

**Massasoit League Speakers Union
Coaching Manual**

2015-2016

DRAFT

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Why Debate?

The mission of public schooling is to educate our future citizens for their success and for the success of our democracy as a whole. Debate clubs further both of these ends. Colleges and employers consistently rank the ability to effectively communicate as a trait they are looking for in applicants; debate and public speaking help students to master that skill. Democracy is characterized by the open exchange and thorough exploration of ideas. Debate leagues give students the opportunity to practice this in an atmosphere that models tolerance, reason, and the careful examination of evidence. Students are taught critical thinking skills, effective communication and the ability to respectfully explore opposing points of view. This empowers students not only in their academic and professional careers but also to critically examine the world around them and make decisions based on multiple sources and viewpoints. Thank you for helping to make this possible.

Why Debate this way?

Parliamentary Debate Leagues exist all over the English speaking world at all levels ranging from upper elementary to collegiate competition. This style requires that the debaters present material in a way that is organized and that they put forth arguments that are both relevant and supported by anecdotal evidence. Additionally, participants will recognize unsubstantiated claims and specious reasoning when refuting the claims of their opponents. This style of debate is more engaging for middle school students than policy debates due to the freedom of interpretation in debate resolutions and the general tone exhibited throughout competitions. This format emphasizes logic, persuasion and wit. This is a modified form of Parliamentary Debate and is slightly different than that used by the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League.

How does it work?

Each debate round has two teams of two debaters. These teams either support a resolution or oppose it. The resolution is the topic or question being debated. The team that supports the resolution is referred to as the Government. The team that opposes the resolution is referred to as the Opposition. The Government speaks first. The first member of the Government to speak is known as the Prime Minister. The second member of the Government team is known as the Member of Government. The first member of the Opposition to speak is known as the Leader of the Opposition. The remaining member is known as the Member of the Opposition. The Prime Minister has the responsibility for defining the terms of the resolution and presenting the first constructive speech. The Leader of the Opposition has the responsibility for second constructive speech in the round. The purpose of the second constructive speech is to refute the arguments and claims of the first and put forth their counter arguments. The third speech in the round is presented by the Member of Government. It is called the Member of Government rebuttal, and its purpose is contradict the claims of the Leader of the Opposition. The fourth speech in the round is called the Member of the Opposition rebuttal. Its purpose is to contradict the claims of the Prime Minister. The fifth

speech of the round is called the Prime Minister's rebuttal. It is a chance for the Prime Minister to defend his or her position. The sixth speech of the round is also called the Leader of the Opposition's rebuttal. It is a chance for the Leader of the Opposition to defend his or her position. The seventh speech in the round is given by the Member of Government and is the closing argument for the Government. It should refute any remaining flaws in the Opposition's argument and should convincingly restate the Government's position. The final speech in the round is given by the Member of Opposition. It should refute any remaining flaws in the Government's argument and should convincingly restate the Opposition's position.

How much research should students be doing prior to the debate tournaments?

Parliamentary debate resolutions are typically argued based on the life experiences of the participants. However, as this is a modified format designed for the middle school, students could be given material from which to draw their arguments.

What are some examples of Parliamentary style debate resolutions?

Parliamentary debate resolutions are typically open-ended, and frequently are taken from famous quotes in literature. Some examples are:

"It is a far, far better thing that we do today than we did yesterday"- Dickens

"All the world's a stage"- Shakespeare

"There is a sense in which we are all each other's consequences"- Stegner

"We must cultivate our garden"- Voltaire

Not all resolutions need to be quote based. Some examples are as follows:

Television is the opiate of the masses.

Capital punishment should be outlawed.

The internet is more revolutionary than television

Are there restrictions on how students can interpret resolutions?

Students are largely free to interpret resolutions in their own way, as long as a logical link can be established. There are certain cases that are not permitted however; these include tautology, truism and specific knowledge topics.

How long is each speech?

