicator, and is in many ways worse than delivering a speech with the odd stumble and hesitation. Palmcards should fit easily in one hand. They should have writing on only one side, and must not be fiddled with. Speakers should limit the number of cards they use. Most importantly, they should not attract attention from the overall presentation.
- **Gesture:** With their Palmcards held in only one hand, Speakers will be able to use gestures and 'body language' throughout the speech. Remember that an audience may well be distracted by unusual, repetitious or inappropriate gestures. If a speaker is forever flicking back their hair or shuffling their feet, the audience becomes more interested in their movements than the Arguments being presented. Speakers should be made aware of any distracting mannerisms and encouraged to use gesture to add life to their presentation. It is often very compelling to use hands and even arms to emphasise certain points – hands may be clenched for aggression or upturned in a questioning manner. Basically, speakers should be encouraged to use gesture to whatever degree is appropriate to their Matter and their own personality.
- **Stance:** Speakers should stand comfortably, occasionally taking a step or two in any direction without overdoing it. Stepping forward can be an effective way of emphasising a point, but pacing about the stage is more likely to distract the audience. Speakers should also be wary of swaying when they are on their feet. This can be extremely distracting. Standing with one foot a little in front of the other will often fix this problem. Finally, speakers should be sure to wait until they are standing ready out the front before beginning their speech, and equally should finish their speech while standing out the front and only then return to their chair.

MANNER – VOICE

When used effectively, the voice can be a powerful tool for any debater or public speaker. Speakers should be encouraged to develop tonal variety and to improve their clarity of expression and the liveliness of their speaking style. To achieve this, it will be useful to look at a number of things that may accentuate the speaker's personality and communication.

- **Speed of delivery:** Speed variation can be used to emphasise certain points, for example, by slowing down; or even to dismiss points by speaking faster.
- **Volume:** This should always be appropriate to the size of the audience and the venue, but should be varied to create impact. Emphasis can be gained by speaking forcefully or by speaking softly. Delicate points may require a soft voice, while aggressive statements may sound more effective delivered in a louder voice. It is something that depends on each speaker because the variety used should always sound natural. The most important thing to remember is that you need to be easily heard by the most distant person in the room, so while some variety in volume is to be encouraged, it must stay above a minimum level.
- **Pause:** A small pause used after an important point, allowing it to sink in, can be effective. It can also allow relief after a strong statement has been made or allow the audience time to consider an important proposition.
- **Variety of Tone:** Tones which are aggressive, calm, unassuming, or confident can be used to convince an audience and make an impact.
- **Clarity:** Clear presentation is very important. Words should be pronounced clearly and correctly and should not be repetitious. The language used should be appropriate to the Matter and to the audience and speakers should appear to be comfortable with the words and phrases they use.

As to the speaker's **verbal presentation**, correct grammar and accurate pronunciation are essential. These should be combined with a natural, conversational tone and language appropriate to the topic. Wide and original use of vocabulary and the use of humour can also contribute to making a speech interesting and effective. It should be noted that the use of humour is only valid where it is directly related to the debate. Personal invective and overly harsh sarcasm must be avoided at all times. In summary, a good speaker will present a sound Argument enhanced by the quality of their presentation.

MANNER – DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE MANNER

Encouraging Fluency

The first aim should be to foster fluency and eliminate the over-reliance on notes. This can be achieved by asking the speakers to speak for short periods, beginning with a minute and gradually building up the time allowed. Beginning debaters should be given a formal though simple topic with a little time to prepare. As students become more confident, a debater from the audience could be nominated after the speech to give a reply without formal preparation time.

Ideally, for speeches of less than 3 minutes, no notes should be needed. The same does not apply for speeches of longer duration. When debaters are learning the basic skills, they should be taught the correct way of making notes. A small number of cards with one or two headings on each should be sufficient. A coach who allows a beginning debater to become too dependent on notes is doing that speaker a disservice.

The most important factor involved in these techniques is their frequency. Each speaker should be given the opportunity to practise one minute speeches many times before they move onto longer speeches, while the preparation time should be reduced as they become more confident.

Once speakers become comfortable with one or two minute speeches, then the coach can begin to talk about eye contact and variety in style. This should be within a month or so of beginning – long before bad speaking habits have had time to form.

Using Role Play

To show young speakers the different ways they can use their voice, a selection of written passages can be read aloud using different and appropriate tones. The same person can read a passage in an angry tone, persuasive tone etc. Ensure that the passages selected are easily understood and conversational. Analysis can then follow as other students note what the speaker did to vary the tone of delivery.

Creating different situations in which students play out different roles enables them to practise taking different sides of arguments and using voice and gesture to be convincing. Afterwards those in the audience can analyse what was effective and why, and the participants can explain why they used certain skills. This could then be applied to more formal situations.

Both methods can be used to practise a variety of tone, facial expression and body language. Students will gradually gain confidence and become aware of the different skills used in effective speaking. When they have gained enough confidence through these methods, they will be able to apply the skills to formal speaking situations.

Analysing Role Models

Watching and analysing media personalities during interviews can be a good lesson. Students can concentrate on certain personalities, note their styles and compare their effectiveness. Their techniques can be discussed in terms of how they suit the personality and the situation. Students must be reminded that they are not meant to copy these role models, but develop their own style of effective communication.

MANNER – DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE MANNER (cont.)

Watching Debates

The best way to teach speakers how to be effective is to expose them to as much debating as possible. Teams should watch debates held at their school, regional finals and especially state finals (live or on video). Encourage debaters to make notes during the debate, not just on the Arguments, but on the Manner of the individual speakers. How impressive were they and why? What was impressive about each speaker? What were the strengths and weaknesses of each speaker? Discussion afterwards is vital and they can discuss their own reactions as part of an audience. The different styles of the speakers should be highlighted and attention given to how the speakers used their personality to make contact with the audience.

Helping Individual Speakers

To overcome particular problems in Manner, a speaker must firstly be made aware of the aspects which are inhibiting their effective communication. One way to achieve this awareness is for the coach to make a note of any obvious problems in Manner during a debate and discuss them with individual speakers after the debate. Limit the list to one or two per debate, so that the student can concentrate on eliminating the problems gradually. When one problem has been overcome, the student can move to another area which needs attention, so that their overall Manner improves as specific problems are overcome.

Another way of identifying specific problems is for each speaker to sit down with their coach and make a list of the effective and ineffective aspects of their Manner and discuss how they can capitalise on the positives and gradually eliminate the negatives.

Speakers should be encouraged to practise making speeches generally. To overcome specific problems, speeches can be delivered on a one-to-one basis. Advice should be given before the speech starts and then, during the speech, it is useful to interrupt to make the speaker aware that the error is being made. This type of practise and analysis takes time and effort on behalf of both speaker and coach, but it can be very effective.

Using Recorded Debates

Video recording of debates is another method whereby experienced speakers can fine tune their Manner.

Listening to a recording of a debate allows a speaker to experience, from the audience's point of view, the quality of their own voice and gives them the opportunity to be objectively critical.

Watching themselves on film allows speakers to improve their Manner by seeing the whole impact of their presentation: voice, gesture, facial expression, stance and eye contact. Pin-pointing problems allows for changes and development to occur with a clear understanding by the students of the impact of their Manner and its importance.

As debaters gain experience, their skills of communication will improve, so it is important to give speakers plenty of practice. They should be encouraged to participate in local competitions for debating and public speaking. A school debating club, inter-class competitions and class debates all provide valuable avenues for speakers to gain the experience which will help them become effective communicators.

GENERAL DEBATING ADVICE

- Try to be relaxed. The more nervous you are, the less clearly your speech comes across and the less impact you have.
- If you can, bring a little humour to the debate. Not only does it play a useful role in relaxing the audience, but it makes the debate more enjoyable. Remember that it must be appropriate and relevant to the matter of the debate.
- Rebuttal for First Negative and Second Speakers should not be too long since their role is also to support and develop the team's argument. Rebuttal may be roughly three or four minutes in an eight minute speech, or four or five minutes in a ten minute speech, although it can vary widely depending on the nature of the debate.
- Rebuttal for Third Speakers is effective if it comes in a compare/contrast format. The final summary should be commenced roughly just before the first bell, but this too may vary.
- The best Manner is that which is not too dramatic but lets the personality of the speaker shine.
- The best way to prove a topic and win the debate is to take a simple line and defend it rigorously. Do not try and win the debate in Definition. Choose a Definition which is reasonable and balanced.
- Always try to write down the opposition's Definition and Teamline word for word, so that you can use it faithfully in refutation.
- If you believe the opposition have shifted their case or introduced inconsistent Arguments, speak up.
- As a team, try to ensure at least one person is always listening to the person speaking while the others are involved in discussion.
- Try not to misquote or exaggerate the Examples of your opposition.
- Do not change your Teamline between speakers.
- When using Examples, try not to bombard the audience with a vast number. Select the more forceful ones and use one or two to support the points that make up your Matter. Do not forget to tie each Example back to the Teamline and show how it is relevant to your case.
- As you become more experienced, aim to show a little more flair in your speech. Particularly in the first speeches, use the standard methodology of Definition, Teamline, Allocation and Substantive Matter, but try to present it in an interesting way to capture the attention of the audience.
- When commencing a speech, try not to begin with "The topic of today's debate is..." or "I shall now rebut the Negative..." or "The First Speaker got up and said...". If possible, vary your opening remark. Some say that the time when the audience is listening most intensely is at the beginning and at the end (when they know you are about to finish) so use this time effectively. Plan your Introduction and Conclusion.
- Always be ready to accept constructive criticism from your coach and the adjudicator as well as from the other members of your team. Always be ready to learn and always talk to the adjudicator after the debate and seek advice about how you can improve.
- Finally, **try to enjoy yourself**. Don't stress too much over small mistakes and stumbles. The more relaxed you are, the better the debate will go.

COACHING A TEAM – GETTING STARTED

Coaches should advertise widely at the school for speakers. Debating is an enjoyable social activity as well as a competitive intellectual pursuit. You might try:

- Issue personal invitations to students based on staff recommendations.
- Visit all classes, as the best debaters may not always be in the top class.
- Organise inter-class competitions, lunch time debating clubs and competitions.
- Speak at school assemblies to publicise debating.
- Mention the ‘fringe benefits’ of debating; educational, social and the food.

At the initial meeting of interested students, you should explain the nature of the debating competitions and the commitment expected from team members. You will need more than one meeting to finalise the team selection. Remember that at this stage you are looking for four speakers, not necessarily four speakers locked into various positions.

Here are some of the qualities to look for in potential debaters:

- Good listening and speaking skills.
- Confidence and a willingness to speak before an audience.
- Enthusiasm and reliability.
- Willingness to accept criticism and advice.
- Willingness to cooperate with others.
- Wide general knowledge and awareness of current affairs.

Spend time explaining the basic aspects of debating to the team. Debating is a listening as well as a speaking activity. It involves communicating ideas clearly, planning what to say and the most effective way to present Arguments, challenging the opposing team’s Arguments, co-operation, discipline and teamwork. Outline the basics of Matter, Manner and Method and the importance of winning the initiative through conflict in the debate.

Detail carefully the role of each speaker, including the duties of the Fourth Speaker. Explain how to perform these duties and give the speakers practice in these areas.

Provide opportunities for students to develop confidence in speaking situations e.g. prepared and impromptu speeches. Try to also provide opportunities for students to develop debating skills. Organise singles and pairs debates, team debates against teams from other years or schools.

Provide constructive criticism through adjudications delivered by yourself or by experienced debaters from the school. Record speakers on video so that they can assess their performance.

Give speakers instruction on how to develop a case. Work through several topics with the students developing both Affirmative and Negative cases, then allow the team to work independently and offer advice and constructive criticism. It is also important to help the team to develop its strategy and time allocation for preparing a case in one hour.

Explain the procedure for the selection of the topic and the allocation of sides, and the positions and roles of everyone involved. Emphasise the importance of good manners and debating etiquette; to attack the Argument not the speaker, that team discussion during the debate is permitted but should not disturb other speakers and to thank the other participants in the debate after the adjudication. Encourage the team to discuss the debate with the adjudicator and ask for advice.

Make notes during the team’s debates, and use them to advise the team on how to improve.

COACHING A TEAM – EXPERIENCED TEAMS

No matter how experienced a team may be, they still need coaching. Unless you continue to develop the skills of your debaters, they may fail to reach their full potential. Concentrate on improving the more advanced aspects of Matter and Method.

Spend time with the team discussing current issues and events that could be used in debates. Speakers should be encouraged to listen to and watch news broadcasts, current affairs programs and documentaries, to read newspapers and current affairs magazines and collect articles from these to be discussed at coaching sessions. The team could collect these together in a reference folder.

Concentrate on topics that use metaphors or common sayings. Explain how to define these types of topics and how to justify a Definition.

Examine as many different types of topics as possible and concentrate on developing the skills involved in being able to identify the Issue suggested in the topic. Develop the team's understanding of Reasonableness in Definition and how to explain and justify it.

Develop the skills of flexibility and quick thinking so that when debating on the Negative, teams have the ability to change or alter cases and Definition if the circumstances demand and assess situations in terms of debating strategy. Explain the variety of possible Negative strategies and give the team practise in using all of them.

Work on the methods used to outline the Teamline and look at a variety of ways to allocate Matter and how to ensure that the allocation develops naturally and logically from the Teamline.

Ensure that all speakers understand the 'Even If' Technique and can use it effectively. Give them practice by setting up different Definitions in singles and pairs debates. They should understand when to use the technique and be able to identify whether or not there is a real conflict between two Definitions. Teams should be made aware of all possible strategies that can be used in debates where definitional disputes arise.

Give speakers practice in impromptu singles and pairs debates.

