

WHY DEBATING?

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BRAINS

CONTENT OF ARGUMENTS :

- Knowledge
- Culture
- Research

LOGIC OF ARGUMENTS :

- Accurate
- Well-put
- Consistent

OPEN-MINDED



Consider the **MULTIPLE ASPECTS** of an issue

LIVE INTERACTION

- LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND
- SPEAK AND MAKE YOURSELF UNDERSTOOD
- IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE
- IN ENGLISH

ARGUMENTS

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COMING UP WITH ARGUMENTS

- **understand the topic** thoroughly (definition)
- figure out **why the topic is important**
- think **who** might be **affected**, or **what** sphere is concerned (Social, Political, Economics, Environment, Regional, Medical, Practical, Moral, *etc.*)
- establish **comparisons** (proofs by analogies) or **oppositions**
- search for **facts, figures, studies** (proof by authority), events, *etc.* supporting your case
- **link** to the issue

CONSTRUCTING AN ARGUMENT

ARE model

- **A Assertion**

The minimum driving age should be raised to 18.

- **R Reasoning**

Raising the driving age will save lives by reducing accidents.

- **E Evidence**

16-year-old drivers have three times as many crashes as drivers aged 18 and 19.

- A : a label (encapsulates the argument)

- R : an explanation (key reasons logically linked)

- E : examples, etc. (linked to the logic)

« ***This team believes that*** »

« ***This team argues that*** »

FALLACIES

FALLACIES are common errors in reasoning that will undermine the logic of your argument.

Adapted from :

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/659/03/>

- *Ad hominem*
- *Ad populum*
- *Begging the Claim*
- *Circular Argument*
- *Either/or*
- *Hasty Generalization*
- *Moral Equivalence*
- *Post hoc ergo propter hoc*
- *Red Herring*
- *Slippery Slope*
- *Straw Man*

REFUTING AN ARGUMENT

- **understand** it: take notes and analyse it
- **identify** it: name it, summarize it briefly
- then **challenge the conclusion or / and the method**
(irrelevant examples or evidence, fallacies, biased argumentation, *etc.*)
- or **raise another issue** not directly linked but relevant to the motion
- **conclude**
"You are correct to a point, but"
"They say, but ...because...therefore"

POINTS OF INFORMATION

*“During speeches, speakers on the opposite side may offer **short points of rebuttal or questions to the speaker known as points of information**. To do this, the speaker offering the point of information must stand and say 'On that point', 'On a point of information' or similar. They must then wait to see if the speaker speaking accepts or declines it. If accepted, the point of information can last up to around fifteen seconds and the speaker speaking may ask for it to stop at any point.”*

<https://cus.org/members/debating/what-debating>

- “Yes, I’ll take your point,”
- “No thank you,”
- “Not at this moment, thank you,”
- Not allowed during “protected time”.

STRUCTURE

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SET FORMATS

- There are **a few set formats**, such as team vs individual debate, parliamentary debate (modeled on the practices of the British parliamentary system and other parliaments around the world, with such phrasing as « This House Believes »), legislative debate, mock trial, public forum debate, *etc.*
- NB : The “**motion** (or proposition)” is the idea to be discussed.
- NB : “**protected time**” is time when questions or challenges cannot be raised.
- In this UEL, you will mostly practise a format **adapted from parliamentary debate**.
- **Motion**: always announced **ahead of time** to allow you time to search for your arguments.
- Each student will always be liable to **argue both sides** (chosen randomly).
- **Teams of 3**.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE (adapted rom)

- **1st proposition, 1st opposition:** introduction and definition ; partially 'protected time' ; 3 arguments ; 3 minutes
- **1st rebuttal, 2nd rebuttal:** 2 minutes ; new arguments allowed
- **1st concluding speech, 2nd concluding speech:** 1-2 minutes, no new arguments allowed

TAKING NOTES: FLOW CHARTS

PROPOSITION SPEECH	OPPOSITION SPEECH	<i>etc.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1st argument details- 2nd argument details (link to ↗)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- answers to arguments (↙ link to)- 1st argument details- 2nd argument details	

STYLE

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BODY LANGUAGE

Debaters should take special care of

- **voice**

speed and pauses

tone (modulate pitch)

volume

- **presenting clarity**

e.g. use shorter sentences, not too many filler words

- **body posture**

notes (necessary, but not obstrusive)

eye contact (keep shifting your gaze, don't stare)

avoiding distracting movement or gesture

A FEW WEBSITES

GENERAL WEBSITES, SOCIETIES, COMPETITIONS

- <http://www.frenchdebatingassociation.fr/>
- <http://idebate.org/>
- <http://debate.uvm.edu/>
- <http://www.esu.org/>
- <http://highschooldebate.org/>
- <https://sites.google.com/site/oxfordschoolsdebate/>
- <http://www.joyoftournaments.com/ma/harvard/info.asp?p=4>
- <http://www.debate.org/>
- http://www.studyramagrandesecoles.com/home_news.php?Id=9463
- <http://www.middleschooldebate.com/index.htm>

DEBATE VIDEOS

- <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ioppn/news/maudsleydebates/debate-archive-31-50.aspx>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85sSJp3Mf9w>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngPv3kfPDck>
- <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/series/five-minute-debates>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lgGZ1NFubw>
- <http://idebate.org/media/video>

DEBATE FORMATS

- <http://www.ru.idebate.org/about/debate/formats>
- <http://debate.uvm.edu/dcpdf/PFNFL.pdf>

DEBATE METHOD, TOPICS, VOCABULARY

- <http://debateable.org/debate-topics/constructing-arguments>
- <https://cus.org/members/debating/what-debating>
- <http://www.wikihow.com/Win-Infomal-Arguments-and-Debates>
- <http://www.debateable.org/debate-topics/speaker-roles>
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/659/03/>
- <http://www.paulnoll.com/Books/Clear-English/English-debate.html>
- <http://www.middleschooldebate.com/resources/studentresources.htm>
- <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/searching/fournets.htm>
- <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/external/1943>
- <http://www.fallacyfiles.org/index.html>

DEBATE TOPICS

- http://www.debatingmatters.com/topicguides/topicguide_categories/C18/
- <http://www.debate.org/opinions/science>

- **Popularity.**

In the English speaking world, debating is popular as an extracurricular activity in middle and highschool (in addition to sports, music, *etc.*). Some people keep on in university competitions - especially people into politics, law, *etc.*

- **What is Debating?**

“A debate is a structured argument. Two sides speak alternately for and against a particular contention usually based on a topical issue. Unlike the arguments you might have with your family or friends however, each person is allocated a time they are allowed to speak for and any interjections are carefully controlled. The subject of the dispute is often prearranged so you may find yourself having to support opinions with which you do not normally agree. You also have to argue as part of a team, being careful not to contradict what others on your side have said.”

<http://www.sfu.ca/cmns/130d1/HOWTODEBATE.htm>

- **What makes a good debater?**

“Typically, judges decide how persuasive debaters have been through three key criteria:

Content: What we say and the arguments and examples we use.

Style: How we say it and the language and voice we use.

Strategy: How well we engage with the topic, respond to other people's arguments and structure what we say.”

<https://cus.org/members/debating/what-debating>