



WELCOME TO DEBATING 101

Prepared by the Toronto Debating Society



What is 'Debating'?

A formal method of argument where the main objective is to beat the opposing team by using substantive evidence, logic, persuasion and rhetoric to convince the judges that your opinion/arguments/points of view are right!

Benefits

- Promotes team work
- Develops critical thinking skills
- Builds confidence

How does it work?

The Toronto Debating Society uses the parliamentary style of debating. A debate round has two teams with two debaters each and a Speaker. One team represents the government, while the other represents the opposition.

The resolution before the house is presented by the Speaker and is defined by the Prime Minister:

"Madame/Mister Speaker, Be it resolved that..."



Speaking Order:

Prime Minister (PM) Constructive (7 mins)

- Introduces & defines the resolution
- Presents the Government's case

Leader of Opposition (LO) Constructive (7 mins)

- Introduces the Opposition's arguments
- Rebut the PM's argument and refute points

Member of Gov't (MG) Constructive (5 mins)

- Refutes the Opposition's points
- Expands Gov't. argument, offers new points
- Summarizes the Government's POV

Member of Opposition (MO) Constructive (5 mins)

- Refutes the Government's points
- Expands opposition argument with new points
- Summarizes the Opposition's POV

Summations:

****New arguments are not allowed****

Leader of Opposition Rebuttal (2 mins)

- The LO has a final opportunity to summarize the Opposition's point-of-view & address outstanding arguments from the Government

Prime Minister Rebuttal (2 mins)

- PM has the final word to summarize the Government's POV & to address outstanding arguments from the Opposition.

The debate is judged by an adjudicator who awards points and determines the winner. The Speaker decides whether the Government has proved its case, or whether the Opposition has disproved it. The team which met its burden more convincingly wins.

Remember:

- Speakers aren't necessarily debating their own views and opinions. This is just sport.
- Be persuasive.
- Don't let an opposing argument "survive".
- Outwit your opponents.
- Use humour, when appropriate. Have fun!

Feel free to visit us on Tuesday evenings. We meet in Bloor West Village at the Swansea Town Hall on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month – from September to May. The schedule of resolutions can be found on the Toronto Debating Society website.

Check out more information at www.debating.ca

This workshop was brought to you by:
Volunteers of the Toronto Debating Society

Any questions:

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