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Teacher's Guide

to

Introducing Debate

in the Classroom

INTRODUCTION TO DEBATE: OVERVIEW 2
 Generic Debate Format 3

UNIT 1

 Title: Introduction to debate 4

UNIT 2

 Title: Expanding on the concept of debate 8

UNIT 3

 Title: Affirmative case structure 12

UNIT 4

 Title: Overview of Negative strategy 16

UNIT 5

 Title: Overview of debate 20

UNIT 6

 Title: Discussion in detail 24

UNIT 7

 Title: The great debate 26

CONCLUSION 28

INTRODUCTION TO DEBATE: OVERVIEW

The objective of this resource is to provide an introduction to debate that will allow you to use debate in the classroom. Debate in the classroom can be an end in itself, or it can be used as a way to facilitate research and discussion of an issue in the curriculum. Whether it is used for the latter purpose or not, the recipients will benefit from developing public speaking skills, critical thinking skills, research skills and teamwork skills.

It is possible to develop competency in debate without speech training. There is no question, however, that a student's competence in debate will develop more rapidly if accompanied by some training in public speaking. If you choose to get right into debate, this competence in public speaking will come with time and practice.

During the last 30 years there has been a growing interest among Canadian educators in promoting debate, particularly to provide a pedagogical structure for the oral component of curricula. Although debate is as old as Greek philosophy, it is only during the last two decades that associations have existed in Canada for the purpose of encouraging involvement in debate.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, two such associations are the Newfoundland Federated League of Debaters (NFLD) and the Newfoundland and Labrador Speech and Debate Union (SDU).

Debate is often seen as more intimidating and more difficult than public speaking. To some extent, this perception is correct. Unlike public speaking, there is an expectation that the participant will react to and challenge contentions made by other speakers (opponents). This means that, although preparation is essential, in many cases it is not possible to prepare speeches. This should not be viewed as intimidating. What we are dealing with here is the challenge of learning to be resourceful thinkers who can synthesize ideas and quickly articulate them. If you think about it, this is one of the most basic, but important, skills that educators can offer students. Debate is based on simple, logical concepts and does not need to be conducted in a formal and rigid way.

Debate often involve two teams of two people speaking in a specific order; this is just one type of debate. The process is infinitely variable and whatever works in your class is fine.

Depending on the circumstances, the debates may work better if you use teams of 3 or 4 or more students. You will have to consider the maturity of your students, the time available and the size of the class.

Generic Debate Format

There are different types of debate and it is important that you know what kind of debate you will be participating in. There are some things, however, that all debate formats have in common:

- 1) There is a *resolution* of policy or value that provides the basic substance of the discussion. The terms of this resolution will be defined by the first speaker of the debate.
- 2) There are two teams representing those in favour of the resolution (*Government* or *Affirmative*) and those against (*Opposition* or *Negative*)
- 3) The Government/Affirmative always has the burden to prove its side.
- 4) The debate closes with final rebuttals on both sides which summarise their respective positions.

Generic Debate Overview (Does not show breaks, cross-examination, and discussion.)					
1 st Affirmative	1 st Negative	2 nd Affirmative	2 nd Negative	Neg Rebuttal	Aff Rebuttal
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Introduction</i>	<i>No new arguments can be introduced .</i> <i>Explain why your team should win and the other team should lose</i> <i>Remind the judges of your arguments.</i> <i>Tell the judges why they should believe your arguments even after the other team's attack</i> <i>Explain why the judges should not listen to the other team</i> <i>Review critical evidence.</i>	
<i>Definitions</i>	<i>If necessary, attack definitions</i>	<i>Clash with points made by Negative and rebuild Affirmative case (proof)</i>	<i>Continue attack on Affirmative (proof)</i>		
<i>Explain why present system is bad and needs change (proof)</i>	<i>Clash with needs for change (proof)</i>	<i>Present plan, if not already presented (proof)</i>			
<i>At least introduce the plan or present all of plan (policy debate)</i>	<i>If necessary, present counterplan (policy debate)</i>				
<i>Present reasons why</i>	<i>Clash with reasons Present counter-reasons</i>				

UNIT 1

Title: Introduction to debate

Objectives:

- To introduce students to some basic concepts and terms.
- To involve students in an informal debate.

Number of class periods: 1

The purpose of this unit is to introduce students to some of the vocabulary involved in debate and to the idea that there are at least two sides to every argument.

