

Debate Rules and Suggestions

Rule 1: Even if you don't agree with a position you are assigned to debate, your job is to debate it to the best of your abilities.

Rule 2: Do NOT speak longer than the time limit (although you may finish your sentence if time is called while you are in mid-sentence).

Rule 3: Do not speak during an opponent's allotted time.

Rule 4: No name calling. It will make your audience (ie. your judges) think less of you and your argument.

Rule 5: When you are not debating and sitting as a judge of the other debate, your rubric and your task requires your full undivided attention.

Suggestion 1: Choose your roles carefully according to individual strengths and skills.

Suggestion 2: Have your speech and questions prepared but be ready to adjust or scrap them if needed. A debate is a living organism that is constantly changing and evolving.

Suggestion 3: Try to predict your opponents' strongest points and refute them (before they even deliver them if possible.) This makes you appear to be a balanced thinker who has weighed all options while at the same time taking the wind out of your opponent's sails.

Suggestion 4: At all times be polite and dignified. Passion for an argument can peacefully coexist with respect (for yourself, your team, your opponent and your audience.)

Suggestion 5: Your greatest strength is often your ability to work together as a team.