

Worksheet 1 (2 pages)

DEBATE FORMAT JUNIOR DEBATING

Number of Students in a Debate Team

- Five students in the “Core Team” (the active debaters)
- Three students in the “Question Masters Team” (for the “Question Masters” stage in a debate)

The Setting

Two debate teams oppose each other, if possible placed at speaker stands.

Each team is split into two rows. The students in the first row are the active debaters at the specific stage (see below).

In the first row, there is always an empty speaker stand placed beside the active debaters so that debaters from the second row can come to their aid if necessary.

The “Question Masters Team” is sitting at the side-lines, close to their “Core Team”.

A moderator leads the debate and takes care that the basic rules of debating are followed (see worksheet 2 “Rules”).

Stages of a Debate Competition

A moderator guides the teams through the following debate stages:

► Stage 1:

OPENING SPEECH (1½ minutes):

One debater from each team introduces her teammates, their position, and why their position is of general importance nowadays. She also briefly mentions the two main arguments of the team (these two arguments will be explained in more detail later in the debate).

► Stage 2:

DEBATE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN TWO DEBATERS FROM EACH SIDE:

Two students from each team stand in the first row. An empty speaker stand is placed on either side of the first row. These two students debate with two students from the opposing team. Both groups alternate in their contributions.

The empty speaker stands are available for the other debaters of their respective teams, who can join in to aid their teammates from the second row.

Important: After joining in for support, the assisting student has to go back to the second row. Thus, the empty speaker stand is available for other assisting students from the second row.

► Stage 3:

CONSULTATION BREAK (*about 3 minutes*):

The “Core Team” and the “Question Masters Team” meet with their teacher to consult about stronger arguments, counterarguments, and defence strategies.

► Stage 4:

DEBATE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN THREE DEBATERS OF EACH SIDE:

Three students from each team stand in the first row, and both teams alternate in arguing. The two debaters from the second row can come to the empty speaker stand to help them if needed.

► Stage 5:

QUESTION MASTERS:

The “Question Masters Teams” of both sides take turns asking questions to the opposing team, which the opposing team has to answer—always one question and one answer alternating.

The members of the “Question Masters Teams” ask very short questions; the opposing team gives short answers. The members of the “Question Masters Teams” are not allowed to respond with another question or to comment after they receive an answer.

► Stage 6:

CLOSING SPEECH (*1 minute*):

One debater from each side gives a short speech repeating their position, emphasizing why in their view their position is stronger than the position of the opposing team (by giving their two best arguments again in another wording) and pointing—in a respectful way—to one perceived weakness in the argumentation of the others. The end of the speech could be a strong appeal in favour of their own position. Important: At this stage of the debate, no new arguments will be accepted.

► Stage 7:

OPPONENTS SHAKE HANDS:

The moderator asks the debaters of the “Core Teams” and the “Question Masters Teams” to cross the floor and shake hands with the opposing team.

The message is:

“The other is not my enemy but my opponent.”