Begin by asking students what a debate is, why it is important and what sorts of people debate for a living? Students will invariably answer lawyers and/or politicians. This is a good opportunity to point out that the abilities to resolve issues and articulate points of view are skills that all of us need:

- What situations might these skills be useful in?
- Who needs these skills?

Continue the discussion by describing and/or asking for some of the terms that are frequently used in debate.

There are two sides in a debate, known as the *Affirmative* (or *Government*) and the *Negative* (or *Opposition*). The terms *pro* and *con* and *for* and *against* often come up here, which are also fine. The subject to be discussed is known by a number of terms: the *resolution* (the most commonly used term), the *proposition*, the *Bill*, the *measure* or the *issue*. Your students will probably think of others.

There are different types of resolutions. The two most common are *resolutions of value* and *resolutions of policy*. Resolutions are, in Parliamentary debate, preceded by the expression "Be It Resolved That (or B.I.R.T.)".

Resolutions or propositions of value generally deal with a philosophical questions and are worded as positive statements:

Question	Resolution
"Are these the best of all times?"	B.I.R.T. these are the best of all times.
"Are women better than men?"	B.I.R.T. women are better than men.
"Is truth more important than beauty?"	B.I.R.T. truth is more important than beauty.
"Does the best government govern least?"	B.I.R.T. the best government is the one that governs least.

Resolutions or propositions of policy deal with changing some current or established aspect of society, the economy and so on (the *status quo*). These are worded in the imperative form. For example:

- *B.I.R.T. a dam be built on the Lower Churchill River.*
- *B.I.R.T. environmental laws be stricter.*
- *B.I.R.T. a poll tax be introduced.*
- *B.I.R.T. measures be taken to protect the rainforests.*

You should ask the students to provide examples of both types of resolutions until it is clear that they understand the difference.

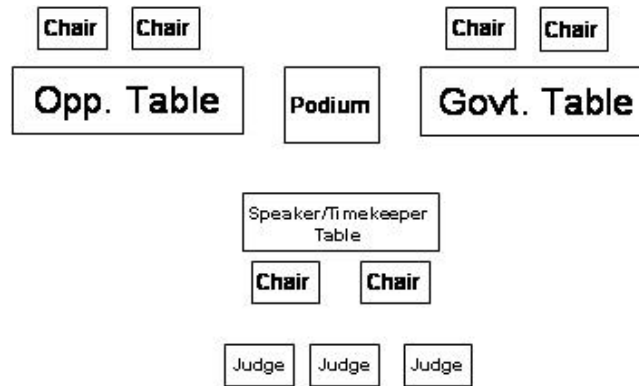
The Affirmative in a debate proposes or supports the resolution. In a policy debate, the Affirmative is trying to change things. The job of the Negative in any type of debate is to oppose and clash with the Affirmative. (This is the essence of debate, right here; all other concepts will flow from this.)

Debate (of value or policy)	
Government/Affirmative	Opposition/Negative
<i>Seeks to promote change</i>	<i>Seeks to Clash</i>

Having introduced these basics, it's time for an exercise. During this exercise, we will be encouraging students to discuss a controversial issue. You may wish to determine the issue yourself or get your students to suggest it. It is important to pick a topic for which there are clearly two sides; this exercise, or indeed any debate, will not work well if all the students tend to hold similar views. Be careful to pick a topic (value or policy), that will not offend or embarrass your students. Once you have picked a topic, there are two ways in which to proceed.

A TYPICAL ROOM LAYOUT FOR A DEBATE

Remember, the format is flexible. The teams may vary in size, and the roles of the chairperson and the timer could be combined



Approach #1.

Have the students form pairs. In each pair, designate one person as A and the second as B. A is given a set period of time (1 minute) to outline why he or she supports the topic. B is given a set period of time to explain why he or she opposes the topic. You should encourage the students to make notes on each other's points of view. You may also wish to give the students time to respond to one another's comments. Discuss the different views expressed; compare and contrast arguments.

Approach #2.

Have the students vote on whether they are opposed to or in favour of the resolution. After recording the vote, ask those in favour to each give a brief account of why they support the resolution. Then repeat this process with those students who oppose the resolution. Try to encourage discussion between the two factions. If this does not occur naturally, you may wish to stimulate discussion by asking pertinent questions.

Conclude this unit by pointing out that the students have now taken part in an informal debate and that, over the next few classes, they will be learning some more formal debate skills.