Give speakers opportunities to adjudicate in team coaching sessions and in junior inter-class debates. This will improve their listening and analytical skills as well as their understanding of initiative and debating dynamics. It's often easier to analyse the problems in a debate if you're not one of the speakers.

Encourage speakers to use Signposting in their speeches. Help practise the various ways of Signposting, and the various kinds of sentences that can be used.

Speakers should be able to plan their speech to use their allocated time effectively. They should develop an understanding of how to isolate the most important issues in a debate and to allocate an appropriate amount of time to deal with these issues in rebuttal.

The organisation of Rebuttal and case development should be practised as well as the ability to analyse the opposition's case construction and development.

Coaches should make detailed notes during a debate so that they can discuss the debate in detail with the team, highlighting any errors made, giving constructive criticism and suggesting better approaches that could have been used in Rebuttal.

Experienced debaters should always discuss the debate with the Adjudicator and be willing to seek and accept advice.

Debaters learn from watching good debates, so they should be encouraged to attend and take notes at as many debates as possible. They should also be encouraged to watch videos of themselves debating and analyse their strengths and weaknesses.

COACHING A TEAM – SINGLES & PAIRS DEBATING

Singles debating is a practical way of introducing inexperienced debaters to the skill of debating and is also a very useful way of developing debating skills in more experienced debaters. In a singles each student speaks twice. The singles debate fits easily into a classroom period or lunchtime, allowing time for adjudication by the teacher, coach or class members. The Speakers' Roles are:

- **First Affirmative Speech:** Provide the Definition and case outline giving the direction to be taken in both speeches. Allocate the areas to be covered in each speech. Present the Arguments and Examples allocated to the first speech.
- **First Negative Speech:** Respond to the Affirmative Definition and re-define if necessary. Rebut the Affirmative line and Arguments. Outline the Negative position and present all of the Negative's Substantive Matter
- **Second Affirmative Speech:** Rebut the Negative's Arguments. Develop the Arguments and Examples allocated to the second speech. Briefly compare the cases and summarise.
- **Second Negative Speech:** Rebut the entire Affirmative case. Briefly compare the cases and summarise the Negative case (no new material may be introduced).

Essentially, the First Affirmative Speech has the same role as the First Affirmative Speaker in a normal debate, while the Second Affirmative Speech combines the roles of the Second and Third Affirmative Speaker in a normal debate. The First Negative Speech combines the roles of the First and Second Negative in a normal debate, and the Second Negative Speech fills the same role as the Third Negative Speaker in a normal debate.

Both sides will present a longer and a shorter speech, though in opposite positions. Speaking times can be varied to meet the particular needs of any situation. Remember that both short speeches should be of equal length (First Affirmative and Second Negative Speeches) and both long speeches are of equal length (Second Affirmative and First Negative Speeches).

Position	Inexperienced	Intermediate	Experienced
First Affirmative Speech	2 minutes	4 minutes	5 minutes
First Negative Speech	4 minutes	6 minutes	7 minutes
Second Affirmative Speech	4 minutes	6 minutes	7 minutes
Second Negative Speech	2 minutes	4 minutes	5 minutes

Affirmative speakers have an opportunity to gain the initiative in the debate by carefully planning the first, shorter speech. They should concentrate on the detail of setting up the case and limit the development of their Substantive Matter. The second, longer speech should then develop the majority of the Matter after delivering the entirety of the Rebuttal.

Negative speakers must attack the Affirmative Arguments strongly as well as developing their own case in the first, longer speech. No new material is allowed in the second, shorter speech. Still, the second speech needs to develop the side's case through strong Rebuttal and a careful summary of the side's case. They should also try to compare the two cases in this second speech.

Pairs debates can be organised to increase the number of students participating. The above format can easily be modified to accommodate four different speakers, each delivering a single speech.

ORGANISATION – GETTING STARTED

When you receive the draw for your team's part in the competition, there are a number of steps involved in actually organising to meet the other teams and debate. This section explains what is required from both the host school and the visiting school in arranging a debate.

Schools are, of course, extremely busy places, and it can be difficult to get hold of the opposing coach at times. A great many of the adjudicators in NSW are busy university students, and they can also be difficult to contact. Where mobile phone numbers or email addresses are provided, these are probably the best ways to track down debaters. If you do experience any problems in this organisation, you should feel free to contact your Regional Coordinator or the State Coordinator. They can help advise you on the situation, track down coaches for you, or appoint a different adjudicator where one is unable to attend. You should also refer to the NSW Schools Debating Policy at the front of this book for the rules of organising debates.

Upon receiving your draw, the school nominated as host for the first round should begin preparations for the debate. There are a number of steps to this process:

- **Decide on the days** which are most convenient on the timetable to hold inter-school debates. (Remember to think about what will happen to your classes)
- **Phone the adjudicator** to find out when they are available to adjudicate. No answer? Keep trying – after school hours. Leave a message giving an after hours contact number and the reason for your call.
- **Phone the visiting school.** Again, keep trying. Schools are often difficult to contact and it can be hard to locate teachers during class times. Try leaving messages with the office staff, or faxing the school with a list of possible dates. Phone the teachers on their after hours numbers, or email them if you have the address.
- **Arrange possible dates and times** convenient to both teams, keeping in mind the adjudicator's availability.
- **Confirm the date with the adjudicator personally.** You should try to avoid simply leaving them a message, so as to be certain that they have all the details.
- **Confirm this date again with the visiting school.** Again, confirm the arrangements personally. Messages are often lost in schools.
- **Inform your Head Teacher** and/or Deputy of the details of the planned debate.

Once the date is set, there are a number of things you will need to organise at your school to host a successful debate:

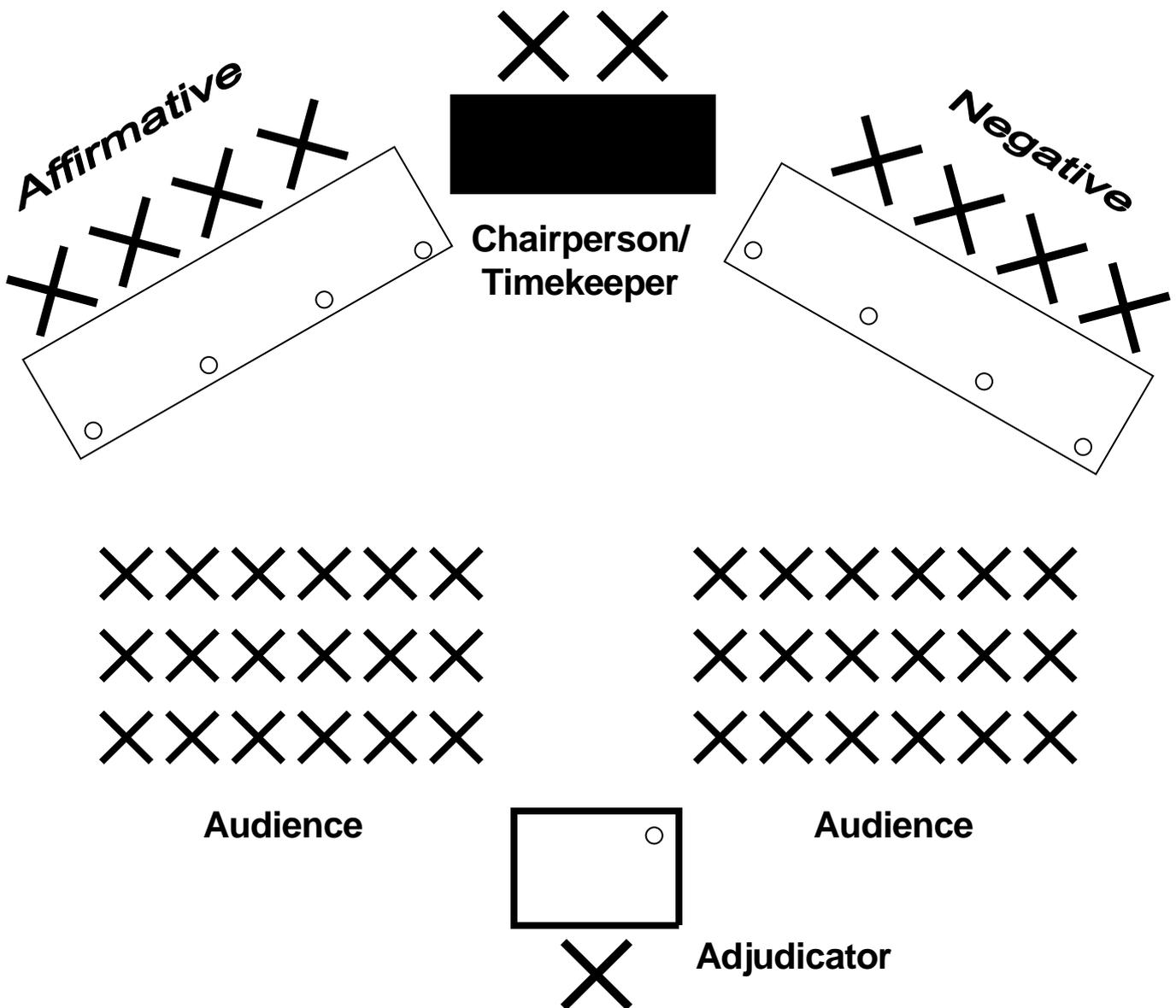
- Preparation rooms for both teams (avoid photocopying rooms and transit areas)
- A room to hold the debate in (libraries are often best spaces for this)
- Crockery for morning or afternoon tea, along with water jugs and glasses
- Tea, coffee, milk, biscuits and cakes for morning or afternoon tea
- A competent Chairperson and Timekeeper (they may need some instruction)
- A stopwatch and bell for the Timekeeper, and a Chairperson's form.
- An audience for the debate

ORGANISATION – ROOM ARRANGEMENT

Remember, you need everything on this list for the room:

- A Chairperson
- A Bell
- A Timekeeper
- A Chairperson's Form
- An Audience
- Glasses and Water Jugs
- An Adjudicator
- A Stopwatch

Now arrange the room for the debate roughly as follows:



ORGANISATION – CHAIRPERSON, TIMEKEEPER, & AUDIENCE

The Chairperson

- The Chairperson should help ensure that the room is correctly arranged for the debate and that the stopwatch, bell, glasses and water jugs are provided.
- The Chairperson should bring the teams and the Adjudicator to the room, record their names and other details on the Chairperson's Form, and show them to their seats.
- Before the debate begins, the Chairperson should introduce the teams to the audience and explain the format of the debate following the Chairperson's Form.
- After each speech, the Chairperson should wait for a signal from the Adjudicator indicating that he or she is ready to continue before introducing the next speaker.
- At the conclusion of the debate, the Chairperson should wait until the Adjudicator is ready, then invite the Adjudicator to deliver the adjudication. After the adjudication the Chairperson should close the debate and invite both teams, their coaches and the Adjudicator to morning or afternoon tea.
- The Chairperson must ensure that there is silence before each speaker is introduced and that noise is kept to a minimum for the duration of the debate.
- Since the Chairperson is responsible for keeping order during the debate, a confident, reliable student should be selected.

The Timekeeper

- The Timekeeper should time each speaker accurately.
- The Timekeeper should ring the bell clearly at the correct time.
- The Timekeeper should record the total time taken by each speaker and give this record to the Adjudicator at the conclusion of the last speaker's speech. **The times should not be announced after each speaker.**

The Audience

- If at all possible, the audience must remain for the duration of the debate, so make sure that this is one of your prime considerations when selecting one. It can be disruptive for all concerned to change the audience in the middle of the debate. Arrange the debate in conjunction with the school timetable so that the audience is able to watch the whole debate.
- Try to select students who are interested in debating so that they will benefit from the experience of watching the debate. Explain to the audience what is expected in a debate so that the students are aware of the basics. They will learn from the experience and may provide the school's future debaters.
- Try to select an audience capable of understanding the level of debating. Year 7 students often have difficulty understanding Year 12 debates. A Year 11 or 10 audience would be more suitable.
- Above all, select an audience that will be well behaved and listen attentively to the speakers.
- A teacher from the host school must be in the room at all times.



CHAIRPERSON'S SCRIPT & RESULTS FAX

I welcome you to the _____ round of the Premier's Debating Challenge for Year(s) _____

This debate is between _____ (A / B) and _____ (A / B)

The Affirmative team, from:

The Negative team, from:

School is:

School is:

1st Speaker _____

1st Speaker _____

2nd Speaker _____

2nd Speaker _____

3rd Speaker _____

3rd Speaker _____

Team Adviser _____

Team Adviser _____

The Adjudicator for this debate is: _____

Each speaker may speak for _____ minutes. There will be a warning bell at _____ minutes with two bells at _____ minutes to indicate that the speaker's time has expired. A bell will be rung continuously if the speaker exceeds the maximum time by more than one minute.

As a courtesy to the speakers, please ensure that all mobile phones are switched off.

The topic for this debate is: _____

Please welcome the 1st speaker of the Affirmative to open the debate. *(After each speaker, wait for a signal from the adjudicator and then introduce the next speaker).*

(After the debate) Please welcome the adjudicator to announce the result of this debate.

(After the adjudication) A speaker will now congratulate the winning team.

(After the congratulations) A speaker from the winning team will now respond.

ATTN: _____

FAX: _____

Winning Team Name: _____

Home Coach: _____

Away Coach: _____

(Signature)

(Signature)

Adjudicator: _____

Debate Date: / /

(Signature)

The Winning Coach should ensure that all of the top section is completed *(round number, age division, topic, team A or B & adjudicator's name)*. **The Winning Coach** should then collect the signatures needed and fax this entire page to the number above.

