



START HERE: TEACHING PUBLIC FORUM



Have you ever wished you had a road map to help you teach a new event? The National Speech & Debate Association has consulted expert coaches to create the “Start Here” series to act as your guide while navigating a new event. These easy to follow lesson plans are backed up with ready-to-use resources and materials.

LET'S GET STARTED!



These lesson plans were initially created by a group of NSDA coaches led by Pam McComas and Renee Motter. In 2020, lesson plans were revitalized by Elena Cecil, Lauren Hince, and Christian Vasquez. We extend our sincere thanks to all contributors!

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SPEECH & DEBATE ASSOCIATION:

The National Speech & Debate Association was created in 1925 to provide recognition and support for students participating in speech and debate activities. While our organization has evolved over the decades, our mission is more relevant today than ever before. We connect, support, and inspire a diverse community committed to empowering students through competitive speech and debate.

As the national authority on public speaking and debate, the National Speech & Debate Association provides the infrastructure for speech and debate competitions around the world. We create a platform for youth voices to be heard and celebrated, which culminates with an annual National Tournament, the pinnacle of public speaking.

Speech and debate changes lives. NSDA membership builds confidence, boosts classroom performance, improves communication, and increases critical thinking skills to prepare students for college. Our activity provides life skills vital to a young person's success in the future.

MISSION:

The National Speech & Debate Association connects, supports, and inspires a diverse community committed to empowering students through speech and debate.

VISION:

We envision a world in which every school provides speech and debate programs to foster each student's communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative skills.

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NAVIGATING CRITICAL CLASSROOM CONVERSATIONS

Connect. Support. Inspire.

In your exploration of topics and arguments in these lessons, you may encounter issues concerning identity, social justice, and other critically important subjects. These issues are more than just topics for speeches or for debate rounds. They affect students, teachers, families, and communities daily. Increasingly, some are choosing violence instead of dialogue in relation to these topics. As an educator, you may feel overwhelmed and unsure how to foster these vulnerable yet critical classroom conversations. Thank you for committing to doing so!

Set shared expectations. Grow together.

Solutions and paths to those solutions may be up for debate, but lived experiences are not. In these critical conversations, your students may want to share personal insights on these issues. These personal insights often come from a place of lived experience. Using these stories allows us to view issues through a critical lens. When having these critical conversations, some students may become uncomfortable. Although you want these conversations to be respectful, please be aware of any ground rules that may limit students from traditionally marginalized and disenfranchised communities from sharing their stories. Please also be aware that students may not feel comfortable sharing their lived experiences—that is okay. Respect their boundaries as you prepare for and engage in this critical dialogue.



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LESSON 1: WHAT IS DEBATE?

TOPIC:

Debates vs.
Arguments

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What exactly is a debate and do I identify if something can be debated?

How does a debate differ from an argument?

1. Students will be able to differentiate between a debate and an argument.
2. Students will be able to define the three components of an argument.

MATERIALS:

- Spar cards
- Timer
- Note cards
- Sticky notes
- Coin (or other way to choose sides)

Insight:

This lesson introduces students to the fundamentals of debate and argument structure. This lesson is a great way to teach students that debate is about more than arguing with someone. Debate is also about breaking down the elements of an argument and seeing how they interact with other elements of the debate.

The Toulmin model for arguments says there are three components to an argument: claim, warrant, and impact. In later lessons these elements will be discussed further, but it's important to understand the Toulmin model as it is the foundation for debate. The Toulmin model will be used when writing cases, researching evidence, and refuting opponents.

As you introduce the argument structure, please refrain from asking students for personal examples of arguments that they may be uncomfortable sharing. Instead consider arguments in the news, on tv shows, or between political candidates.

LESSON 1: WHAT IS DEBATE?



ONE-DAY LESSON

HOOK

5 minutes

Ask the students to write down on their note card different techniques for persuading people and strategies they use for winning arguments. Share a few answers.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Write the definitions of debate and argument on the board for the students to see.

Define **debate**: a formal presentation of arguments with evidence within time constraints.

Define **argument**: trying to convince someone using your opinions without research. An argument consists of these things:

1. **Claim**: this is the tagline of an argument. Think of this like a topic sentence to a persuasive essay
2. **Data**: evidence that supports the claim
3. **Warrant/Grounds**: why the evidence meets the claim
4. **Impact**: why the claim matters

Before you start, set ground rules to ensure there are no personal attacks, no screaming, and no talking when it is not your turn.