UNIT 2

Title: Expanding on the concept of debate

Objectives:

- Observe a live or videotaped debate.
- Take part in an informal debate.

Number of class periods: 1 for the first objective, 2 for the second.

There are a number of possibilities for this unit.

1. You may wish to move on to the next unit and begin looking at how to structure a debate in more detail.
2. You may wish to arrange for a demonstration debate - either live or on video. The Newfoundland and Labrador Speech and Debate Union has video tapes that can be made available, or it may be possible to have debaters from within your school or a neighbouring school do a demonstration debate.
3. You may wish to have the students take part in some informal debates. Let's assume (just for the sake of debate!) that you wish to do 2 and 3 before proceeding to a more detailed study of debate.

Short informal debates:

These short debates and, indeed, most debates in classrooms, can be conducted in a variety of ways. Teams can be whatever size works for your class, from one person teams to half of your class.

Assuming that we are talking about two person teams, debates can be done one at a time in front of all the students or all students can be involved in debating at one time. The advantages of the latter is that everyone is able to debate in a much shorter span of time and students are not put in the position of having to sit and watch numerous other debates.

Having all of the students involved in debating at once has the additional advantage that the shy students are not subject, on their

first few attempts at debate, to such a large audience. The disadvantage of this approach is that you will need more than one venue. In order to have multiple simultaneous debates it is necessary to break the class into groups of teams.

A team is normally two or more students. (For the purposes of this resource document, we will be dealing primarily with two person teams.) Each group should contain three or, ideally, four teams. With a group of four teams, you should have two Affirmatives and two Negatives.

While one Affirmative and one Negative pair off, the other two teams can be involved in judging and chairing the debate. Let us call the two teams debating A and B and the two teams officiating C and D. Once A and B have debated, then C and D can debate and A and B can officiate. If you end up with a cell of six students, or three teams, A, B and C, A and C could be Affirmative with B the Negative. You could then have a second round in which B challenges C and A officiates. Let's diagram a four team cell for clarity.

1. Let's assume that you have 33 students in your class. We can make up 16 teams, 15 with two people and 1 with three people.
2. Number the teams 1 to 16, then designate odd-numbered teams Affirmative and even-numbered teams Negative.
3. Now create cells of four teams, two Affirmative and two Negative. Let's assume that teams 1 to 4 are in this cell and that teams 1 and 3 are Affirmative and 2 and 4 are Negative.
4. The following sequence should now be possible:

	<i>Affirmative vs. Negative</i>	<i>Judging (3 people)</i>	<i>Chairing & Timing</i>
<i>Round I</i>	Team 1 vs Team 2	Team 3 + 1 from Team 4	1 from Team 4
<i>Round II</i>	Teams 3 vs. Team 4	Team 1 + 1 from Team 2	1 from Team 2

The chairperson's job is to introduce all the participants and then to call on them in turn. The chairperson acts as the timer to indicate to the debaters how much time remains in their speeches. At the end of the debate, after judging is complete, the chairperson announces the winning team. Judges should evaluate the debate on the basis of the arguments and the refutation only. (Judges should each reach their conclusions independently.) These preliminary debates should be short. It should be possible to get through the two rounds in one class. You may wish to use a format such as this:

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Time</i>
First Affirmative	2 minutes
First Negative	2 minutes
Second Affirmative	2 minutes
Second Negative	2 minutes
Break for Preparation	2 minutes
Negative Summary/Rebuttal	2 minutes
Affirmative Summary/Rebuttal	2 minutes

Although the debate can be conducted in one period, you will note that two periods have been designated. The preliminary period should be used to allow the students to prepare and research. It is often helpful when introducing a format such as the one above, to give students a bit of a dry run. Set your space up in the correct configuration and have the students walk through the sequence of who speaks when, without actually speaking.

UNIT 3

Title: Affirmative case structure

Objectives:

- To gain an understanding of the Affirmative philosophy.
- To examine the speech of the first Affirmative.

Number of class periods: 1 to 2

For purposes of instruction, let's make two assumptions. First, let's use a proposition of policy. A proposition of policy is very similar to what would be called a bill in the House of Commons. A proposition of policy calls for a change to the way things are currently done. For example:

- B.I.R.T. Canada increase its foreign aid.
- B.I.R.T. capital punishment be reinstated.
- B.I.R.T. a causway be built to connect Newfoundland and Labrador.