ORGANISATION – HOSTING A DEBATE

The Coach of the host school has a number of responsibilities on the day of the debate.

Before the visiting school arrives

- Check that the Adjudicator (Metropolitan areas) or Regional Coordinator (Country areas) has contacted the school with the debating topics. There should be three copies of the topics – one for each team and one for the coaches – in three sealed envelopes. These are opened when the visiting school arrives.
- In the time prior to the arrival of the visiting team, check that the rooms are available, any classes are covered and the audience knows where to go and when. If room changes are involved, ensure that the Deputy, teachers and classes affected know about the changes the day **before** the debate.
- Check that your team is present. If possible, arrange for them to assemble 10 minutes before the agreed arrival time.
- Check that the Chairperson and Timekeeper are present and know their duties.

Topic Selection

- When the visiting school has arrived, hand both teams the topics in a sealed envelope. Ask both teams to number the topics 1 to 3 on their copy and hand it back to you. Allow them up to 5 minutes to quietly decide their order of preference.
- Please note that coaches are not to advise their teams during topic selection.
- Collect the numbered lists from each team. Eliminate any topic that has been ranked third. If only one topic remains, that is the topic for debate. If two topics remain, the one ranked highest on average is the topic of the debate. If neither of the remaining topics is higher ranked, toss a coin to decide, declaring “Topic A is Heads, Topic B is Tails”.
- To determine sides in the debate, ask a member of the visiting team to call the toss of a coin. The winner of the toss is automatically the Affirmative. The winner of the toss does not get to choose the side they prefer.

Preparation Time

- Double check that both teams are sure of the topic and their side, then show them to their preparation rooms. State clearly the current time and the time the debate is therefore scheduled to begin.
- Show the visiting Coach to the staff room, make tea or coffee, and introduce them to the other staff members. Make sure that the visitor is not ignored, is engaged in conversation, or is shown to a comfortable seat or desk where they can work.
- Check that the debating room is set up correctly and that everything is in readiness for the debate and morning or afternoon tea is prepared.
- Organise for a student, possibly the Chairperson, to wait for the Adjudicator and show them to the staffroom. Offer them tea or coffee, introduce the visiting Coach and announce the topic and the sides of the debate.
- At the end of the preparation time take the teams, the Adjudicator, the visiting Coach and the audience to the debating room. Settle the audience, and then hand over to the Chairperson.

ORGANISATION – ON THE DAY

The visiting Coach also has responsibilities on the day of the debate.

- Allow plenty of time for the trip to the host school. Ensure that you know where you are going.
- Travel with the team should be in accordance with your school's excursion policy. Find out what kinds of permission forms your school requires for travel to a debate, and ensure that all forms are collected and all conditions for travel are met.
- Use the time during the trip for a final discussion of recent news events and generally to relax the team.
- Upon arrival, introduce yourself at the host school's front office and ask for the host Coach by name.
- Bring along something to keep you occupied during the preparation time.

While the debate is on, both Coaches should take notes.

It is a good idea to keep the notes from all the team's debates in a single book so that they can be easily referred to later during feedback or coaching sessions. Coaches also need to listen carefully to, and take notes on, the adjudication.

After the debate, both teams and Coaches should discuss the debate with the Adjudicator.

The school day can of course be very busy, and Adjudicators themselves can sometimes be in a rush. However, the debriefing session with the Adjudicator is an invaluable way of learning more about debating and a good time to seek advice on how to improve. Coaches should try to ensure that their speakers get a chance to talk to the Adjudicator individually and as a team. Adjudicators are understandably reluctant to mention some mistakes and areas that need improvement in front of the audience, so this is the best chance teams will have to get some tips on what needs work.

Coaches should ensure that the conversation with the Adjudicator is amicable.

Remember that the Adjudicator's decision is final. Do not let the discussion descend into argument. Being a sore loser will make it difficult to benefit from what should be an enjoyable learning experience.

When the event is over, the **winning Coach should fax the result** to their Coordinator. Please check the information that accompanies the competition draw for more detail.

ORGANISATION – DEBATING ETIQUETTE

It is essential that coaches and teams remember that a debate should be a pleasant social occasion where the conflict occurs only in the arguments during the actual debate. The competition and winning should take a back seat to the learning and social experience and should never become the dominant factor. Coaches are responsible for the team's behaviour and attitude and should always be good role models.

Before the Debate

Coaches should be courteous and considerate in their dealings with visiting coaches, teams and adjudicators and always be mindful of making their time at your school as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

The choice and provision of an audience for the debate is most important. The students chosen to watch the debate should be appropriate for the standard of competition. For example, a low ability Year 7 audience is not a suitable audience for a debate involving Year 12 students – Years 10 or 11 would be a wiser choice. A change of audience when the bell rings mid-way through the debate should be avoided.

The host Coach is responsible for the behaviour of the audience and should remain in the room with the audience throughout the debate. It may be necessary to prepare the audience for the debate by detailing what is expected of them during the debate in terms of behaviour and their response to the debaters. Explain when to clap, how respond to humour, and that they should refrain from reacting to rhetorical questions. Encourage them to respond positively to all speakers without bias and to accept both victory and defeat graciously.

Ensure that all necessary equipment is provided as detailed above, including the appropriate number of chairs and tables, glasses and jugs of water.

After the Debate

The most important rule for coaches and teams is:

<p style="text-align: center;">ACCEPT THE ADJUDICATOR'S DECISION AND ACCEPT THAT THE DECISION IS FINAL</p>

The time spent with the Adjudicator after the debate should be pleasant and should afford a valuable learning experience for all. Both teams and both coaches should ask for advice on how to improve their debating performance and be eager to listen to the Adjudicator in order to expand their knowledge of debating. They should be willing to discuss the debate and ask questions about how the decision was reached and what factors contributed to the decision.

- **Never** should the decision itself be questioned
- **Never** should the discussion become an argument
- **Never** should the time after the debate be unpleasant
- **Never** should either team fail to talk to the adjudicator
- **Never** should winning be more important than learning

ORGANISATION – TROUBLESHOOTING

Where to find Adjudicators:

In the competitions organised by the NSW Department of Education and Communities, qualified and accredited adjudicators are appointed by the Coordinators to adjudicate debates in metropolitan areas. In country areas, schools typically need to find their own Adjudicators, who must have been trained, screened and accredited by the Department. A list of accredited Adjudicators in the Region is included with the draw, and is also available upon request from the Regional Coordinator or the State Coordinator.

If there are no accredited Adjudicators:

Contact your Regional Coordinator who will help you find an Adjudicator.

In the longer term, look for suitable people to become Adjudicators. Some suggestions might be retired teachers, teachers on leave, casual teachers, ex-student debaters, university students, graduates, and librarians.

Encourage them to attend a training course or organise for an experienced adjudicator to run a course in your area and ensure that they have a copy of *Taking the Initiative*.

Help them gain experience in debating and adjudicating by:

- Watching DVDs of State Finals (available from the State Coordinator)
- Watching school debates and adjudications
- Talking to experienced debaters, Coaches and Adjudicators

If the Adjudicator does not arrive:

Ring the Regional Coordinator to organise a quick replacement. If they cannot be contacted, try the State Coordinator. If possible, the State Coordinator will arrange a Connected Classroom debate between the two teams. Both coaches may agree to adjudicate together, conferring throughout the debate to avoid any disagreement as to the result. Or they might agree to allow an available Principal or Head Teacher to adjudicate.

If the topics do not arrive:

Again, ring the Regional Coordinator and then the State Coordinator. If that doesn't work the two Coaches should confer and agree on a list of three topics. Choose from the topics listed on the next few pages.

If a team prepares the wrong topic or side:

The team at fault should be given another twenty minutes to prepare the correct side of the correct topic. The debate should not be postponed.

Where to find help:

- Your Adjudicator.
- Your Regional Coordinator, who organises the zone draws and competition dates, liaises with Adjudicators and handles day-to-day problems in your area
- The State Coordinator, who will answer any questions and assist with any problems you may have. This person is responsible for the overall organisation of all competitions, training and payment of adjudicators, organisation and distribution of topics, information and resource material, publicity and sponsorship.

ORGANISATION – DEBATING TOPICS

When setting or creating topics for a debate, it is important to consider the age and experience of the debaters to ensure their suitability. It is also very important to select topics that do not give an unfair advantage to either side.

Simple, straightforward, single-issue, literal topics that draw on their interests and knowledge are recommended for young inexperienced debaters. As they mature in experience and understanding, literal topics that draw on a wider knowledge base and are more complicated in structure should be introduced.

Topics for the Premier's Debating Challenge are taken from specific categories set for each round of competition. Students participating in the various competitions should be made aware of these categories and the types of topics they can expect.

ORGANISATION – DEBATING TOPICS (cont.)

Here are some examples of the types of topics used in the Premier's Debating Challenge:

The Media

- That commercials are the best part of TV
- That we should censor books and films
- That the media promotes a selfish society
- That reality TV is dumbing us down
- That ABC television is better

General Issues

- That the Jury System needs reform
- That the car must go
- That foreign aid is a luxury
- That life is better in the country than the city
- That contact sports should be banned

Australian Society

- That we are a nation of imitators
- That we are headed in the right direction
- That Australia is the best country in which to live
- That Australia needs a new flag
- That Australians are too concerned with sport

Contemporary Issues

- That trade unions are a thing of the past
- That democracy is overrated
- That our leaders have failed us
- That internet needs more controls
- That computers are worth the money we spend on them

Environment Topics

- That Science has caused more good than harm
- That animals should have rights too
- That we should put the environment first
- That the city centre should be car free

Civics and Citizenship Topics

- That we get the politicians we deserve
- That compulsory voting is true democracy
- That Australia's flag needs to be changed
- That ANZAC Day should be our national day of celebration
- That we should become a republic

ADJUDICATION – CONTACT WITH SCHOOLS

The existence of a successful debating program depends upon the goodwill of the Principals and the staff of the schools. Adjudicators must adopt a professional attitude not only in handling decisions in debates but also in the organisation and conduct of debates.

Organising a Debate

Debating Coaches seldom receive a period allowance to organise debating in their school. They have limited free time during school hours and may need to be contacted in the evening. Wherever possible, Adjudicators should try to speak directly with the debating coach.

For some competitions, Adjudicators will be allocated a zone and it is their responsibility to ensure that the zone is completed by the date due. As soon as the competition draw is received, adjudicators must contact all the coaches who have teams in the zone to introduce themselves, inform coaches of the times they are available to adjudicate and to remind coaches when debates are scheduled to be completed. **Don't wait for the schools to contact you.**

If Adjudicators experience difficulties in organising debates, they should notify the Regional Coordinator or State Coordinator to ensure that the debates are completed on time.

When arranging a debate, schools should be given one week's notice to allow for the re-organisation of the school routine. Once the Adjudicator and the home school have set a day and time for the debate, the home school will be responsible for all other arrangements, including contact with the visiting school and confirming arrangements with the Adjudicator. The visiting school should endeavour to meet the arrangements made by the home school and the Adjudicator.

Forfeits

If a debate has not taken place by the date for the completion of the zone, in order to determine a zone winner the Regional Coordinator in consultation with the State Coordinator may award the debate to a particular team. The decision will be based on whichever team is deemed to have been disadvantaged due to another team's unwillingness to agree on a suitable time to debate.

Inability to Attend

If an Adjudicator has organised a debate and is unable to attend through illness or misadventure, the Adjudicator must arrange a suitable substitute. If the attempts are unsuccessful, contact should be made with the Regional or State Coordinator as soon as possible. Never simply ring the schools and cancel or postpone the debate.

Attending the Debate

Adjudicators should always arrive at the school at least ten minutes before the debate. It will take that time to contact the teacher organising the debate, reach the venue in the school and write down the topic, sides and names of speakers for the debate.

Before the debate begins, the Adjudicator should ask the teacher organising the debate when the audience will be dismissed and adjust the time taken to deliver the adjudication accordingly.

Adjudicators must make every effort to attend the morning or afternoon tea held after the debate and speak to both teams. Explain the decision and advise the speakers, but do not respond to aggressive attacks or offensive questioning. Refer any disputes to the State Coordinator.

Adjudicators are official representatives of the Department of Education and Training and should behave and dress in an appropriate manner. As Adjudicators have a position of trust they should not become involved in close personal relationships with members of teams they are adjudicating.

ADJUDICATION – EVALUATING THE DEBATE

The role of the Adjudicator is not to police the rules of debating. Rather, the Adjudicator should concentrate upon evaluating the strength of both team's Arguments and the damage done to them in Rebuttal. While the various rules of debating are important to know, minor infractions should not form the basis of a decision. Such rules exist to ensure that the Matter a team presents is as effective as possible, and any mistake a team makes in following those rules is only as important as the impact that mistake has on the case they present. For instance, it's easy to imagine a team presenting a perfectly cogent and impressive case even though they might have allocated incorrectly, so while the team should be corrected, this error would not form the basis of the decision. Of course, most infractions and Method mistakes will have dire consequences for the case itself, so Adjudicators need to be on the lookout for them. Still, it is the final case that the Adjudicator is judging.

It is **not** reasonable to award a close debate against a team on a minor Method point, such as being slightly over or under time, failing to begin by addressing the Chairperson or for not keeping voices down while others are speaking.

Adjudicators should be aware of certain factors that may influence their judging. Speakers must not be penalised for errors for which they are not responsible, such as a Chairperson's failure to announce the topic, or the inaccurate timing of the debate by the Timekeeper. Allowance should be made for the fact that speakers may be affected by a partisan audience or by unforeseen interruptions (such as announcements on the school's public address system).

While the Matter introduced after the second bell should not be considered as contributing further to the speaker's Argument, it should be noted by the Adjudicator in case the opposing team makes reference to it in subsequent speeches.