Pick two students at a time. Have them flip a coin or pick a number between one and ten. The winner gets to choose which topic they will use from the spar cards and the loser will choose which side they would like to be on. Give the students a chance to think and then let the loser of the toss talk about their side for one minute on why their side should win. Then let the other student talk for one minute.

When done, have the rest of the class vote on who won the debate.

Repeat the process with the rest of students for the remainder of class.

NOTE: As the students get more comfortable, make them speak longer.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Give the students five sticky notes. Have them write five different spar topics on the sticky notes and add them to your board as they leave class. There are also topics pre-provided you may use.

LESSON 1: **WHAT IS DEBATE?**




ASSESSMENT:

Use the student's debate topics as an exit slip for class.

- Evaluate if the topic is something that could be debated or is it just a statement?

SPAR CARD TOPIC IDEAS:


- *TOPIC 1:* Pineapple belongs on pizza.
- *TOPIC 2:* Dogs make the best pets.
- *TOPIC 3:* [Name of city the school is located in] should be the capital of the United States.
- *TOPIC 4:* The United States should switch to a year round school schedule.
- *TOPIC 5:* Homework should be abolished from the school system.
- *TOPIC 6:* [Insert name of the school] should require school uniforms.
- *TOPIC 7:* On balance, social media provides more benefit than harm.
- *TOPIC 8:* Cell phones should be allowed in schools.
- *TOPIC 9:* The voting age should be lowered to 16.
- *TOPIC 10:* The drinking age should be lowered to 18.
- *TOPIC 11:* Similar to men, women should be enrolled in the draft at age 18.
- *TOPIC 12:* The United States should abolish the Electoral College.
- *TOPIC 13:* Voting in the United States should be compulsory.



SPAR
DEBATE TOPICS



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LESSON 2: WHAT IS PUBLIC FORUM?

TOPIC:

Public Forum Basics:
Students will see part of an exemplary debate and have open discussion about which side did better based on current knowledge.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What is Public Forum Debate, and what makes it different from other formats?

What is Public Forum Debate compared with other styles?

1. Students will be able to define the general terms of a PF debate.
2. Students will be able to find key parts of opening speeches.
3. Students will be able to identify good debating techniques that they should emulate.

MATERIALS:

- *PF study guide* for discussion questions
- *2015 PF final round video*
- Notebook paper and pen/pencil for note taking

Insight:

When most people picture a debate, what they envision is likely closest to a Public Forum round, because Public Forum was created to appeal to an everyday audience. Public Forum topics change every month or every other month and focus on current events and other timely issues. Public Forum is also the shortest of all debate formats, with rounds lasting about 45 minutes. Due to the nature of changing topics, students who compete in this format will not need a large depth of knowledge in a particular area compared to other formats. This makes Public Forum a great format for those brand new to debate.

This lesson includes an example debate and discussion questions to get the students familiar with what a debate looks like and have them start asking critical questions that will help develop their debating skills. By the end of these lessons, students should be able to identify the four types and responsibilities of each Public Forum speech: constructive, rebuttal, summary, and final focus.

THREE-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- *2015 PF final round video*
- *2015 PF study guide*

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Have an open discussion about the first amendment and different arguments that someone may use for or against. This will help prime the students for the round they are about to watch.

NOTE: Since this is a multi-day lesson we recommend opening each lesson with this hook but see if the student's opinions change the further into the debate they get. Ask them what arguments they are finding persuasive.

BODY

30-40 minutes

After defining Public Forum, pass out the study guide that provides discussion questions for the students.

Stop after each section and discuss what happened in each speech. Below is what the students should be looking for. We recommend breaking this lesson into multiple days, which are outlined below. You will not finish the round in an entire class period. Below you will also find keywords that apply to the speech. We recommend having the students write these words down before the speeches. During the discussion after each section instruct the students to write the definition of these key terms in their own words. This will serve as their personal debate dictionary. There is also a *debate dictionary* provided for reference.