Second, let's use the following debate format:

<i>Speaker</i>
First Affirmative
First Negative
Second Affirmative
Second Negative
Discussion period
Break for Preparation
Negative Summary/Rebuttal
Affirmative Summary/Rebuttal

In a policy debate the duties of the respective teams are clearly defined. One of the teams, the *Affirmative*, always supports the resolution and is therefore advocating change. This is a key concept in debate.

Change consists of two elements: the *need for change* and the *plan* (a procedure for change). For example, if you argue that capital punishment should be reinstated, you must give compelling reasons (or *needs for change*) and then you must provide a plan. The plan must answer questions such as for what crimes will capital punishment exist and what method of capital punishment will be used.

Change = Need(s) for Change + Plan

Once you are satisfied that the students understand this concept, move on to discussing the specific duties of the first Affirmative.

The *first Affirmative* speaker commands a most important role in the debate. This debater presents and clarifies the resolution for debate and is the first person to speak in favour of accepting the terms of the resolution and therefore sets the initial tone and direction of the debate. The *first Affirmative constructive speech* is the only speech that can be prepared in its entirety before the debate.

First Affirmative Constructive Speech

1. Introduction; State resolution.
2. Define the terms of the resolution fairly, in such a way as to prevent ambiguities or "definitional debate" later in the competition. Choose straightforward language. Restate the resolution using your definitions in place of the original words/phrases.
3. Present the Affirmative need(s) for change by demonstrating flaws in the current system (or *status quo*).
4. Present evidence which affirms the needs for change.
5. Introduce a plan which initiates the necessary changes.

First Affirmative Constructive Speech - a detailed examination

As you discuss the different stages of the Affirmative speech, diagram it on the blackboard. If possible, retain these notes and diagrams.

If we assume that the resolution is "Be It Resolved That capital punishment be reinstated in Canada", then the speech may proceed along the following lines.

1. **Introduction:** This introduction is intended to get the audience's attention and to introduce the subject. For example:

"Ladies and gentlemen, imagine if you will that you are going for supper at a friend's home. You arrive at the home, but no one answers the door bell. The light is on and the door unlocked, so you go in. You are greeted by a horrifying sight: your friend has been murdered. After the police arrive they tell you that they suspect an escaped murderer. This murderer killed a prison guard when he escaped; the police tell you that had this individual been executed your friend might be alive today. Canada at present does not have capital punishment, but perhaps it should. The subject of the debate today is, "Be it resolved that capital punishment be reinstated in Canada."

2. **Definition of the resolution:** Depending on the topic, the words may be ambiguous. For example: what does capital punishment mean? When students are asked this question they often respond with, "the death penalty" or "execution". This is essentially correct, but it leaves out a few key points that characterize this debate in the Canadian context. The Affirmative team may define capital punishment along these lines:

"Capital punishment is the death penalty carried out by the state for the crime of murder."

Providing definitions theoretically gives the Affirmative a slight advantage, to offset the disadvantage of having the more difficult side of the debate.

Ask students to identify the terms that they feel require definition and have them suggest definitions. Encourage discussion on why one definition might be better than another.

Define the terms of the resolution fairly: This should be done in such a way as to prevent ambiguities or "definitional debate" later in the competition. Choose straightforward terminology. Restate the resolution using your definitions in place of the original words/phrases.

3. **Present the Affirmative need(s) for change:** This can be done by demonstrating flaws in the current system or *status quo*. The needs for change are essentially the compelling reasons that will justify the plan. Typically the Affirmative will have time to present three to five needs for change. In a debate on reinstating capital punishment, the needs for change might be:

1. *Capital punishment would save money.*

2. *The existence of capital punishment deters others from murdering.*
3. *A majority of Canadians are in favour of capital punishment.*
4. *Murderers should forfeit their lives.*
5. *Ask the students to suggest needs for change and list them on the board.*

5. ***Present evidence which affirms the needs for change:*** Novice teams will often limit their cases to simple recitations of points. Ideally each of the needs for change should be presented in three stages. The need should be stated, then described in more detail, and finally evidence should be offered in support of the contention.

Ask students to take a need and elaborate on it as they would if they were debating. Ask questions if you feel their explanations are inadequate. The biggest mistake that debaters make is assuming that because they understand an issue, their audience will understand it also.

