

Debate Format & Preparation

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- An illustration showing the silhouettes of six people in profile, facing right. Above them is a complex network of green lines connecting various icons. The icons include a smartphone, a tablet, a lightbulb, a laptop, a globe, a cloud, a magnifying glass, a pencil, a speech bubble, a gear, a pie chart, a bar chart, a document, a mail icon, a play button, and a tree. The overall theme is digital connectivity and communication.



The Process

1. **Class Survey on topic** (Google form -- 30s)
2. **Opening Statement** (1 minute)
3. **Main Argument** (2 minutes)
4. **Break** to prepare rebuttal (3 minutes)
5. **Rebuttal** (1 minute)
6. **Concluding Statement** (30 seconds)

Debate Survey: death penalty

Answer only the first question before the debate. After the debate, answer the second question.

* Required

Should capital punishment (the "death penalty") be allowed? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

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- ☐ Yes
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- ☐ Unsure

SUBMIT

1. Opening Statement

- State the topic
- Give informational background which will prep the audience to hear your point of view
- You can focus on information which supports your point, but don't get into your arguments yet





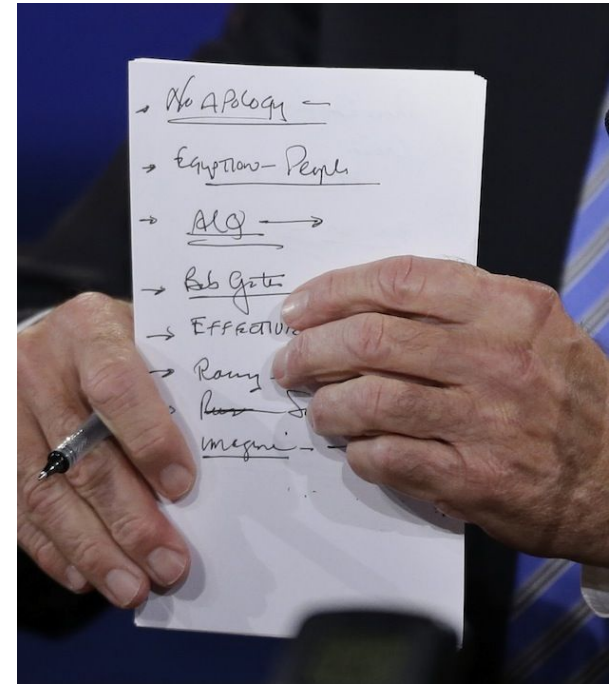
2. Main Argument



- NOTE: as the opposing team makes their argument, take notes so you can rebut them as effectively as possible
- Craft a clear, short paragraph for each point
- Focus on at least 3 but no more than 5 points
- Restate your position at the end

3. Rebuttal

- Referring to your notes, rebut your opponent's main points one at a time
- You can also rebut points they didn't make as a way of strengthening your argument or if you don't have points to rebut their specific arguments





4. Concluding Statement

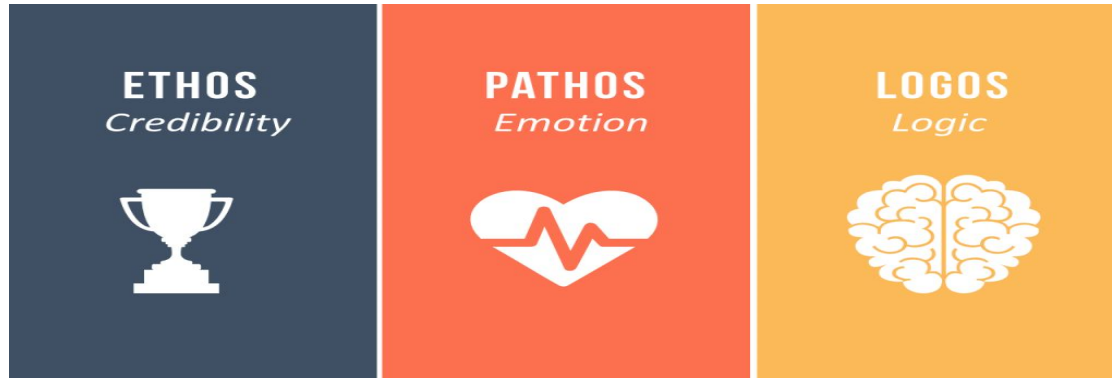
- Restate the topic in different words
- Summarize your main points (like a lawyer making her last statement to a jury)
- Do not introduce new arguments

Conclusion Outline

1. Restate the thesis IN DIFFERENT WORDS.
2. Make reference to your hook.
3. Summarize main points in ONE SENTENCE.
4. Choose a strategy.
 - General to specific
 - Specific to general
 - Give a warning and state the consequences of failing to act
 - Give advice or offer a possible solution.
 - Tell the reader what he should now think, do, or feel
 - Tell what you really think of the topic.
 - Tell what lessons or truths should now be understood

What kind of arguments work?

- **Ethos** -- arguments based upon someone's credibility or upstanding character; they create respect for the speaker
- **Pathos** -- arguments based upon emotional appeal; they create sympathy with the speaker
- **Logos** -- arguments based on facts, data, and logic; they create convincing appeals in the minds of the listeners



Never attack your opponent; the point is to dig into **ideas** and help the audience think critically about the issue.





What now?

- Type up your opening statement.
 - As you type, read your writing to yourself to make sure it is clear and convincing. Make corrections -- if it's hard for you to read it clearly, it will be even harder for the audience to understand it!
 - Practice to ensure that it is just under one minute long.
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- Type up your arguments in short paragraphs. As above, read them to yourself and make corrections.
 - Practice to ensure that reading all of them takes just under two minutes.