Key words before starting the round:

Prep Time: *bank of time each debate can use to prepare for their next speech. Think of this like taking a time out.*

Cross Fire: *a chance to ask your opponent questions about the speech they just gave. This can be used to clarify a missed point, test knowledge, or contest evidence. There will be a larger lesson on this later.*

Constructive: *A pre-written, evidence-based speech that outlines 2-3 reasons why you should vote for the debater's side. Each team gives one constructive per round.*

DAY ONE

Rebuttal:— An unscripted speech where each debater attacks their opponent's points, and if time permits, defends their own. This does include research but is not as evidence heavy as the constructives. Each team gives one rebuttal per round.

Ballot: How the judge votes. This is both something a judge physically fills out to announce who won the round, but also something the debater will reference in round as they try to convince the judge to vote for their side.

PART 1. Constructive Speeches: This speech lays the foundation for what will be discussed in the round and is handled by the first speaker. Have the students note what is each case's main argument and impact. Have students listen for the contentions in each case.

Key Terms:

Contention: The topic sentence or reason for their case. A PF case typically consists of 2-3 contentions and sometimes has subpoints underneath the contentions. Each contention should be unique and argue something different from the other.

Framework: How you should view the round. This is meant to provide a lens through which you should evaluate the round. If used, this is placed at the top of the case before contentions.

Impact: Short for implication. Why does this argument matter? What happens if this argument is true? Impacts are extremely important in debate. If you have no impact then why should I as a judge care?

PART 2. Cross Fire: A chance to clarify missed points and test your opponents knowledge. Have the student watch and see if there are any concessions gained. (There will be a whole lesson on this later) so don't spend too much time. There are also 3 crossfires in the debate.

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Have an open discussion about the first amendment and different arguments that someone may use for or against. This will help prime the students for the round they are about to watch.

NOTE: Since this is a multi-day lesson we recommend opening each lesson with this hook but see if the student's opinions change the further into the debate they get. Ask them what arguments they are finding persuasive.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Continue the lesson with the next set of speeches in the debate

PART 3. Rebuttal Speeches: This speech refutes claims made in the constructive speeches. The second speaker on each team uses this time to respond to their opponent's case. Have the students listen for complete refutations. Are the debaters responding to the argument's warrant or is it missing the point? Are the debaters organized how they go about responding to the case.

Key Terms:

Impact: *Short for implication. Why does this argument matter? What happens if this argument is true? Impacts are extremely important in debate. If you have no impact then why should the judge care?*

Link: *How does the warrant link to the claim and the impact? How does this argument link to the topic? This is the step in the argument that is created by the affirmative or negative position. If the status quo looks like 'x' then the world changes in 'y' way after hypothetically voting for either side in the debate.*

Warrant: *A warrant is a critical part to an argument, as it establishes why the claim the debater made is true. Arguments that are missing warrants are comparatively worse, as there is no reason that a judge can be told to evaluate the warrantless argument over the other.*

Turn: *To take the claim or impact made by a debater and turn it against them. i.e. Claim: United States presence in Iraq is good because we built roads and bridges to help the local population. Turn: Roads and bridges are bad because it helps local terrorist organizations find these communities*

PART 4. Summary Speeches: The first speaker of each team handles this important speech. Their job is to take the 16 minutes of debate that just happened and boil it down into a 3 minute speech. Have the students listen for key issues. Does the debater try to respond to everything or have they picked a few key issues to focus on?

LESSON 2: WHAT IS PUBLIC FORUM?



DAY TWO

Key Terms:

Line by Line: *To respond to everything exactly in the order it was presented. This is a more technical style and will make more sense once you complete the flowing lesson*

Crystalize: *To take all of the arguments that have been presented in the first half of the debate round and summarize them into a few key big picture ideas.*

Drop: *Due to time constraints, competitors must make decisions about what arguments to no longer discuss in the round. These arguments are considered a “drop,” referring to the idea that they “fall” off the flow to some extent. Drops can be intentional or on accident and frequently are a strategic choice that teams will choose to exploit. A common idea is that a “dropped” argument is a “true” argument in the context of the round.*

Weigh: *If an impact is the reason that an argument should have importance, weighing is the reasoning for the judge to prefer one issue over another. If a debater does not weigh, the decision is left up to the judge to determine that difference.*

HOMEWORK

5 minutes

HOMEWORK: Read Chapter 1 in the *Public Forum Textbook*

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Have an open discussion about the first amendment and different arguments that someone may use for or against. This will help prime the students for the round they are about to watch.

NOTE: Since this is a multi-day lesson we recommend opening each lesson with this hook but see if the student’s opinions change the further into the debate they get. Ask them what arguments they are finding persuasive.