6. ***Introduce a plan which initiates the necessary changes:*** After presenting all the needs for change, the first Affirmative speaker usually has just enough time to give a brief outline of the plan before concluding the speech. If there is a significant amount of time left, the first speaker will then present the plan. Most debate associations in Canada require that the Affirmative provide at least an outline of the plan in its first presentation so that the Negative team has an opportunity to respond to the proposed plan.

UNIT 4

Title: Overview of Negative strategy

Objectives:

- To have an understanding of Negative strategy.
- To understand the job of the first Negative speaker.

Number of class periods: 1

The presentation by the first Negative is perhaps the most difficult in the entire debate. The job of the Negative may be more broadly described as *clashing*, using any means possible to convince the judges not to accept the Affirmative proposition. Some wild and wonderful strategies flow from this; however, outlandish strategies are better left to another presentation.

In clashing with the Affirmative, the Negative would consider the items listed below. You could discuss these concepts with your students asking questions such as:

- *What would happen if the Affirmative lacked evidence for its main points?*
- *Does the source of evidence affect its validity?*
- *Does the plan need to be a major change?*

First Negative Constructive Checklist

1. **Definitions:** If the Affirmative has failed to define any key terms of the resolution, you may offer definitions. If the Affirmative definitions are absolutely illogical or unreasonable, you must contest them immediately by providing compelling reasons to reject them. Otherwise, it is assumed that your team is in complete agreement with the terms as defined.
2. **Need(s) for Change:** Are the major needs for change supported by evidence or logic? Do not accept a need simply because the Affirmative says it is needed.

3. **Evidence:** Is the evidence current and from a credible source? Usually, the more recent the evidence, the better. Also, attempt to identify reasons the source may be biased: for example, one would likely question the objectivity of a car manufacturer or petroleum company writing about the Kyoto (greenhouse gas) Accord.
4. **The Plan: does it solve the problem?** Does the plan constitute a significant change? Does the plan meet and solve the needs for change? For example: if a need raised in support of capital punishment is that murderers are escaping, the Negative might respond that the more rational plan is to increase the security of prisons.
5. **The Plan: does it created new or worse problems?** Does the plan create new problems that potentially outweigh the suggested benefits of its implementation? For example: the Negative might attack capital punishment on the grounds that the jury would find the prospect so repugnant that they might be inclined to acquit rather than convict, thereby creating a situation in which society was in greater peril as a result of reinstating capital punishment.

TIP: *Generally the Negative will argue that there is no need for change or that any problems that exist can be solved through small changes known as "minor repairs". (Yes, the Negative is allowed to make small changes!)*

Unlike the first Affirmative speaker, the first Negative speaker can't draft out a speech beforehand. Since the specifics of the first Affirmative speech are unknown before it is presented, "clash" requires special preparation.

There are three things that the Negative can do to prepare.

- 1) The first thing is to be familiar with the subject matter so as to be aware of the potential Affirmative arguments and to plan responses.
- 2) The second is to prepare documentation for the various Negative responses, knowing that the evidence prepared may not be used. This documentation is essentially quotations that can be used to support assertions made in the Negative speech. Each quotation should be recorded on an index card, along with its source. The appropriate cards can then be retrieved and organized as the Negative speaker prepares comments.

Capital Punishment Fails!

Studies of American states with and without capital punishment show that the murder rate per hundred thousand is marginally higher than states with capital punishment.

Evidence Card:

- 3) The final tool at the disposal of the Negative is a technique called *flowing*. This is simply a method of taking notes, in which the observer records the comments of the opposing speaker on the left side of a page, called a *flowsheet* and writes down the responses to the speaker on the right side of the page. As comments and responses to them are noted, evidence cards can be retrieved to support the responses that the Negative speaker is about to make. Typically, a Negative speech will consist of observations based on the team's research and comments based on the flowsheet.

TIP: *Although the use of the flowsheet is shown in two stages, generally Negative responses are filled in response to Affirmative statements. Normally, one would not wait until the whole Affirmative case has been made before filling in the Negative side.*

If the Affirmative case is still on the board or overhead, it's useful to pretend that the board is a giant flowsheet and try to fill in the Negative responses on the board. It's a good idea to use the left side of the board or transparency for the Affirmative and leave the right side blank for the diagramming of the Negative argument.

