

Debate Rules & Guidelines for Students

What Is a Debate?

A debate is a respectful discussion where people share different ideas about a topic. The goal is to explain your thinking and listen to others, not to “win” an argument.

Basic Debate Rules

1. **Be Respectful**
 - Speak politely.
 - No interrupting.
 - No teasing or insulting.
 2. **Listen Carefully**
 - Pay attention when others are speaking.
 - Try to understand their point of view.
 3. **Take Turns Speaking**
 - Wait until it is your turn.
 - Raise your hand or follow the moderator’s directions.
 4. **Stay on Topic**
 - Talk about the debate question.
 - Avoid unrelated comments.
 5. **Use Reasons and Examples**
 - Explain *why* you believe something.
 - Give facts, examples, or experiences.
 6. **Disagree Respectfully**
 - It is okay to disagree.
 - Focus on ideas, not people.
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Debate Team Roles

Speaker

- Shares ideas and arguments.

Listener

- Pays attention and thinks about responses.

Moderator (teacher or student)

- Makes sure everyone follows the rules and gets a turn.
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Good Debate Habits

- ✓ Speak clearly
 - ✓ Use evidence or examples
 - ✓ Be confident but kind
 - ✓ Keep an open mind
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Remember

A great debate is about learning, thinking, and respecting different ideas.