BODY

30-40 minutes

PART 5. Final Focus: The second speaker wraps up the debate with this speech. Their job is to give the judge final reasons to vote their side. Have the students listen for the voting issues. Do these voting issues line up with the key issues identified during the summary speech?

DAY THREE

LESSON 2: WHAT IS PUBLIC FORUM?



Key Terms:

Voters: Reasons you should vote for that team. Debaters will present these in the last two speeches as a way to tell the judge why they should vote for their side.

Role of the Ballot: How the judge should evaluate the round. A debater may inform the judge how they believe the ballot should be viewed/completed.

After the round is done, have students write down who they think won the round and take a tally. Take a moment to discuss the class results.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Next, work through the **discussion questions** in groups as the students evaluate the round and decide a winner.

Assign each group one section of the debate to discussion. Give them five minutes to discuss their questions.

Have each group share their discussion with the class and see if the other groups agree with their conclusion.

HOMEWORK: Read Chapter 6 in the **Public Forum Textbook** before lesson 3

ASSESSMENT:

Have the students create a quiz based on the round they just watched and submit an answer key. Options for quiz templates:

1. Vocab quiz based on the new terms learned
2. Order the speeches and times of a Public Forum round
3. Create a multiple choice test based on knowledge of the round

LESSON 3: RESOLUTION ANALYSIS

TOPIC:

In this lesson, students will dissect and analyze a debate resolution designed for Public Forum.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What is a debate resolution?

What are we debating?

1. Students will be able to identify and define key words of the resolution in terms of synonyms, antonyms, and definitions.
2. Students will be able to rephrase the resolution including nuances and limitations.

MATERIALS:

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- Highlighters, coloring pencils, or other colorful indicators
- Dictionaries and thesaurus

Insight:

Why this lesson and these materials?

Public Forum is different from any other debate format because the topic changes every month, or every other month, depending on the time of year. Students who compete in Public Forum will broaden their knowledge on various topics including international relations, economic policy, environmental decisions, etc. Public Forum topics will be separated into several categories: proposing change in policy, weighing benefits vs. harms, or repealing a certain policy or practice. Understanding how a topic functions is key to being an effective debater. The resolution helps frame the debate and set parameters for what the students will be discussing. A smart debater will learn how to use the wording of the resolution to their advantage.

ONE-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- *Past topic examples*
- *All past PF topics*

HOOK

10 minutes

Discuss homework and review Chapter 6.

Give eight original examples of each type of resolution: **fact**, **policy**, and **value**. Have students group them into those categories. Use these examples or create your own.

Fact:

- NATIONALS 2020 – Resolved: On balance, charter schools are beneficial to the quality of education in the United States.
- NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019 – Resolved: The benefits of the United States federal government’s use of offensive cyber operations outweigh the harms.
- Resolved: On balance, standardized testing is beneficial to K-12 education in the United States.

Policy:

- SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER – Resolved: The United States federal government should enact the Medicare-For-All Act of 2019.
- FEBRUARY 2020 – Resolved: The United States should replace means-tested welfare programs with a universal basic income.
- FEBRUARY 2017 – Resolved: The United States should lift its embargo against Cuba.

Value:

- SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016 – Resolved: In United States public K-12 schools, the probable cause standard ought to apply to searches of students.
- NOVEMBER 2015 – Resolved: In response to the current crisis, a government should prioritize the humanitarian needs of refugees over its national interests.

NOTE: These are not common in PF debate. The topics above are very weak value examples

LESSON 3: RESOLUTION ANALYSIS



BODY

20 minutes

Explain why Public Forum must treat each resolution independently to determine burdens.

*The three types of resolutions are inherently examining different things. Factual resolutions are determined to **find a true answer** to a question. Value resolutions are asking what we as a society should **care about**. Policy resolutions are asking what we should **do**.*

Explain the goal of every debate.

The goal of every debate should be to engage and focus research skills while learning how to then better present those findings. By having to switch sides, each debater can also learn how stances they don't necessarily agree with come to form their arguments. This approach has value because beyond the debate space, it teaches students to see all sides of an issue, advocate for change, and push those individuals in the real world from negative positions.

What is the difference between the positive and normative models of truth?