Flowsheets:

Affirmative Speech	Negative Response
Definition: Capital punishment = death penalty imposed by state	OK
Needs: 1. Murder rate is climbing 2. Majority of Canadians favour 3. Would save money	1. Murder rate higher in states with capital punishment 2. Parliament has voted twice to abolish 3. What is price of human life?
Plan: lethal injection for first degree murder	Jurors acquit if capital punishment is option; therefore, more murderers go free

UNIT 5

Title: Overview of debate

Objective: To set the first two speeches into the larger context of the debate and summarize the remaining speeches.

Number of class periods: 1

Begin by briefly summarizing the first Affirmative and Negative speeches.

Second Affirmative Constructive Speech

The second Affirmative speech is the first opportunity the Affirmative team has to directly clash with the arguments of the Negative case. It is also the Affirmative's last chance to present new contentions which support the resolution and their proposal.

The approach is to:

1. ***Attack the Negative philosophy while defending the Affirmative perspective.***
2. ***Clash!*** Directly address each of the specific challenges issued by the Negative team. Explain why the Affirmative's evidence should be accepted is authoritative.
3. ***Detail and defend the Affirmative plan.***
4. ***Describe the benefits of the plan.*** (If you were using three person teams, this could be done by the third person.)
5. ***Anticipate the second Negative's points and further clarify the Affirmative position in contra-distinction.***

In the case of capital punishment, the plan would have to answer such questions as:

- What method of capital punishment would be used?
- For what crimes would capital punishment be used?

- Would the judge have discretion in sentencing?

Second Negative Constructive Speech

This final constructive speech of the debate gives the second Negative speaker an opportunity not only to criticize the Affirmative plan, but also to present the final contentions that complete the Negative case.

The approach here is to:

1. **Attack the Affirmative plan** as unworkable, undesirable, unable to solve the needs and/or unnecessary.
2. **Deny the supposed benefits of the plan.**
3. **Clash. Counter all Affirmative challenges** directly and specifically.
4. **Refute the Affirmative case** as a whole. Defend and strengthen Negative arguments, including those presented earlier by your partner. Try to refine and solidify your best points without sounding repetitive.

This ends the constructive portion of the debate. The debate now moves into what is called the discussion period. We will discuss this later and press on with the rebuttals.

The Break

Both sides may use this time to review the debate and focus their ideas for the concluding speeches.

- A well-developed final speech requires teamwork; both debaters should be fully involved in contributing ideas.
- The rebuttals are extremely important because they are the last opportunity for each team to convince the judges before the final evaluation.
- The rebuttal speeches are for response and refutation only; they are used to review and crystallize central issues by challenging the other side's strongest arguments and tracing the progression of important contentions.

Although new evidence or sources may be used to strengthen ideas introduced in the constructive speeches, no new contentions may be presented. This

ensures that the teams do not wait until the end of the debate to introduce new ideas that their opponents would not have ample time to refute.

Rebuttal by First Negative

1. ***Begin by reviewing major case arguments*** presented in the first Negative speech. Reaffirm, by applying additional evidence and logic, why it is that arguments which have come under Affirmative attack still stand.
2. ***Remind the judges of any significant Negative attacks the second Affirmative has failed to clash with.***
3. ***Attack the Affirmative plan from all possible angles:*** needs for change, course of action, benefits and overall justification.
4. ***Clearly, concisely and forcefully sum up the Negative's key points.***

Rebuttal by First Affirmative

1. ***Execute final attack on Negative case, while defending Affirmative*** needs for change, plan, benefits and philosophy.
2. ***Briefly review your case, restating powerful points*** in favour of the adoption of the resolution. Make sure that you try to counteract successful Negative closing arguments and that you indicate where the Negative team failed to advance argumentation.

Note: If three person teams are used the third person could be responsible for the rebuttal.

Some formats of debate allow each team member to give a rebuttal speech. For example:

1st Negative rebuttal

1st Affirmative rebuttal

2nd Negative rebuttal

2nd Affirmative rebuttal

UNIT 6

Title: Discussion in detail

Objective: To acquaint students with the nature of the discussion period.

Number of class periods: 1 or 2

During the discussion period the team members ask one another questions. The questions serve a number of purposes, such as seeking information, probing areas of weakness, analysing evidence and clarifying points.

The "head-to-head" character of this particular activity encourages thorough preparation on the part of the participants. (The discussion period in and of itself can be an interesting class activity.)

Discuss with students the types of questions one might ask.