Adjudicators should **not** award a debate on a subjective point such as their personal dislike of a Teamline. The Teamline and Arguments **must** be judged in relation to how they are handled by the opposing team.

Under **no** circumstances should Adjudicators reveal notes taken during the course of a debate to the teams or coaches. Detailed note taking is necessary when determining the outcome of a debate and in order to provide feedback to speakers. In the event of an official protest being lodged with the State Coordinator, an Adjudicator may be called upon to provide a written justification for the decision reached.

A practice form for Adjudicators is included on the next page. While this form is useful for short debates and coaching sessions, Adjudicators are recommended to use a book rather than separate sheets to record the details of every debate at which they officiate. This allows them to compare the notes they have made on various occasions. It is also useful if Adjudicators are asked for their impressions of various speakers whose efforts they have judged.

Three double pages should be used for each debate. Notes on the First Affirmative and First Negative should be entered on the first double page and so on. The left half of each double page should be used for Affirmative speakers and the right half for Negative speakers.

Adjudicators must observe each speaker as much as possible. Notes should be confined to the essentials of Matter, Method and Manner, and full use made of time saving abbreviations.

ADJUDICATION – SPEAKERS’ ROLES

Adjudicators must take accurate notes on the Matter presented by each speaker in the debate.

First Affirmative

- The Definition should be noted down **exactly** as delivered by the speaker.
- The Justification given for the Definition should be noted down.
- The Teamline should be written down exactly, along with brief notes on any basic explanation given to support it.
- The Allocation given to First and Second Speakers should be written down exactly.
- Brief details of the Arguments and Examples should be taken.
- Brief comments on Manner and Method should be noted down.

First Negative

The Adjudicator should take notes covering the same areas as the First Affirmative with special attention given to any change in the interpretation or Scope of the Definition and the Justification for these changes. The Rebuttal used against the opposing team should be noted carefully as well as the important aspects of the Negative case.

In order to assess where the **initiative** lies in the debate, adjudicators may make a note of specific points which should be attacked by the following speaker and tick off afterwards to show that these points have been covered. The First Negative may seize opportunities presented and place the Affirmative in a difficult position or may fail to seize the opportunities and thus allow the Affirmative to retain the initiative.

Second Speakers

Regarding Matter, special attention should be given to the maintenance, re-establishment or loss of the initiative. Second speakers may have to reinforce their team’s Definition and/or case in reply to any damage done by the opposing team as well as rebut the Arguments and ideas presented by the opposition. Consistency in developing the Teamline and discussion of the areas allocated by the First Speaker in the case division are features of Method. Brief comments should be made regarding Manner.

Third Speakers

Notes on Matter should relate to the contrast of cases, any Argument used to show the superiority of one case over the other, general Rebuttal and specific Rebuttal. Brief comments should be made regarding Manner and Method. Adjudicators must be aware of the equal importance of all speakers and not place too much or too little emphasis on the role of Third Speakers.

Reaching a Decision

While listening to the debate, Adjudicators should be comparing each speaker’s performance individually and assessing its contribution to the team’s efforts and to the development of the debate as a whole. At the conclusion of the debate, the Adjudicator makes a decision on the basis of:

- Which team holds the initiative at the end of the debate.
- Which team presented the stronger, more convincing case.
- Which team most effectively dealt with the opposition’s case.
- Which team understood the issues and used the rules of debating to develop the best overall case.

ADJUDICATION – DELIVERY

Adjudicators have a special responsibility to encourage debaters and Coaches to persevere with the development of debating skills and to make debating an enjoyable learning experience for all who participate. They must be informative and helpful in their approach to debaters, Coaches and the audience for the debate. This must be borne in mind when presenting the adjudication.

The adjudication should be delivered principally **to the audience**, not to the debaters. In the adjudication, students have the opportunity to learn about the skills of communication and conflict and develop their own interest in debating. The adjudicator's remarks should be appropriate to the age and debating experience of the audience, while discussion of the more difficult, technical considerations may be left to the discussion with teams and coaches later.

The adjudication should be delivered promptly after the last speech in the debate. While an Adjudicator may take a few minutes to organise their notes and confirm their decision, they should never take longer than the length of a speech in the debate to begin their presentation. Similarly, while there is no fixed time limit for delivering the adjudication, the Adjudicator should **never** speak longer than the time allowed for the speakers in the debate.

In an adjudication, the Adjudicator should comment on the Manner, Method and Matter in the debate and discuss where the initiative went in the debate by comparing the teams' performances. Adjudicators should pay special attention to the Arguments and Examples that proved pivotal in the decision, and briefly run through the position each team took on those Arguments; which was the more effective and why. It is vital that Adjudicators refer to and analyse the actual Matter from the debate in their adjudication, and not simply talk in broad terms about Arguments, Rebuttal, and initiative.

On the other hand, the adjudication should take the form of a general review of the debate, **not** a detailed repetition of what was said by every speaker and everything that happened in the debate. The audience has already heard it all from the debaters, so they don't need to hear it all again. An adjudication is an evaluation of the debate, not an instant replay.

Specific comments on technicalities and the relative strengths and weaknesses of each speaker should be made **after** the adjudication in discussion with both teams and Coaches. Criticism should always be constructive and encouraging.

Some Tips for Delivering the Adjudication

- Do not allow questions or interjections during the adjudication. If these occur, the Adjudicator should politely inform the interjector that discussion of the adjudication can take place after it has been delivered.
- Adjudications should not be structured on a discussion of the debate on a speaker by speaker basis. If it is important to talk about one speaker's performance, do so in the context of the broader structure discussed earlier.
- Do not attribute the loss of a debate to any single speaker as it is often very damaging to single out one speaker's inadequacies before the audience.
- Be sympathetic and positive in discussing how teams approached a topic and their cases. Impress upon the audience that there are no wrong Arguments, only Arguments which are more or less reasonable.
- Be objective in the presentation of the analysis of the debate. Do not let personal opinion or beliefs colour the evaluation of the Matter presented.

ADJUDICATION – THE INVALID CASE

The previous approach to an Invalid Case was to award the debate **against** the team which introduced it. The justification for this approach was that this sort of case was not debating at all—it was an attempt to deny the opposition the chance to argue, and that this was inconsistent with an approach to debating which emphasises conflict. This had the result that many Negative teams were penalised for a case which they did not know was invalid, and further, that Affirmative teams were winning debates without even noticing the invalidity of their opposition's case.

Today, while it is still considered an extremely ineffective way to pursue a debate, **an Invalid Case is not in and of itself grounds for awarding a debate against a team.** If a team is guilty of presenting an Invalid Case, then their opposition should be able to point out the invalidity and show the problems with such a position. Invalid Cases are fairly simple to detect, and fairly easy to argue against and defeat once detected. It should be remembered however, that a team will not automatically win a debate by pointing out the invalidity of their opposition's case. They need also to explain why a case is Invalid, how they have been denied room to argue, and the overall effect on the debate.

There are a number of reasons for this approach to adjudicating Invalid Cases. Firstly, to award the debate on the basis of a technicality such as an Invalid Case where the opposition has not detected the error is to allow an Adjudicator to make a subjective judgement. This is contrary to the position that above all things, **an Adjudicator must judge the debate as objectively as possible, not allowing any personal beliefs to enter into the debate.** So, an Adjudicator should only award a team or penalise a team on the basis of how their opposition handles the Arguments in the debate.

Furthermore, Adjudicators should be encouraged to judge each debate on its own merits and not on some blanket rule laid down with regard to some technical point. No single mistake of a team is sufficient to lose a debate.

Most importantly, this approach stresses that every factor of the debate is to be regarded as relative. Certain things may technically be mistakes, or ineffective, but they may not win or lose a debate in isolation. The Adjudicator needs to weigh up the relevance and significance of all the factors of a debate to make the correct decision.

Once an Adjudicator has become aware of an Invalid Case, they should think of the invalidity as they would any other Argument which could be easily refuted by the other team. If it is detected, pointed out and argued against successfully, then the opposing team will have defeated that Argument. If, on the other hand, a team presents an Invalid Case and their opposition neither picks it up, nor presents an adequate case of their own, the Invalid Case should stand.

In summary, the team presenting the Invalid Case will be at the severe disadvantage of having to support a Teamline which is restrictive and assertive. They will therefore penalise themselves to some extent, but the opposition still needs to attack the invalidity to ensure a victory. An adjudicator should always remember that if the invalidity is not picked up by the opposition, it is like any other unanswered Argument, and may prove successful. The difficulty with the Invalid Case is that it is, generally speaking, easy to rebut and usually based on false assumptions.

Finally, Adjudicators need to be wary of teams attempting to dismiss their opposition's case as invalid simply because they have misunderstood the case or have no better answer to it. Such Rebuttal should carry no weight, which is why teams are expected to **explain** the invalidity, and not just assert it, even where it exists.

ADJUDICATION – MANNER

Manner should not be a factor in deciding the winner of a debate. Where a team's presentation is so poor that it makes their Matter difficult to follow or comprehend, the team will be punished precisely for having poor Matter. Generally speaking, the Manner of the various speakers tends to be roughly alike. Both teams will have their more competent members, both teams will have members who are less confident, and need to be encouraged rather than punished for the odd stumble.

Adjudicators should nonetheless be aware of a speaker's Manner and be ready to help them improve it with advice and comments. Speakers who are able to improve their Manner will be more confident and will be able to focus their attention on the more difficult and important aspects of the debate.

Adjudicators are capable of making reasonable assessments of how effectively a speaker is communicating a message to an audience. It is not a totally subjective exercise because that assessment will be made against a list of criteria, all of which are outlined in the previous section on Manner. Adjudicators should be able to make relative judgments about speakers in a debate or between speakers in a public speaking competition.

Remember that you are making a judgment on the overall impression made by a speaker on the audience, so that you cannot be concerned with the individual points of judgement. It is wise to have the criteria for judgement in mind, but make a decision which is a reflection of the speaker's impact on the audience and the effectiveness of the presentation. Remember to be flexible in your judgement because there are many different speaking styles, so no one style is the correct one. The style used must be appropriate to the situation and the audience.

Some Tips for Adjudicating Manner

- Beware of arbitrary standards of perfection. Don't neglect the importance of the more conversational elements of delivery which can enhance the naturalness of the presentation. This approach will probably have a stronger appeal and be more acceptable to the audience than an overly formal style of delivery.
- Do not allow your own prejudices regarding pronunciation and grammar hamper your judgement. There are many words where alternative ways of pronunciation are acceptable.
- **Do not base your decision on Manner**, and be careful when addressing aspects of Manner to point out that you are doing so for the good of the speakers, not because Manner was a factor in the decision.
- Beware of speeches which have not been prepared by the speaker but by someone else. For a speech to be effective, it should be delivered in the speaker's own words, not an impersonal recitation. Over-rehearsed speeches are often unnatural and annoying to an audience.
- Remember that the Manner displayed by a speaker is a reflection of their personality, so never attack a speaker for their use of Manner. Make your criticisms constructive and be positive in your approach. Be encouraging in your adjudication and discuss Manner in fairly general terms during your adjudication, leaving personal criticism to a private discussion with speakers after the debate. While it is often a good idea to highlight the very good Manner of one speaker in your adjudication, never highlight particularly poor Manner in front of the audience.
- Remember to be a good role model for the debaters you are adjudicating. Make a real effort to display good Manner while delivering the adjudication.

ADJUDICATION – ‘EVEN IF’ AND CASE SHIFTS

The ‘Even If’ Technique, when applied successfully, ensures conflict in a debate despite the fact that the teams initially intended to discuss two very different interpretations of a topic. Therefore it is an important technique for debaters, coaches and Adjudicators to understand. Adjudicators in particular need to be able to recognise when a definitional problem exists in a debate and know what is expected from the speakers to resolve the conflict. Adjudicators should ensure that they are thoroughly familiar with the rules of Definition and the ‘Even If’ Technique.

Still, every debate will be different and while it is the Adjudicator’s job to be aware of what should and should not happen when the ‘Even If’ Technique is used, it is important to judge the debate on what each team actually does in any given situation.

For example, the ‘Even If’ Technique may occur early in a team’s case, (First Negative / Second Affirmative) or it may eventuate in the Third Speakers’ speeches. Whatever happens it should be assessed in relation to what else has occurred in the debate, **not** by the Adjudicator’s own standard.

Used well, the ‘Even If’ Technique can win a debate, but used badly it can turn a debate into a shambles. Every Definition Debate will be different, and will need to be considered differently. In one debate, an impressive and convincing attack upon the opposition’s Definition combined with solid Substantive Matter may be enough to win a debate without an effective ‘Even If’ argument. In other debates, a team will be convincing when it comes to the Definition, but fail to present a strong enough case of their own or a strong enough ‘Even If’ attack. Winning the fight over the Definition will be of little use if a team loses both of the Issues in the debate. Basically, all the steps involved in the ‘Even If’ Technique need to be carefully evaluated and their impact on the debate as a whole weighed up.

Adjudicators should bear in mind that the ‘Even If’ Technique is a sophisticated one that can be difficult for debaters to understand and use correctly. It will often be run poorly or introduced when it was not necessary. Keep in mind the level at which the debate is occurring and whether or not the conflict requires the use of the ‘Even If’ Technique.

If a case shift, or a change in the Teamline is obvious, then a team should be penalised for poor Method, whether or not it is detected by the opposing team. This is because that team’s structure is lacking. Alone, this may or may not be sufficient grounds on which to award a debate, depending on all other aspects of the debate. For the shift to be truly damaging, however, it must make the case difficult to follow or illogical in some way. The opposing team should take note of this situation by pointing out the shift and exploiting the inconsistencies in the case.

