**PUBLIC FORUM DEBATE COMPONENTS**

**Opening Speeches – 4 Minutes**

* Lays out your case and position.
* Has a strong introduction. Reveals a startling statistic that bolsters your case or a story/example that catches the audience’s attention.
* States clearly for the judges “As the pro (or con), I support (or oppose) the resolved . . .”
* Defines the resolution – set forth very clearly for the judge what you must prove to win the debate. What does the resolution ask? A very strategic team will tilt the resolution in a way that is easier for their side to prove their case. For example, the resolution “Video Games do more harm than good” – the pro would state that they do not have to prove that video games have absolutely no good – just that it is slightly more harmful than good. This is important as the con can obviously prove that video games improve coordination. The pro would respond that it makes children more violent and therefore even though it has some good, its evils far outweigh its benefits.
* Lays out 3 to 5 clear reasons in support of your case. Each reason should be supported and developed with sound analysis or evidence.
* Concludes with a memorable and powerful ending that re-emphasizes whether you support or oppose the resolution.

**Rebuttal Speech – 4 minutes**

* Answers each of the other side’s arguments
* Answers each arguments in the order presented
* Prepares for the rebuttal by:
  + Anticipating every possible argument the other team will make.
  + Drafting a brief for each possible point the other team can raise. In essence, you are writing a speech against each possible point they can raise.
    - Each brief must be on a separate sheet of paper. That way you can organize them in the order read by the other team.
    - Top of the brief should say “Answers to \_\_\_\_\_\_” insert their argument.
    - Keep your briefs organized so that you can grab the appropriate one to read during the debate.

**Summary/Closing Speech – 2 minutes**

* Asks the following 2 questions:
  + What 2 arguments, if I win, do I win the entire debate?
  + What 2 arguments, if I lose, do I lose the debate?
* Goes for those arguments.
* Extends your top 2 winning points.
  + - Explains the point
    - Explains why you win the point
    - Explains why winning the point means you win the debate
  1. Tells judge why you defeated opponents 2 best arguments.

Student Resource Sheet 1.3

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**Crossfire – 2 minutes**

* Happens after the 2 opening speeches and after 2 rebuttal speeches. Pro asks the first question but after that, either side can ask questions. In preparation, you should make a list of questions to ask during the debate.
* Clarifies arguments to expose weaknesses.