1. What opportunities does the discussion period provide?
2. Discuss what sort of questions might be relevant with respect to the subject that you are using to introduce debate.

For class one divide the students into two groups, Affirmative and Negative. Physically divide the class so that Affirmative faces Negative with a space in the middle. Appoint a student to be chairperson. Have the two sides ask and answer questions on the subject that you have been using for debate instruction. To ask or answer a question, students must raise their hands.

Class two is optional, during which you could show two 15 minute videos available from the SDU: one on debate and one on discussion techniques.

To incorporate class in involvement in a particular debate, all students could take part in the discussion period.

UNIT 7

Title: The great debate

Objective: To give students an opportunity to prepare and debate in a formal style.

Number of class periods: 2 to 4 classes to do the research, depending on the level of research and preparation you expect.

The number of classes to present the debates will depend upon whether or not you wish each debate to take place in front of the class, or whether you go with a format (described earlier) that allows multiple debates to occur at once. Whichever format you use, there will only be time for one round of competition in a single class period. If you go with a multiple class format, you will need to allow for two classes, to allow everyone a chance to debate.

For the purposes of these debates, a modified discussion format is recommended as follows:

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Time (minutes)</i>
1st Affirmative constructive speech	37319
1st Negative constructive speech	37319
2nd Affirmative constructive speech	64
2nd Negative constructive speech	64
Discussion period	37350
Break	37319
Negative rebuttal	37289
Affirmative rebuttal	37289

The procedures used for conducting the debate are the same as already described.

CONCLUSION

As indicated earlier, the debate described was in the *discussion format*. The format used, the sizes of teams, the lengths of speeches and other factors can of course be modified for various purposes. For competitive purposes in Newfoundland and Labrador there are also a number of other formats used.

The most popular formats of high school debate in Eastern Canada and at most Canadian universities is *parliamentary debate*. In this format the participants assume the roles and some of the conventions of members of the House of Commons. This format lends itself to role-playing, and presentations tend to be a little more dramatic. A popular format used at the high school level in Western Canada and much of the United States is called *Cross-Examination*. In this format, rather than having a discussion period, each speaker, after giving a constructive speech, is cross-examined by a member of the opposing team. This often leads to some fairly exciting confrontation. All of the formats described to this point are used in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The use of debate in Newfoundland and Labrador is growing as both a curricular and extra-curricular activity largely because of its educational value. The most obvious benefit is the opportunities students have to develop and practice oral skills. These skills are extremely important to academic and personal development, yet few curriculum materials are available to support the teacher in fostering them.

What makes debate especially valuable for fostering development of oral skills is that it is not only structured, but also interactive. Debate requires that participants listen, think and respond. It is not enough for the debater to simply memorize and perform a speech. Instead, debaters must listen to their opponents, engage in a questioning process and incorporate this information into their own presentations.

Debate is also an excellent way to develop critical thinking skills. The process of researching a debate is one of examining the pros and cons of an issue, determining what the problems are and considering alternative solutions. The research and presentation of a debate is clearly a team effort, and participation in activities like debate explicitly develops the skills needed to work in teams.

Debate can also be used to explore issues in an area such as social studies, economics or history. For example, one could have a debate on whether or not human aggression is innate or learned. Whether or not a debate topic is related to a particular curriculum, debate has a lot to offer participants.

When promoting debate, educators usually do not have to be sold on the value of the activity. The key concern is often how to go about getting started. This is the reason that the Newfoundland and Labrador Speech and Debate Union and the Newfoundland and Labrador Federated League of Debaters exists.

The purpose of these organizations is to promote debate, and a significant portion of that goal is to help educators get involved. Toward that end, a number of services are provided:

3. Video programs on various aspects of debate which can be borrowed or purchased;
4. Guides on all aspects of debate and speech are available free;
5. Research briefs on a vast range of topics;
6. Volunteers are also available to answer your questions or to visit your school and conduct a variety of sessions ranging from brief introductions to full-day workshops for staff and students. (Depending on distances travelled and amounts printed some cost sharing may be requested.)

NFLD and SDU will try to do whatever we can to foster debate and debate-related activities (such as Youth Parliament) in our province's schools. In short, if there is some way we could help, call and let's talk.

We have an exciting annual program. The program starts in the fall with workshops and then proceeds to tournaments throughout the school year. Participation in the tournaments can lead to participation in regional, national and international exchanges.