Matter will be less effective if the Teamline changes, as it will be inconsistent or contradictory to the original line. Where a change in Teamline is detected by the opposing team, they will gain the initiative in terms of both Matter and Method. The extent of the gain will depend on the opposition’s understanding and explanation of where the change occurred and how it has weakened the case. It is not sufficient for one team to simply state that the opposing team has changed their line. The change **must** be explained.

For instance, if a change in line occurs in Second Negative and is dealt with very early in the Third Affirmative’s speech and explained, then it is clear that the Affirmative has understood the importance of the Negative’s error. If the Third Affirmative discusses the change late in the speech but explains it in detail (shows an understanding of the problem but not its importance) this will be reasonably successful. If the Third Affirmative stumbles across the change in line in the concluding minutes of the speech and deals with it in little detail, then very little or no advantage will be gained because there has been no understanding of the importance of the issue and the chance to seize the initiative in the debate has been lost.

ADJUDICATION – THE CRESCENDO EFFECT

The Crescendo Effect is a short-hand name for the tendency amongst Adjudicators to occasionally over-emphasise the contribution of Third Speakers. It may be said that this need not be a problem if any consequent over estimation is equal for both speakers so that the teams remain on an even footing.

In a particularly close debate such a mistake in adjudicating could be costly. This is because by concentrating on the final speakers, one denies the dynamic nature of debating. Such an approach undervalues the structural importance of the First and Second Speakers. The Definition, Justification, Teamline, Allocation, and Rebuttal, together with their organisation within a speech is very important. The foundation of a case as constructed by First Speakers and justified or defended by Second Speakers provides a way of gauging consistency and the movement of initiative. Case development, consistency and the initiative which results from the clash of cases are the touchstones of any successful debate.

An adjudication which is tainted by the Crescendo Effect loses sight of these aspects and therefore runs the risk of robbing consistent teams in close, difficult debates. The early structural work of the consistent team is undervalued, while a competent Third Speaker from the opposing team is elevated to the status of match winner, despite indifferent case construction by fellow team members.

Moreover, the identification of structural tasks for First Speakers provides an easily-grasped way of educating young debaters in techniques of logical, coherent argument. The Crescendo Effect adjudication belies the work done in founding a case and so is derelict in its educational responsibilities.

Put simply, Adjudicators need to give equal consideration to every speaker in the debate. The truth is that debates can often be convoluted, and Third Speakers have the significant advantage of being able to watch them unfold and come to terms with them before having to speak. You would expect their speeches to therefore be more insightful and convincing, but that does not mean the team's earlier work, as it struggled to put its case together or understand their opposition's response, should be undervalued.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – PLAIN ENGLISH SPEAKING AWARD

What is the Plain English Speaking Award?

The Plain English Speaking Award is a competition which aims to encourage and maintain the use of clear and effective spoken English. Each contestant will present a speech of eight (8) minutes on a subject of their choice and a three (3) minute impromptu speech on a subject chosen by an adjudicator.

Who are the Organisers?

The Award is organised by the NSW Department of Education and Communities. The New South Wales competition is proudly sponsored by The English Speaking Union and the Australia-Britain Society and the national competition is sponsored by BBM Limited.

How is the Award Conducted?

- Schools may conduct a contest to select their representatives [no more than two] for the Award.
- The Coordinator will advise the contestants of the date and venue of their Local Final to be held in May. Regional Finals will be held in June.
- From the Regional Finals, contestants will be chosen to compete in the State Semi-Finals.
- At least six contestants will be chosen to compete in the State Final in Sydney.
- Each State Final winner competes in the National Final.

What are the Speaking Requirements?

At each stage of the Award, contestants will be expected to give two speeches. The criteria for these are as follows:

- A Prepared Speech of eight (8) minutes [warning bell at six (6) minutes] on a subject of their own choosing.
- An Impromptu Speech of three (3) minutes [warning bell at two (2) minutes]. For comparative assessment purposes, the same impromptu topic will be given to each contestant.
- Contestants should note that adjudicators are required to give equal consideration to the speeches in their allocation of marks.

What are the Prizes?

- All contestants will receive a certificate of participation.
- All state finalists will receive a silver medallion and a cash prize of \$100 from the Australia-Britain Society.
- The NSW winner will receive \$500 courtesy of the Australia-Britain Society and a gold medallion.
- The winning student's school will receive the Australia-Britain Shield for Plain English Speaking and the Westminster Stone. The National Winner and runner-up will receive return flights to London courtesy of BBM Limited to take part in the international competition.

What Rules Apply?

- Contestants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia.
- Secondary school students of 15 years and under 18 years of age on January 1 of the year in which they are competing shall be eligible to enter this award.
- NSW Secondary Schools (government and non-government) may enter up to two contestants.
- Participants may compete in the National Final on one occasion only.
- Prizes are to be used by the winner and are not transferable.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – LEGACY JUNIOR PUBLIC SPEAKING AWARD

What is the Legacy Junior Public Speaking Award?

Legacy introduced a Junior Plain English Speaking Award in 1995 as part of the 'Australia Remembers 1945-1995' commemorations. The award was renamed the Legacy Junior Public Speaking Award in 1997. It was set up for younger students in government and non-government schools to complement the existing Plain English Speaking Award for senior high school students. It aims to encourage the correct use of spoken English, to enhance oral communication skills, to promote research skills and to increase confidence.

Who are the Organisers?

The Legacy Junior Public Speaking Award is conducted by the NSW Department of Education and Communities with the assistance and sponsorship of Sydney Legacy.

How is the Award Conducted?

- Schools may conduct a contest to select their representatives (no more than two) for the Award.
- The Coordinator will advise the contestants of the date and venue of their Local Final to be held in July. Regional Finals will be held in August.
- From the Regional Finals, contestants will be chosen to compete in the State Semi-Finals.
- At least eight (8) contestants will be chosen to compete in the State Final in Sydney.
- Two contestants will be chosen to compete in the National Final.

What are the Speaking Requirements?

At each stage of the competition a contestant will be expected to deliver two speeches:

- The Prepared Speech should be of 5 minutes duration on a topic of the student's choosing. A warning bell will be rung at 4 minutes with 2 bells at 5 minutes to indicate that the speaker's time has expired.
- The Impromptu Speech should be of 2 minutes duration with 5 minutes preparation time. A warning bell will be rung at 1 1/2 minutes with 2 bells at 2 minutes to indicate that the speaker's time has expired. The same impromptu topic is given to each contestant.
- Contestants should note that adjudicators are required to give equal consideration to the speeches in their allocation of marks.

What are the Prizes?

- All contestants will receive a Certificate of Participation.
- State Finalists will receive a medallion, a Certificate of Commendation and a cash prize of \$100.
- The winning student's school will receive an additional \$500 from Legacy and the winning student's school will receive a trophy.

What Rules Apply?

- Contestants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia.
- Secondary students no older than 14 years of age on January 1 in the year in which they are competing shall be eligible to enter.
- NSW Secondary Schools (government and non-government) may enter up to two contestants.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

What is the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition?

In 1996 the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition was introduced to government primary schools throughout New South Wales. The competition aims at heightening awareness of multicultural issues among primary school students while developing their interest and skills in public speaking.

How is the Award Conducted?

- Contestants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia.
- The competition is in two divisions, one for students in Years 3&4, the other for Years 5&6.
- NSW Government Primary Schools may enter up to two contestants in each division.
- Schools may conduct a contest to select their representatives in the competition.
- The Coordinator will advise the contestants of the date and venue of their Local Final to be held in June.
- Regional Finals will be held in August in Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and other venues.
- At least twelve contestants from each division will be chosen to compete in the State Finals in Sydney in November.

What are the Speaking Requirements?

- All contestants are required to deliver two speeches at every level of the competition: a Prepared Speech (unlimited preparation time) and an Impromptu Speech (5 minutes preparation time).
- Each speech is given equal consideration in deciding a winner.

The Prepared Speech:

- For each division of the competition, a selection of topics with multicultural themes is available. Contestants must choose a topic from this list. The Prepared Speech must have multicultural content.
- Years 3&4 contestants will speak for 3 minutes. There will be a warning bell at 2 minutes and 2 bells at 3 minutes to indicate that the speaker's time has expired.
- Years 5&6 contestants will speak for 4 minutes. There will be a warning bell at 3 minutes and 2 bells at 4 minutes to indicate that the speaker's time has expired.

The Impromptu Speech:

- The topic for the Impromptu Speech is chosen by the adjudicator. In order to encourage a variety of possible responses, the topic will be on a general theme i.e. not multicultural. The same impromptu topic will be given to each contestant in turn.
- Years 3&4 contestants will be given 5 minutes to prepare for a 1 minute speech. There will be a warning bell at 30 seconds and 2 bells at 1 minute to indicate that the time has expired.
- Years 5&6 contestants will be given 5 minutes to prepare for a 2 minute speech. There will be a warning bell at 1 minute and 2 bells at 2 minutes to indicate that the speaker's time has expired.

What are the Prizes?

- All contestants will receive a certificate of participation.
- Winners of Local Finals and beyond will receive certificates of congratulation.
- State Finalists will receive silver medallions.
- The State Winner will receive a gold medallion and their school will be acknowledged on a perpetual trophy.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – OVERVIEW

Before beginning any preparation for participation in these competitions, contestants and their coaches must be aware of what is expected in a public speaking competition. Speeches presented in competitions run by the Department of Education & Training **are not:**

- **A First Affirmative debating speech:** The structure, purpose and style of public speaking are completely different from what is expected of debating.
- **A reading exercise:** In public speaking, notes should be unobtrusive and kept to a minimum. A speech which is read to the audience is unacceptable.
- **An essay competition:** Contestants should not make the mistake of writing an essay, learning it and presenting it as a speech. The spoken and written word are very different in terms of sentence structure and vocabulary. The additional formality and sophistication of essay writing techniques are unsuitable for public speaking competitions because they assume a reading, rather than a listening audience.
- **A lecture:** The language and content of a speech should not be so technical and elevated that audience contact is lost.
- **A string of unconnected ideas** or shopping list of Examples. The ‘Stream of Consciousness’ approach to structuring a speech is unacceptable.
- **A comedy routine.**
- **An eight minute segment of a one act play.**
- **A rehearsal for an elocution exam.**

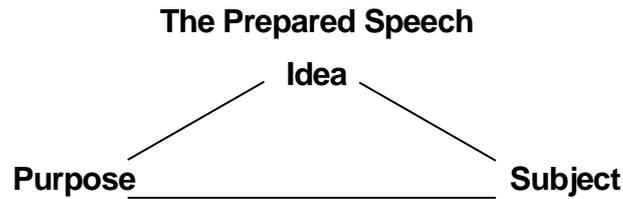
Presentation should not be over-dramatic or over-stylised, nor should it be too relaxed or informal. Speakers should adopt a natural Manner which uses individual personality to communicate ideas effectively to the audience. Manner should never be forced or artificial but believable and sincere.

No one style of speech or presentation is considered better. Choosing the best approach will depend largely on the personality and experience of the speaker and the content and structure of the speech. However, the presentation and content must always be appropriate and consistent.

The type of speech in this competition is the **extemporaneous speech**. This involves planning an outline of the main ideas and leaving most of what is to be said to the actual speech situation. These ideas should have a definite theme and a clear outcome.

The ultimate criterion for these competitions is the level of communication achieved. Simply put, speakers will be judged on how effectively they communicate their ideas to an audience.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – PREPARATION



There is no one starting point in the preparation. It can begin at any point on the diagram. However the purpose, the basic idea or theme and the actual subject of the speech must be linked and their inter-connection clear.

Purpose

Speakers must decide what they wish to achieve in the speech. There are many possible purposes. A speech might aim to inform, persuade, arouse sympathy, increase understanding, heighten awareness, change an opinion or simply present an individual point of view.

The purpose will govern the manner of presentation, the vocabulary used and the structure of the speech.

Subject

Often the most difficult aspect of the Prepared Speech is finding a suitable subject or theme. Most effective speeches are based on issues which the speaker has considered for some time and in which they have a vital interest. The issues in which the speaker holds a special interest are a good springboard provided the subject is not too highly specialised or the view too narrow or sectarian. Speakers should avoid issues that will alienate or divide an audience, seeking rather to establish a common ground with them.

Stimulus for ideas and themes for speeches can be found in many places such as lyrics, poetry titles in general anthologies, personal experiences, interviews, conversations with family and friends, newspapers, magazines, television, radio and the like.

It is important that the idea or theme has a degree of universality. The speech needs a fairly broad base that will appeal to the majority of audiences.

An effective speech can be one which takes a current or prominent issue, and works it in an original way. Cliched or hackneyed subjects and issues should be avoided. Equally problematic are self-reflexive subjects that deal with the writing of a speech itself—'What makes a Good Speech' will never be a successful choice as a topic.

Structure

Students should spend time thinking about the structure of the speech rather than writing it out and learning it. The development of the speech should be thought of as a continual process of editing, reworking and re-evaluating. Early attempts at the speech could be recorded, refined and the final structural points listed as a summary guide to be used when the speech is presented.

After settling upon a subject and a purpose, it is important to begin to structure the speech to bring out and develop that subject. Most important to every structure is the division of the speech into an **Introduction, Development and Conclusion**.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – STRUCTURE

Introduction

The Introduction should capture the attention of the audience and establish a rapport. The type of technique used will vary according to the purpose and subject matter of the speech. The Introduction must be integrated with the body of the speech and appropriate to the subject matter of the speech. It should **not** be a mere gimmick or clever speech device but consistent with the matter and mode of presentation of the speech. Speakers can be powerful and imaginative without sacrificing credibility or sincerity.

