

Public Forum Debate

1. Debaters have been given a topic, and during the tournament, they will debate both sides of the issue.
2. Before the tournament, you should let the coach of your school know that you are ready to judge. The coach will check the entire school in. After you check in, log onto Tabroom. There will be an option for the Judge's Lounge. You should report there and stay there until you receive further instructions.
3. When registration is finished, you will receive a text message to report for judge instructions. Please follow the link to these instructions. Instructions are very important if you have never judged before or if you are unfamiliar with the online tournament.
4. During the judge instructions, you will receive a TEST BALLOT. This is not your first-round ballot. Its purpose is to show you what to do. You will be instructed how to fill out the ballot.
5. When instructions are finishing, you will receive a text message if you are on the first round. Please do not report to the first round until instructions are finished.
6. When the instructions are finished, go back to Tabroom. If you are on Round 1, you will receive a text and an email blast telling you that you are on. If you do not receive this blast, please go back to the Virtual Judge Lounge.
7. Once the speakers have arrived, press the green start button on Tabroom. This will tell the tabroom that you are ready to start the round. Please do not hit that green button until you are ready to start
8. While the debate takes place, you should be taking notes (or flowing).
9. The debate will begin:
 - A) 1st Pro Speaker (4 minutes): The 1st Pro speaker will speak for 4 minutes to explain why the topic should be affirmed. The Pro should define any terms of importance. This speech is usually written out.
 - B) 1st Con Speaker (4 minutes): The 1st Con speaker will speak for 4 minutes to explain why the topic should not be affirmed. This speech is usually written out.
 - C) Crossfire (3 minutes): The first speakers will question each other. The Pro asks the first question. After the first question, either one may ask a question of the other. Each debater should show skill in asking and answering questions.

D) 2nd Pro Speaker (4 minutes): The 2nd Pro speaker will speak for 4 minutes to clash with what the Con said and to rebuild the Pro case. Therefore, it is not usually written out. A good speech will refer to what has been said before in the debate.

E) 2nd Con Speaker (4 minutes): The 2nd Con speaker will speak for 4 minutes to clash with what the Pro said and to rebuild the Con case. Therefore, it is not usually written out. A good speech will refer to what has been said before in the debate.

F) Crossfire (3 minutes): The second speakers will question each other. The Pro asks the first question. After the first question, either one may ask a question of the other. Each debater should show skill in asking and answering questions.

G) Pro Summary (3 minutes): The 1st Pro will try to summarize the salient points of the case and explain why the Pro's position is stronger.

H) Con Summary (3 minutes): The 1st Con will try to summarize the salient points of the case and explain why the Con's position is stronger.

I) Grand Crossfire (3 minutes): Both members of each team ask questions of the other side. Pro asks the first question. After the first question, either member of a team may ask a question of the other. Each debater should show skill in asking and answering questions.

J) Pro Final Focus (2 minutes): The 2nd Pro will give one or two reasons why the Pro should win. No new ideas may be introduced during this speech.

K) Con Final Focus (2 minutes): The 2nd Con will give one or two reasons why the Con should win. No new ideas may be introduced during this speech.

10. During the debate, please time the debaters. Debaters may also choose to time themselves, but you are the official time of the round.

11. During the debate, debaters may use "prep time." Each team has 3 minutes of prep time. You should count the prep time of the team that is about to speak. However, the other team is also permitted to use that time.

12. During the debate, please fill out the ballot, either electronically or on paper. Please explain to the debaters which ideas worked and which ideas did not. Please give the debaters information about how they can perform better next time.

13. The stance of a debate judge is unusual. Debate is an intellectual exercise, not an ultimate search for truth. Your job is not to judge the debaters against what you know to be true; you judge the debaters against each other. If the affirmative makes a weak argument, the negative must point that out. If the argument goes unanswered, it stands, even if you as the judge know

the correct answer. Thus, to win, a debater need not convince you of his side; the debater must merely be better.

14. After you choose a winner, please assign each debater points between 18 and 30. Please give more points to the winner. Please also realize that the points are relative. Thus, a 30 for a novice debater might only be a 24 for a varsity debater.

14. Please submit your ballot on Tabroom as soon as possible. If you need to write more substantive comments, be sure that you submit the results. Comments may be done up until the awards ceremony.