Prime Minister's Constructive: 4 minutes

Leader of the Opposition's Constructive: 4 minutes

Member of Government Rebuttal: 2 minutes
Member of Opposition's Rebuttal: 2 minutes
Prime Minister's Rebuttal- 1 minute
Leader of the Opposition's Rebuttal-1 minute
Government Closing- 2 minutes
Opposition Closing- 2 minutes

How are the debates judged?

Speakers are judged along the following criteria:

Adherence to format
Speech effectiveness and volume
Use of evidence
Supporting details
Use of time

What rules and procedures do judges, coaches and students need to be aware of?

Time limits are firm and students are not to continue past them except to finish their sentence.

Conference time between speakers is firm.

New arguments are only permitted in constructive speeches.

Point of information is risen by an opposing team. Whether or not the speaking team addresses the point is at the discretion of the individual speaking. Points of information are not permitted during the first or last minute of speech.

Point of order is raised by the debater but decided solely by the judge.

Point of personal privilege is rare and solely decided by the judge.

Are there any templates that will help me and my team?

There are several attached that may help. Additionally, please feel free to contact me if I can help or answer any questions. My e-mail is pellegrinon@seekonkschools.org.

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Name: _____

Debate

Resolution: _____

Team Position: _____

I.

A.

1. (

a.

b.

2.

a.

b.

B.

1.

a.

b.

2.

a.

b.

II.

A.

1.

a.

b.

2.

a.

b.

B.

1.

a.

b.

2.

a.

b.

III.

A.

1.

a.

b.

2.

a.

- b.
- B.
- 1.
- a.
- b.
- 2.
- a.
- b.

Constructive Speech Critique

REQUIREMENT	CHECKOFF
Team introduced	
Judge thanked	
Opposing team thanked	
Resolution stated	
Team position stated	
Key terms of the resolution defined (government only)	
Three contentions stated	
Speaker signals when beginning first contention	
Speaker ties first contention to the resolution	
Speaker's evidence for the first contention is correct	
Speaker's evidence for the first contention supports contention	
Speaker's evidence for the first contention supports team position	
Speaker signals when moving on to the second contention	
Speaker's evidence for the second contention is correct	
Speaker's evidence for the second contention supports contention	
Speaker's evidence for the second contention supports team position	
Speaker ties second contention to the first and to the resolution	
Speaker signals when moving on to the third contention	

REBUTTAL TEMPLATE

RESOLUTION:

My team's position:

Opponent's first contention:

Arguments against this contention:

Opponent's second contention:

Arguments against this contention:

Opponent's third contention:

Arguments against this contention:

Speaker's evidence for the third contention is correct	
Speaker's evidence for the third contention supports contention	
Speaker's evidence for the third contention supports team position	
Speaker ties third contention to the second and first and to the resolution	
Speaker convincingly sums up case	
Speaker reminds judge to side with their position	
Speaker thanks judge and opponents	

Rebuttal Peer Critique

REQUIREMENT	CHECKOFF
Opponent's first contention clearly stated	
Argument against this contention clearly stated	
Solid reasoning against this contention is evident	
Evidence against this contention is accurate	
Evidence against this contention is clearly articulated	
Evidence against this contention is appropriately applied	
Opponent's second contention clearly stated	
Argument against this contention clearly stated	
Solid reasoning against this contention is evident	
Evidence against this contention is accurate	
Evidence against this contention is clearly articulated	
Evidence against this contention is appropriately applied	
Opponent's third contention is clearly stated	
Argument against this contention clearly stated	
Solid reasoning against this contention is evident	
Evidence against this contention is accurate	
Evidence against this contention is clearly articulated	
Evidence against this contention is appropriately applied	

Team contentions compared to opponent's	
Speaker reminds judge why their team's case is superior	
Speaker thanks judge	

Second Rebuttal Template

One Specific **Problem** with Opponent Contention I OR One Specific **Benefit** to our Contention I:

One Specific **Problem** with Opponent Contention II OR One Specific **Benefit** to our Contention II:

One Specific **Problem** with Opponent Contention III OR One Specific **Benefit** to our Contention III:

Second Rebuttal Peer Critique

REQUIREMENT	CHECKOFF
Opponent's position clearly stated	
Speaker clearly states opposition to opponent's position	
Speaker is specific	
Speaker provides ample support for points made within allotted time	
Effective rhetorical techniques are applied	
Speaker reminds judge why their team's position is superior	
Speaker thanks judge	

Closing Template

List the Opponents Three Weakest Points:

List your Team's Three Strongest Points:

Remind the Judge of your Three Contentions:

Remind the judge of any evidence that proves your case:

Remind the judge of how your Team has proven/disproven the Resolution:

Thank the Judge:

Remind the Judge to side with your team:

Closing Peer Critique

REQUIREMENT	CHECKOFF
The speaker reminded the judge of their opponent's weakest points	
The speaker reminded the judge of their own strengths	
The speaker presented the case in a clear and logical manner	
The speaker employed effective rhetorical techniques	
The speaker effectively used accurate evidence	
The speaker effectively summarized their case	
The speaker reminded the judge how their case has been proven	
The speaker thanked the opposing team	
The speaker thanked the judge	

DEBATE SCORE SHEET

GOVERNMENT	SCORING	OPPOSITION
Name:	Constructive	Name:
	Format	
	Speech volume and effectiveness	
	Use of evidence	
	Supporting details	
	Use of Time	
Total Constructive Score:		Total Constructive Score
Name:	First Rebuttal	Name:
	Format	
	Speech volume and effectiveness	
	Use of evidence	
	Supporting details	
	Use of Time	
Total 1st Reb. score		Total 1st Reb. score
Name:	Second Rebuttal	Name:
	Format	
	Speech volume and effectiveness	
	Use of evidence	
	Supporting details	
	Use of Time	
Total 2nd Reb. Score		Total 2nd Reb. Score

Name:	Closing	Name:
	Format	
	Speech volume and effectiveness	
	Use of evidence	
	Supporting details	
	Use of Time	
Total Closing:		Total Closing:
Government Total:		Opposition Total:

Winner _____

Judge's Notes:

Prime Minister:
Leader of the Opposition:
Member of the Government:
Member of the Opposition

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General Notes

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GLOSSARY

Closing- The last speech in a case

Conference Time-The time in between speakers when teams communicate with each other prior to the next speeches

Constructive Speech- The first speech in a case. It is the speech upon which the entire case is constructed

Government- The team which supports the resolution

Leader of the Opposition- The first speaker on the team which opposes the resolution. The leader of the Opposition delivers the constructive speech for the opposition.

Member of the Government- The second speaker on the team which supports the resolution

Member of the Opposition- The second speaker on the team which opposes the resolution

Opposition- The team which opposes the resolution

Parliamentary Debate- Any style of debate loosely modeled on the English Parliamentary system. There are several methods in use in the English speaking world. The common characteristics are that do not allow speakers to read prepared speeches and that they do not have a cross examination period

Policy Debate- Any style of team debate that requires participants to have cases entirely prepared before attending the debate and have a cross examination period

Point of Information- A question posed by an opposing team while a speaker is speaking. The questioner must rise and use the phrase "point of information please". The speaker can choose to address the questioner or not. It is considered good form to take a point of information or two, but this is at the discretion of the speaker and cannot occur during the first or last minute of the speech.

Point of Order- A point expressed by an opposing team while a speaker is speaking. The individual seeking the point of order must rise and ask the just "point of order please". It is at the discretion of the judge whether or not to hear the point of order. It is also at the discretion of the judge if the point of order is valid. A point of order can be to point out a violation of the rules of the debate or rude conduct of the speaking team.

Point of Privilege- A request by a debate participant of the judge- usually a request to leave the room for some reason

Prime Minister- The first speaker on the team which supports the resolution. The Prime Minister delivers the constructive speech for the government.

Rebuttal- Speeches that counter to opponent's argument. There are two in this style of debate.

Resolution- The topic being debated

Specific Knowledge Topic- A topic that the general population is not typically familiar with.

Tautology- An interpretation of a resolution for which no opposition is possible

Truism- An interpretation of a resolution for which no opposition is possible due to the obvious moral implications of opposing it. An example might be that " Bullying is wrong".