Speakers should also take care to avoid hackneyed, pedestrian Introductions that remind the audience they are listening to a speech. For instance, do not begin a speech with a definition of the subject the speaker has chosen, unless it is for some specific and surprising reason. In addition, trite openings like 'Hello, my name is... and I'm here to talk about' or 'My subject today is' should be avoided. Try to begin with something arresting, not just a statement of the topic of the speech.

Development

It is important to plan the body of the speech and to ensure that there is a definite and logical link between the Introduction and this section. There should be a smooth, logical progression through the speech, not simply a series of examples or ideas loosely strung together. The Development of the speech will vary, but when planning the outline, speakers should balance the need for a clear structure and direction with the need to keep the speech fresh, surprising and spontaneous.

Speakers should be aware of how the time limit affects the structure of the speech. It should be seen in terms of how it relates to the overall structure of the speech rather than an arbitrarily imposed gag to stop the speaker. The concluding minutes of the speech are of vital importance and speakers must be sure to use them in a way that leaves a lasting impression on the audience. It is unacceptable to run out of time and rush through the Conclusion. On the other hand, speakers should avoid the situation where the closing minutes of the speech are simply filling time, padding, stretching or adding further to what has already been said.

It is important to avoid the problem of allowing a speech to fall flat in the middle. Too often momentum can be lost because the speech has become repetitive, or the speaker has run out of examples, or the same ideas are being discussed in exactly the same way with the use of different examples. Often this problem can be detected by looking carefully at the plan for the speech. If too many of the points to be discussed are too similar, or achieve the same ends, the plan should be changed to keep the speech flowing and develop some broader material.

Conclusion

The Conclusion is vitally important as the climax of the whole speech. It should not be clumsy, self-conscious, abrupt, repetitive or long-winded. Speakers should know the Conclusion almost word-for-word so that the delivery of those last, vital sentences creates just the right impact on the audience. Speakers should plan to begin their Conclusion on or just after the warning bell. A confident, well-planned, appropriate final sentence delivered as close as possible to the sounding of the final bell is an excellent way to conclude a prepared speech.

The impact of the whole speech can be lost in the last few seconds. Speakers should never end with "Thank you" or "That's all". Nor should they conclude with someone else's words or start to move from their position on stage while delivering the final sentence. Speakers should conclude confidently and hold the atmosphere by pausing briefly before moving off.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – IMPROMPTU SPEECHES

Impromptu Speeches and Prepared Speeches receive equal weighting in determining a winner, so candidates should put equal effort and consideration into the Impromptu when they are preparing for a competition. Most importantly, speakers should remember that the structure and content requirements set out for the Prepared Speech apply equally to the Impromptu Speech. Impromptu Speeches need to be just as carefully structured and just as interesting.

Before attending the competition, students need to keep abreast of what is happening in their local community as well as nationally and internationally. They should keep up to date with the news and current affairs. Their view of the world must not be limited to the curriculum they are studying at school. They should know about and have opinions on a wide range of issues.

Preparation for the Impromptu should only be taken so far. It is dangerous and against the spirit of the competition to actually prepare an Impromptu Speech with the aim of moulding it to whichever topic is given on the day. Students can, however, prepare issues, structures or ideas that might possibly be used. Various strategies and structures should be practised with a wide variety of topics so that students can develop their skills and then concentrate on the particular strategies with which they feel most comfortable. **In developing an Impromptu, speakers should avoid the following:**

- Re-telling the trauma of the preparation room, e.g. “When I first saw this topic....”
- Listing every possible interpretation of the subject rather than choosing one to develop.
- Simply listing off examples without developing an argument or a position.
- Using material from their Prepared Speech or the speeches of other contestants.

Topics set for Impromptu Speeches are deliberately open-ended and can be interpreted in any number of very different ways. Students must narrow the topic down by choosing a single, hopefully unique interpretation and developing it. Bear in mind that even the more specific, personal interpretations need to be developed so that they have a broader significance for the audience. No speech should ever be inconsequential. Some possible topics and interpretations are:

- **“9 to 5”**—The working day, changes to Industrial Relations Law, Australian work ethics, feminism in the workplace, the Dolly Parton film...
- **“Rubbish”**—Littering, broader environmental concerns, junk food, lying politicians...
- **“Changes”**—A recent policy shift, stages in life, technology, the David Bowie song...

Speakers should never try to write out their Impromptu Speech. They should spend their time thinking and planning and should only ever write a bare outline of their speech on one palmcard.

Speakers should be advised to spend their time in the preparation room roughly as follows:

- **Brainstorm.** Quickly analyse the topic to decide on an idea that they can work with and develop. Try to steer away from the obvious idea which most candidates are likely to choose, but if this proves to be too difficult, go back to the original idea. Make sure that the link between the idea and the topic is clear.
- **Decide on the direction** and purpose of the speech.
- **Prepare the Conclusion and the Introduction.** Make sure they are original and arresting, and not simply restating the topic or trying to define its meaning.
- **Prepare the body of the Speech.** Think about how the basic idea will be developed in the speech and the specific examples that will be used.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – MANNER

It is very important that contestants speak to the audience, not at them. The manner of presentation most likely to win the audience and the competition is a style that is **natural** and **authentic**. The audience must feel that the speaker's style is totally sincere and genuine and belongs to the speaker.

There is no one style of presentation that should be aimed for or copied. All speakers are individuals with their own special personality, so their style will and should be individual, but there are areas of Manner where certain standards are expected. Attention should be given to these areas of Manner so that the speaker's skills can be developed and mistakes corrected.

Manner is judged on its overall effect on the audience. The following aspects of Manner contribute to the overall effect:

- **Gesture and stance:**

These should be natural and relaxed without being sloppy. Gestures should be varied and appropriate to the meaning and tone of what is being said, not unnatural, repetitive or stylised. Nervous, distracting mannerisms and static, stilted stance must be eliminated.

- **Visual expression:**

The speaker's facial expressions must be appropriate to the content of the speech. The face should be animated, mirroring the tone and attitude towards what is being said.

- **Eye contact** with the audience is vital, so notes must be kept to an absolute minimum.

- **Vocal variation:**

This is very important for audience contact and effective communication. Appropriate variations in pitch, pace and pause add interest to a speech as well as being the basic means of creating emphasis. Extreme or obviously orchestrated variations must be avoided, as should a monotonous vocal pattern which lacks intonation. Remember that the pitch and volume of the voice must be appropriate to the venue and at a level comfortable for the audience.

Speakers should be made aware of any distracting Manner qualities, like poor pronunciation of particular words or distracting gestures, so that with practice they can be avoided. It often helps for speakers to hear themselves on tape or see themselves on video, so that they can identify and work on any Manner flaws themselves.

Occasionally speakers will be offered the use of lecterns and microphones for their speeches. Where possible, both should be avoided. If a speaker has the choice to stand out from behind the lectern, and has a voice which could be projected to the back of the space, they should do so. Lecterns and microphones make it more difficult for a speaker to get their personality across, and introduce an unnecessary distance between the speaker and the audience.

Finally, speakers should be aware that while delivering a speech is certainly a performance, the most successful speeches do not rely on those performative elements for their effect, but rather use them to get a message across. Speakers should avoid the temptation to do anything overly dramatic or operatic as part of their Manner. For instance, good Introductions are unique and attention-grabbing, but that does not mean speakers should ever open by acting out a small scene or singing a few bars. Speakers should also be aware that they should never use any props. The performance must be authentic and intellectually convincing, not Shakespearean.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – COACHING SPEAKERS

Often when teachers are asked to select a student to compete in a competition it is either an obvious choice (the student who nearly always represents the school in public speaking) or an impossible one (there is no student suitable). Here are some suggestions for how to select students where no experienced candidate is available and some guidelines for how to make the best use of competitions in the future.

Selecting a student to represent the school can be a difficult task. To begin with, coaches should read thoroughly any information on the competition they are entering. They should note that most competitions, and indeed all those run by the Department of Education & Training emphasise naturalness and authenticity of style. Some aspects such as structure can be taught, but it is very difficult in a short time to undo bad habits such as an overly mannered or artificial style.

There is a tendency simply to choose the Third Speaker of the senior debating team. While they will sometimes be the most suitable candidate, public speaking is very different from debating, and you may have to search a little further. Ask teachers to nominate students who frequently participate orally in class and who can express themselves in a clear, logical and interesting manner.

When a number of students (three to six) have been nominated, set them a suitable speech topic with a time limit of five or six minutes and a few days to prepare. The speeches can be heard over a lunch break or better still before a student audience. This not only shows who will be the best candidate for the competition, but also provides an opportunity for discussing various points of good speaking with the audience and even encouraging them to try some speaking exercises in class.

In helping a candidate prepare for a competition, coaches should remember that there are two speeches to be given—the Prepared Speech with the topic selected by the candidate and the Impromptu Speech with a set topic. Make this clear to your contestant, along with any rules about the choice of topic for the Prepared Speech. For instance, students in the Sydney Morning Herald Plain English Speaking Award need to base their Prepared Speech on an article or articles from that paper, while speakers in the Multicultural Perspectives Competition need to choose from a set list of topics with multicultural themes. Speakers also need to be made aware of such matters as time limits and warning bell times.

The Impromptu Speech is a good place to begin preparation for the competition. This helps the speaker develop the extemporaneous style required. It can also be a good source of ideas for the Prepared Speech. Try to involve others in the impromptu practices, as this gives the student ideas of other approaches that could be used with various topics.

Give the students plenty of practise with different topics to develop confidence and competence. Begin with a shorter speaking time, (one or two minutes) and gradually increase it, encouraging the speaker to develop the speech by using and extending specific examples rather than generalisations. See the guidelines above for details on what is expected of an Impromptu Speech.

When it comes to the Prepared Speech, students may have a definite idea for their topic, but more often they will find it difficult to decide. Suggest they focus on issues of particular interest to themselves, or search the newspapers for a starting point.

Avoid interfering too much with the preparation. Give advice when required, and listen to the student practise the speech several times until the language is fluent, the structure sound and Manner confident. In general, encourage candidates and work to develop their confidence. Steer them away from major faults, but don't be too critical. Aim to help speakers develop their own ideas effectively and in a style appropriate to the subject matter, the purpose of the speech and the speaker's own personality. Finally, accompany the speakers to the competition so that you are able to provide follow-up coaching and encourage them to meet with the adjudicator.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – COACHING CLASSES

The competitions run by the Department of Education & Communities are designed to be an extension of the speaking and listening work done in classrooms. As such, coaches should encourage all students at the school to participate in the lead up to a public speaking competition.

It is preferable to have a situation where a candidate for the competition emerges naturally from the school's activities in speech each year. Ideally, this speaker should be the best of a group of very good speakers and the school as a whole should promote a high standard of spoken English among all its students. There are a number of steps teachers can take to help make this happen.

Some schools organise public speaking clubs for interested students. This is valuable for those involved but this has a limited effect on the school as a whole. It is much better to develop a program integrated with class activity, whether in the context of English programs or in other subjects. Such class-based activity is supported in the English syllabus, which has mandatory oral assessment tasks.

From the outset, aim to encourage all students in the school to speak with a minimum of notes. Learning speeches off by heart should be discouraged as it produces a stilted, unnatural manner. Where public speaking is developed in the context of regular, informal speech activity and discussion, it becomes a natural extension of the activity.

Younger high schools students should be given topics for discussion (and later speech-writing) on which they can speak freely and easily. Junior high school students will talk with enthusiasm about family, neighbours, friends, pets, excursions, hobbies and memorable events in their lives. A story-telling approach in early stages is acceptable as it develops confidence and is an enjoyable experience. Move gradually to topics of more general significance as students are ready for them.

Some ideas for class-based activities:

- **Brainstorming:** Discuss as a class what topics are good to talk about and the possible approaches to a number of set topics.
- **Individual preparation:** Have students prepare speeches on a number of topics in tandem with small group discussions to help solve any problems that arise with examples and structure.
- **Practice speeches:** Split the class into small groups and have the students in those groups deliver their speeches to each other. This is a first step to developing confidence, with members of the group listening to each other and offering advice.
- **Presentation to the class:** Each small group could select its best speech and those could be presented to the class as a whole. If there is time, everyone in the class might be able to present their speech. Conduct a follow-up discussion in which students should be encouraged to offer positive comments and concentrate on what the speaker has actually achieved. This is especially important where a student is nervous and lacks confidence. This approach parallels the process writing procedure for written English and has obvious advantages in building confidence and competence.

Teachers should provide information to the public speaking or debating coordinator at their school regarding any particularly talented students who emerge. Their talents can be extended in inter-school competitions as well as participation in school assemblies, speech days, school councils and forums generally.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – GENERAL ADVICE

- The ultimate criterion on which you will be judged is the **level of communication you achieve**. Put simply, what matters is how effectively you can communicate your ideas to an audience.
- Try to **balance your speech**. Good speeches balance a personal approach with a broader significance, humour with serious analysis, discussion of problems with possible solutions.
- Try to **keep up the momentum** of your speech. Don't dwell on one idea too long, or introduce multiple examples that establish the same facts or ideas.

Manner

- Be natural and authentic. The audience needs to feel that the speaker's style is sincere and genuine and belongs to the speaker.
- Try to establish a rapport with the audience. Speak to them and not at them.
- Don't do anything with your Manner that distracts the audience from your message.

Introduction

- The Introduction should capture the attention of the audience and establish a rapport. The shape of the Introduction will vary according to purpose and subject matter.
- The Introduction must be appropriate to and integrated with the body of the speech.
- Be powerful and imaginative without sacrificing credibility or sincerity.
- Avoid hackneyed Introductions that remind the audience they are listening to a speech.

Development and Conclusion

- Ensure there is a clear and logical link between the Introduction and the body of the speech.
- Try to make a well-prepared speech sound spontaneous—the inspiration of the moment.
- Ensure there is a smooth, logical progression through the speech. The speech must not be a series of examples or ideas loosely strung together.
- Write a Conclusion which sums up your main ideas and leaves a lasting impression.

Do

- Have a purpose.
- Appeal to your audience by making your subject relevant and interesting.
- Ensure that the structure of your speech works with its purpose, ideas and subject.
- Capture your audience's attention with an Introduction which is imaginative and credible.
- Use humour to develop an idea or vary your approach.
- Know your Conclusion so that the delivery of the last vital sentence creates just the right impact.

Do Not

- Waffle aimlessly.
- Alienate or divide the audience by forcing your personal beliefs upon them.
- Bore your audience by being too specialised or clichéd or hackneyed.
- Lose the impact of the speech by ending with 'thank you' or starting to move from your position.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Below are a number of exercises and activities designed to develop the debating and public speaking abilities of all primary school students. These activities can be easily adapted for use in classrooms of all sizes and abilities.

1 TONGUE TWISTERS

Purpose: *To create the right atmosphere.*

Children are exposed to an audience for a very short time. **Everybody** makes mistakes and **everybody** finds it funny.

This is suitable for any Primary School grade. Issue each child with a copy of the tongue twister list below and display a chart upon which the tongue-twister number is checked off against the child's name as they successfully say it. Teachers should insist on clarity, giving judicious consideration to blocked noses and missing teeth. Numbers 3 and 4 are stumbling blocks for some children who can often be helped if they are allowed to withdraw from the class to practise with a more successful friend. Also make sure that the "h" in "his" in number 5 is sounded. Similar care should be taken with the "t" in liniment in Number 7 and the "ed" in burned (Number 9) and canned (Number 10).

This activity can be used as a 5 minute warm-up at the beginning of each debating lesson.

Each is to be said twice:

1. Bubbling blubber
2. Cheap ship trips
3. Silver thimbles
4. Red leather, yellow leather
5. He ran from the Indians to the Andes in his undies
6. Truly plural
7. Lemon liniment
8. A big black bug bit a big brown bear
9. Bonnie burned the brown bread badly
10. Canned cod comes completely cooked
11. A cup of proper coffee in a copper coffee cup
12. Don't run along the wrong lane
13. Eight grey geese grazing gaily in Greece
14. The sun shines on the shop signs
15. Kurt kissed Kate and Kate kicked Kurt
16. Six thick thistle sticks
17. Black bugs' blood
18. A crow flew over the river with a lump of raw liver
19. Tom threw Tim three thumb tacks
20. Wriggly worms squirm regularly
21. Sheep shouldn't sleep in a shack. Sheep should sleep in a shed
22. Any noise annoys an oyster, but a noisy noise annoys an oyster most
23. Weak writers want white ruled writing paper
24. The sixth sheik's sixth sheep's sick

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

2 JUST A MINUTE

Purpose: *Students are introduced to the concept of relevance and to speaking within constraints.*

For playing 'Just a Minute' a stopwatch is required. The whole class is given a topic (i.e. TV, sport, string, cabbages, cars, teachers). About ten seconds later a name is announced, the clock is started and the named student stands and commences to speak on the topic. Any other class member may challenge their speech by challenging on one of three grounds: **Irrelevance, Repetition or Hesitation**. To challenge, they should raise their hand. When called upon, the stopwatch is stopped and the challenger has to explain their challenge. The teacher adjudicates and if the challenge is overruled the speaker is allowed to continue and the stopwatch is restarted. If the challenge is valid the challenger takes over until they are successfully challenged or until the one minute is up. The winner is the person who is speaking when the minute is up. Note that there is a difference between pausing and truly hesitating or stumbling. This activity can be made more challenging by adding rules. For instance, you could ban *any* speaker from repeating *any* idea that has already been brought up, or ban speakers from mentioning certain words, and allow the class to challenge on these grounds.

3 JUDGE

Purpose: *This role play has been devised to give the student the experience of using language persuasively.*

A child is selected and sits on a raised chair with folded sweater (or the like) draped over their head to represent a wig. They have just sentenced another selected child to seven years gaol for theft, murder, being out of bounds, picking their nose in class etc.

In turn each member of the class has to plead for leniency. After each plea the judge announces a sentence revised in the light of what they have just heard.

If the accused is given an identity (e.g. Captain Cook, Ben Hall or the author of a book studied in class) this game can add interest and depth in other areas of the curriculum.

If Bart Simpson is chosen as the prisoner it makes a good curtain raiser to the debate topic 'That TV is a bad influence on young children'. In a variant of this activity, Bart is charged with stealing exam papers from Principal Skinner's safe. The teacher plays the part of the judge and children are encouraged to take on roles of characters to defend Bart. There are definite advantages in having an adult rule on the appropriateness of evidence.

4 VERBAL PING PONG

Purpose: *Students experience the role of defence or opposition whether they associate with the viewpoint or not. They are also introduced to 'point-scoring', note-taking and Rebuttal.*

Choose a simple topic like 'That television is good for us'. The left half of the class is the Affirmative and the right is the Negative. Each half, in turn, is invited to make a fresh point which backs up their case. If successful, a point is marked on the blackboard. They can obtain a **double score** if, in the teacher's opinion, they demolish an opposing argument. Thus the importance of Rebuttal is introduced and, from this point forth, it should be strongly encouraged. Children are encouraged to note down their ideas as preparation for speaking. After five minutes, the Affirmative becomes the Negative and vice versa. After another five minutes points are tallied and the winning side is announced.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

5 TALK YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS (Balloon Debate)

Purpose: *Longer, stronger arguments with increased emphasis on opposing the arguments of others.*

Read the story below to the class, emphasising that each adventurer has a different occupation or profession.

You and three friends get the chance to go on an adventure trip in which you attempt to cross the ocean in a gas balloon.

Though the balloon is buffeted by storms and you endure some hardships, you find yourself, after three weeks, in sight of land. Suddenly you and your friends are in high spirits.

But what is that hissing sound...?

"We've sprung a leak!" you call. "Good job it's only small."

"It looks pretty serious to me," says your most miserable companion. "The balloon's going all floppy and we're going down."

"It's lucky it happened now," you exclaim, "when we're close to land!"

He looks at you, shaking his head with pity. "Not close enough," he says. "I'm afraid that, if the rest of us are going to stand a chance, you're going to have to jump out... Sorry about the man-eating sharks."

He's really getting on your nerves now.

"Why me!" you yell indignantly.

Your friends look awkwardly at the horizon and eventually one of them speaks.

"I'm sorry, but the fact is that we're more important than you."

They are all looking gravely at you and nodding in agreement. Time is running out. You take a deep breath and begin to speak....

Children can choose the profession they like or the teacher can appoint professions. Suggestions are: doctor, politician, teacher (they always have to jump), judge, police officer, sports-person, singer, actor, scientist, environmentalist. Whatever they are, students should be ready to defend their choice

Groups of four children are then allocated to a balloon so that they know the occupations of their fellow adventurers. The normal sized class will generate about seven balloons and, hence, about seven contests. On the reverse of the paper, they have to prepare a speech which could save their lives. Their task is to convince the class that they are more valuable to the world than at least one of their companions.

A 'balloon basket' can be formed at the front of the class using furniture and each group in turn plays out the scene which is set up on the sheet. The debate is concluded with a class vote and the enacting of the loser's heroic moment of glory when they can be invited to say a few last words.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

6 PRESENTATION EXERCISE

Purpose: *To encourage children to speak slowly and clearly.*

The following assignment could be given for homework so that students can practise in front of a mirror and/or family member to build up confidence for the 'public' performance in class. They will need instruction as to the relationship between pace and audience size and should be told that they will be assessed on eye contact, hand gestures, use of voice and fluency. The speech below is a guide which can be improved with humour, mention of sponsorship etc.

You are the captain of a champion sporting team which has just been presented with a trophy. This is your speech of acceptance which you must deliver as if on the stage of a small hall with an audience of about one hundred people.

"Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the team, I would like to say how happy we are to receive this magnificent trophy.

We didn't do it on our own and I would like to thank all the people who helped us. In particular I must, of course, mention Tom, our coach. I would also like to thank the teams who played against us. They all fought hard and there were plenty of times when they had us worried. It has all made for an exciting and enjoyable season of sport.

Thank you all, very much."

When speeches are delivered to the class, the adjudication grid for presentation (below) may be distributed for completion by members of the audience.

		Speaker's Name					
Manner	1	Eye Contact					
	2	Gestures					
	3	Use of Voice					
Matter	1	Clear Explanations					
	2	Attack					
	3	Information					
		Totals					

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

7 DEVELOPING AN ARGUMENT

Purpose: *To introduce the concepts of Issue and structure.*

Class discussion to precede this activity should focus on the “better than” component of this topic which lends itself to a structure where, in turn, certain aspects of life in both city and country are placed side-by-side and compared. This is far superior to a speech which devotes one section to extolling the virtues of the city and another to denigrating the country.

In this speech the Issue is which place provides the best overall lifestyle and so is the **happiest**. This theme has to be borne in mind for a satisfactory completion of this exercise.

Keeping the same style and reasoning, write the second half of this speech which is meant to convince your audience that it is better to live in the city than the country.

Boys and Girls,

I am very pleased to argue the case for living in the city rather than the country because, in doing so, I'm agreeing with the nearly 90 per cent of Australians who have chosen to live in cities.

They have chosen to live where they will be **happiest!**

They have chosen to live in a large cluster of fellow human-beings who cooperate with each other to get the best from their environment. This friendly huddle of people is not what you get in the country. People in the country say that they are more friendly, but the way they spread their houses around the landscape shows that they like to get as far away from each other as they can.

No, they tell us, it's not that they hate each other. They just enjoy the wide open spaces of the country. Mostly, it seems to me, that those wide open spaces get in the way....between us and the things we need that make us happy.

Sickness and accidents mess up all our lives but at least in the city, in an emergency, an ambulance arrives promptly and takes you to a nearby hospital where you receive the latest treatment. In the country, hospitals are smaller and much more poorly equipped....but it doesn't really matter because, by the time the ambulance arrives and gets you there, you'll probably be dead anyway!

It's a bit of a worry!

The city is an exciting place where entertainment is always close by. In the country.....

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

8 SPEECH MAKING – GROUPWORK

Purpose: *To further refine the art of speechmaking and to develop teamwork.*

- Set a topic, like 'We get too much homework'.
- Give all children ten minutes to write a speech.
- Split children into mixed ability groups of 4 or 5.
- Each student in turn delivers their speech to their group.
- Each group decides on a champion speaker.
- Each group adds to their champion's speech with material from their own speeches.
- Each group coaches their champion in the new composite speech.
- Class reassembles for a competition to find the 'Champion of Champions'.
- Teacher adjudicates, giving reasons for choice but paying particular attention to whether their material is arranged in a logical way.

9 STRUCTURED SPEAKING

Purpose: *To use a structured plan in delivering a speech.*

Set a simple topic like 'Fishing is a cruel sport', 'Horse racing should be banned', or 'Zoos should be abolished'. Children write a speech using the following headings:

- Topic
- Greeting – (Appropriate to audience)
- Introduction – (Strong statement making clear your opinion)
- Definition/Issue – (Explain the topic and what the whole argument should be about)
- Plan – (Say what points you are going to cover)
- Argument – (Develop your plan and finish with a summary)

10 KEYWORDS

Purpose: *To facilitate the transfer from fully scripted speeches to palm cards, and to encourage improvisation and a more natural style of presentation.*

Writing out a speech in full with each word duly pondered is a worthwhile activity. The time comes, however, when speakers should cease **reading** to their audiences. They must leave their scripts behind and, with no paper to hide behind, look their audience straight in the eye and start **telling** the speech to them.

Many of the foregoing activities result in a written speech but, in this activity, children are told that in the delivery they will be allowed to extract only **ten key words** (or phrases) as prompts. As each speaker takes their turn they are asked for their ten words which are written in order on the chalkboard. The speech is then presented from the **back** of the classroom. Audience participation is ensured by handing out copies of the adjudication grid above.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

(Note: The activities on this page are designed to involve the entire class simultaneously.)

11 CAR YARD (One group)

Pretend the teachers' car park is a used car yard for which you have to make a TV commercial. Get information from five of the owners about the performance and history of five of the cars that you would like to sell. Use realistic prices.

Remember:

- Times are tough and your business depends on attracting customers and keeping them interested.
- Be lively.
- Share out the work fairly and don't leave anybody out.
- Don't be rude about your teacher's car!

12 GOOD ADVICE TO YOUNG CHILDREN 1 (One group)

Prepare and deliver an item to perform to younger classes, which will persuade them to protect themselves against the harmful effects of the sun. Present your information in a lively and entertaining way. They will be allowed to ask you questions afterwards so make sure you know your subject well.

13 GOOD ADVICE TO YOUNG CHILDREN 2 (One group)

Prepare and deliver an item to perform to younger classes which will persuade them to have healthy eating habits. Present your information in a lively and entertaining way. They will be allowed to ask you questions afterwards so make sure you know your subject well.

14 AWKWARD CONTEXTS

Purpose: *To develop consistency.*

In this activity the left hand side of the class competes against the right. Two students from the right hand side are selected and are secretly given a context and a sentence. They have a few minutes to prepare an improvised dialogue which *must* include the given sentence. After the enactment the opposing half of the class have to guess what the sentence was. They score two points if their first guess was correct and one point if they needed two guesses. If neither guess was successful then the right hand side gets a chance to guess and earn a bonus point. Teachers can balance the awkwardness of the match, suiting it to the ability of the participants or can make the whole process automatic by preparing cards which can be picked at random.

Some sentences could be: **"I always leave the red ones to last."** **"Don't forget your raincoat."** **"I'm going to need some onions."** **"Take three really deep breaths."** **"Get that fish out of here!"** **"Which is the best way to the Post Office?"**

Some contexts are: **On a mountain, in the kitchen, in a spaceship, in a broom cupboard, at a supermarket, at the Olympics, before an exam.**

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

This section will assist students in developing the skills needed for the preparation of a debate.

A series of weekly quiz sheets have been devised which should be issued with a week's notice of testing. It is the student's own responsibility to obtain the required information. It is advisable to give the school librarian a copy of the current research questions.

Assignments become more rigorous as sources move beyond the dictionary and the atlas. A natural outcome is that children will find that working together will cut their workloads. This covert cooperation can be allowed to evolve and, at the appropriate time, be legitimised and organised into the forerunner of the teamwork essential to good debating.

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 1

1. Where does a troglodyte live?
2. What metal is obtained from galena?
3. What is sheet metal coated with to galvanise it?
4. What part of your body would be affected if you had conjunctivitis?
5. A common disease among sailors used to be scurvy. What was its cause?
6. Sheep provide us with wool. Which animals provide us with (a) angora, (b) cashmere, (c) mohair?
7. Where do people dance these dances (a) seguidilla, (b) bolero, (c) fandango?
8. Lumbago is a pain in the back. What is plumbago?
9. Approximately how much time in each hour does a commercial radio station devote to advertising?
10. The acorn is the fruit of what tree?

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 2

1. What is the capital of Afghanistan?
2. Who is the present Premier of Victoria?
3. What is a terminal illness?
4. What materials are used for the making of these cloths (a) gingham, (b) chintz, (c) damask?
5. Find another word that means the same as seer.
6. From kelp we get iodine, potassium and other minerals. What is kelp?
7. In the human body, where are the hamstring tendons?
8. What is the main language of North America?
9. What was Pithecanthropus?
10. What is a brumby?

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 3

1. What is measured with a seismograph?
2. All Vikings wanted to go to Valhalla. Why?
3. What is a forequarter?
4. What is a fresco and where would you find one?
5. What is a Gallup Poll?
6. What is a barbarous person like?
7. What is the Greenhouse Effect?
8. What is a decibel?
9. What is a fanatic?
10. What is the capital city of Saudi Arabia?

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 4

1. Where is East Timor?
2. Where and what is the Tigris?
3. Where and what is Titicaca?
4. In which Australian state is the mouth of the River Murray?
5. Where in Australia is the Huon Valley?
6. If you floated down the River Nile, in which sea or ocean would you eventually find yourself?
7. If you sail from the Adriatic Sea into the Mediterranean Sea, what strait do you pass through?
8. On what island would you find the cities of Nagoya, Osaka, Yokohama and Tokyo?
9. What island lies between Java and Lombok?
10. Where in the world is Bolivia?

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 5

1. Of what ocean is the Bismarck Sea a part?
2. One West Indian nation is made up of two islands. If Trinidad is one, what is the other?
3. Beijing is the capital city of what country?
4. Where is the country of Namibia and what is its capital?
5. What is the diameter of the earth?
6. Halley's Comet came close to the earth in 1910. In what year did we next see it?
7. What language do they speak in Austria?
8. What do the letters W.T.O stand for?
9. What is a G.D.P?
10. What is the name of your local council?

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 6

1. What do the letters ANZAC stand for?
2. What important part in Australian history was played by Sir Joseph Banks?
3. Who was Bennelong and what connection did he have with the site of the Sydney Opera House?
4. In their creed, Muslims state, "There is no God but Allah". Who do they claim to be the prophet of Allah?
5. Which colour is seen on the inside of the arch of a rainbow?
6. Who is the President of the United States of America?
7. How long did World War Two last?
8. Bonsai is the Japanese art of dwarfing trees. What is the Japanese art of paper-folding?
9. Lenin and Trotsky were leaders of the Russian Revolution. Lenin died a natural death. How did Trotsky die?
10. What ship did Captain Cook use in his first expedition?

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 7

1. In an hour of television, how many minutes of commercials would there probably be?
2. Be able to draw a wimple.
3. Sydney Cove was the first settlement by white people in Australia. One reason for the choice of this site was the presence of fresh water. What was the name of the stream which supplied this?
4. What famous book was written by Marcus Clarke?
5. What is a G.D.P?
6. Who was Kemel Attaturk and what part did he play in Australian history?
7. What language is spoken in Lebanon?
8. Name two products of Leeton, NSW?
9. Name three universities in the Sydney metropolitan area?
10. In what year was Sydney Harbour Bridge completed?

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

After developing the skills of the class with the activities outlined above, it will be time to introduce the students to formal debating, with all of its rules and structures.

INTRODUCING DEBATING IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM

The forerunners of formal debating (e.g. balloon debates) in the Primary classroom have a basis in fun and a tolerance of mistakes. This should not be lost as proper debating begins. The procedures and terminology should be introduced gradually, in a way that is simple and easy to understand.

Scoring

Real debates are not decided by scores, but scoring can be useful in introducing students to debating. Initially this can serve the observed needs of the students. If, for instance, they are not speaking for long enough, then allow one bonus point for every 15 seconds of sustained relevant speech. Even in local interschool “friendlies” teachers may, by mutual agreement, give weighting to areas which they think need development.

An allocation of maximum points which has served many local inter-school debates has been: Presentation – 10 points per speaker, Content – 10 points per speaker, Teamwork – 5 points

This later evolves into Manner, Matter and Method.

Definition of the topic

From the start, children need to see that here, agreement, rather than conflict between the two teams is desirable as there are usually much better things to argue about. They should be encouraged to look at phrases, looking to the totality of the topic for a reasonable explanation of how it should be treated, rather than chase individual words in a dictionary.

Issue

Can the team agree and sum up in a single word or phrase what the debate should be all about? If they can, then this will form a focus that will serve them well. Again, this should not be a matter of contention between the two teams.

Teamline

The agreed answer to the question “Why?” or “Why Not?” when applied to the topic. This provides a rational basis to each team’s approach and, in singling out their opponents’ Teamline for attack, they will be choosing the best possible target.

Allocation

This will become very important later on but, in most primary debates, all that is necessary is a brief preview of what the First and Second Speakers are going to talk about. Do not allocate to the Third Speaker and please note that Third Speakers should not introduce new material.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

SAMPLE DEBATING PREPARATION

That computers are good for us

This topic can produce conflicts over economy, work ethic, playtime, entertainment, health, etc. It is shown here how in the preparation, it is ensured that both sides engage completely in the debate. For the best result students should have had some experience in debating teams and be acquainted with the Verbal Ping Pong activity.

Phase 1: Verbal Ping Pong

Proceed as described above, recording points on the board as shown, but dispense with recording marks. Each side has to produce six Arguments, either proving their case or disproving the opposition case.

Phase 2: Discussions

The Issue.

What, as near as we can make it, in one word, are these Arguments all about? Both sides should agree. A likely contender in this case is the impact on our lifestyle and this is the Issue we shall adopt.

The Teamline.

Choose a sentence or phrase which will sum up how each team is going to prove their case.

- Affirmative: "Computers are good for us because they help us work and play"
- Negative: "Computers are not good for us because they are a dangerous distraction" (i.e. our health, our homework, human interaction, etc.)

The Allocation.

Who is going to talk about what? Each side should split the material into two logical divisions as their Allocation. Remember teams should only allocate to the First and Second Speakers.

Phase 3: Conclusion

To "win" this preparation stage, each side must contest all the Arguments of Matter raised by the other side. These are recorded as points of Rebuttal and are judged by how well they "knock out" the Arguments which make up the opposing case. The real winners, of course, will be those who use this preparation most effectively in the debate which follows.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Topic: That computers are good for us

Affirmative Arguments (remember to develop Examples to support these)	Negative Arguments (remember to develop Examples to support these)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Computers help students to research their homework and learn about the world. 2. Computer games help people to unwind. 3. Computers allow us to communicate easily with friends anywhere. 4. Computers help people to do their jobs more efficiently. 5. Computers have more up to date information than books. 6. Computers help people to shop, book tickets and do chores more quickly. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Computer games and email distract students from their homework. 2. Spending too much time at the computer makes people unhealthy. 3. The Internet has many dangerous sites and chat rooms. 4. Computers stop us from meeting face to face and talking properly. 5. Viruses and bugs make computers unreliable. 6. The information on the internet is not checked and is often false.
Affirmative Allocation	Negative Allocation
1 st Speaker: Work (Points 1, 4 and 5) 2 nd Speaker: Leisure (Points 2, 3 and 6)	1 st Speaker: Distractions (Points 1, 2 and 4) 2 nd Speaker: Dangers (Points 3, 5 and 6)
Affirmative Teamline	Negative Teamline
Computers are good for us because they help us work and play	Computers are not good for us because they are a dangerous distraction
Issue: Impact on our lifestyle	
Possible Rebuttal of above Arguments	Possible Rebuttal of above Arguments
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The research done on computers is typically unreliable. 2. Computer games are addictive and lead to obesity. 3. Communicating with our friends is just another distraction. Talk to them at lunchtime. 4. Computers crash all the time and make our jobs difficult. 5. Books are far more reliable because they are carefully edited. 6. Buying things online is dangerous. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students are capable of getting their homework done and enjoying the Internet. 2. Computers save us time so we can exercise more. Our diet is the problem. 3. Many programs exist to block dangerous websites. 4. Often people cannot meet face to face with their friends, so email is a better option. 5. Information on computers can be backed up. 6. People can get their information from websites they trust, like newspaper homepages.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

INTRODUCING PUBLIC SPEAKING IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM

Encourage students to think about structure. They should focus on one idea or issue in their speech, develop it and use one or two examples to illustrate each point. They need to link their points back to the main idea. The ideas in the speech must follow a logical sequence so that they can be easily absorbed by the audience.

- **The Introduction** should capture the audience's attention. What is said in the Introduction should make the audience feel that they want to know more.
- **The Body** of the speech is where the main ideas or points brought up in the Introduction are expanded on. It is often useful to select a couple of examples to further emphasise the point.
- **The Conclusion** is the most remembered part of the speech. It remains freshest in the minds of the audience because it is the last thing said. Therefore it must make an impact by efficiently summing up what the speech is about.

Content

- Speakers should avoid simply telling stories. A speaker brings life to a speech, so the speaker's personal perspective or opinion is valued in public speaking.
- The speech should be original. Speeches lacking in originality have little impact because the speaker is not personally motivated to convince the audience.
- Avoid listing a series of ideas or examples. It is wasteful of time that could be spent getting a point across to the audience.

Manner

- It is very important that a speaker appears natural. Public Speaking is not a dramatic performance. It is a means of communicating an idea to an audience in an effort to inform or convince them. If certain gestures would not feel natural when talking to your teacher or friends, they would not be appropriate in front of an audience either.
- The tone should match the content of the speech. If the subject of the speech is serious, then a light-hearted tone would be an inappropriate means of getting through to an audience.
- When making an important point it is always a good idea to pause slightly to allow the audience time to reflect on the point.
- Speakers should avoid reading from cards as it reduces their connection with the audience and makes the speech sound flat. Try to hold cards in one hand so that gestures are not restricted.

Introductory Activity

Use your own words to reveal to your audience that you are not who they think you are. You are, in fact, an alien in human guise. You are an interplanetary inspector and your job is to report to your Headquarters in deep space on how the people of Earth are getting on with each other.

Tell us about your report. Are we getting it right? Do we pass the test? Is there hope for us? Is the Earth doomed? Make sure you give good reasons for your decision.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

INTRODUCING IMPROMPTU SPEECH-WRITING

Impromptu topics are usually open-ended in order to encourage variation among the speakers. The topics are often derived from newspaper headlines, so these are an excellent source of practice topics for Impromptu Speeches.

Planning an Impromptu Speech is the most important step in the whole process. A well-planned speech flows because the speaker is clear on what they will be talking about and can therefore relax when delivering their speech. In the Impromptu Speech, speakers who commit to one idea and develop it fully are much more likely to communicate something meaningful to an audience than those who come up with a number of ideas and proceed to discuss each one very briefly. Impromptu Speeches are only one or two minutes in length, so speakers need to learn to use their time efficiently. It's best to give inexperienced students a framework like the one below to organise their preparation time around.

- **Interpret the topic:** Think about all the different ways that the topic can be interpreted and commit to one interpretation which is the least obvious. In other words, throw out your first idea, because it is likely that this is the first thing that the other contestants will be thinking of. There is a distinct advantage in being original. If you get stuck, then go with your first idea but remember to develop it properly. If an idea is developed properly, then you are still at a distinct advantage.
- **Ask Who? What? When? How? Why?:** This encourages speakers to think of the different aspects associated with the idea that they have committed to instead of being tempted to list a lot of unrelated ideas in their speech.
- **Prepare the Introduction:** The Introduction should capture the audience's attention. Do not restate the topic or define its meaning – the audience knows what the topic is. It is up to you to tell the audience something they don't know.
- **Prepare the Conclusion:** Plan your Conclusion to be approximately 30 seconds long so that you can move on to it when the warning bell sounds. Don't begin the Conclusion with "To conclude" or "In conclusion" and never say "that's all" or "I can't think of anything else" at the end of your Conclusion. Remember, the Conclusion is the last thing from your speech that you leave the audience with to think about, so try to make an impact.
- **Prepare the body:** Think of some reasons and examples to support your opinion or idea. Do not simply list these, they must be explained and linked to your original idea. Do not use more than one or two examples.
- **Rehearse the speech:** If there is any time left, quietly go over your ideas, arranging your cards so that they appear in a logical sequence.