A positive model asserts that this is the way things factually are whereas a normative model attempts to showcase how things "should" be. That's important, as most debate resolutions are written in the normative function, allowing debaters to make arguments that don't require first showing that the slow-moving mechanisms of government would undertake the action.

Distribute the list of **resolutions** and have students underline, label, or highlight words that are KEY to understanding what the resolution wants us to debate.

Separate the students into pairs:

1. Have students circle indicator words and discuss (i.e.—words that indicate a contrast, an addition, a reason, a value, etc.).
2. Have students list synonyms, antonyms, and definitions for key words and discuss how the synonyms and antonyms can extend our understanding of the resolution.
3. Have the students rewrite the resolution in their own words.

Examples to use in class can be **found here**. Students can also go ahead and choose their own from the **past PF example topics**

LESSON 3: RESOLUTION ANALYSIS



CLOSURE

10 minutes

Have students share their rewrites, and vote on whose resolution best mirrors the meaning and intention of the resolution. Discuss why.

HOMEWORK: Pro and Con Discussion: This can be used in class if time permits, otherwise, assign for homework. Using the voted on resolution from the closure, have the students brainstorm why we should (PRO) and should not (CON) adopt this resolution. Get the students to think about this in terms of benefits (PRO) and harms/problems (CON).

ASSESSMENT:

Ask the students to submit their Pro/Con argument homework and use this as an assessment. Evaluate if the student provided benefits and harms for the topic.

LESSON 4: RESEARCH

TOPIC:

In this lesson students will explore how to effectively research a topic. Students will learn where to search for scholarly articles, how to evaluate sources, and different tips for using a search engine to their advantage.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What research do I need for debate? What are the best sources to use for debate?

How do I effectively research for a debate topic?

1. Students will be able to navigate and use databases to pull effective research.
2. Students will be able to identify and use the different hacks for searching on a database.
3. Students will be able to identify the key components of a good source including the author, background, and potential bias.

MATERIALS:

- Computers for each student (or each group if they work in pairs)
- *Handout on research tips*
- *Media bias chart*
- *Search engine game example*

Insight:

When we think back on the skills we learned in debate that helped carry us through college and into a professional career, many of us think of research. Debate teaches many important skills but the skills learned in evidence analysis and research are some of the most underrated abilities. Learning how to manipulate a search engine to find evidence or quickly scan a piece of scholarly work is something that isn't always taught, but is always important.

THREE-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Public Forum Textbook*

HOOK

5 minutes

Ask students where they would go to find an answer to something? What if the answer couldn't be easily googled? What do they look for to know if the source they are getting their answer from is correct? Have an open discussion on this with the students and end by introducing databases such as Google Scholar, Jstor, and Lexisnexis.

BODY

15 minutes

How to Effectively Use Search Engines

Research in debate will often need scholarly and academic research. This evidence can be hard to find from a simple Google search. Students will need to become familiar with how to use Google Scholar, Google News, Jstor, HeinOnline (*free access for NSDA members*), and various other databases. We recommend having a conversation with your school's library staff to see which databases are available.

Explain the different tabs of Google to students, including how they might use the video function to find a quick explainer on an unfamiliar term or concept or the news tab to pull up newspaper and magazine articles in addition to a variety of journalists' articles on the topic.

Next, introduce *Google Scholar*, where most of the content is geared toward academic journals. Explain to students that this means that experts in their respective fields are publishing information that has undergone peer review. Peer review involves experts critiquing the work of others to ensure that the research methods deployed are valid and that the results are reliable. Ensure students recognize that the information they will find on Google Scholar will likely be more credible and reliable than that featured in a general web search. This also means that some of the information may be difficult to read and comprehend without more background. The deeper students dive into the research, the more you will come to read and understand articles found on Scholar and similar search engines.

Once you have introduced the different databases to students the next step is to teach them tips for using search engines to find what they are looking for. *This handout* has several tips to get them started with their search. Go through the sample searches for delimiters and terms of art together to practice.

DAY ONE

DAY ONE

CLOSURE

20 minutes

Have students pair up for ten minutes and think of other terms of art and relevant delimiters they may want to use when searching for them and why. As a jumping off point, write a few examples on the board, like student loan forgiveness, universal background checks for gun sales, and price controls on the pharmaceutical industry. Ask students how they might narrow in on their search terms to learn more about these topics. Then take ten minutes to recap as a class.

HOMEWORK: After the lesson on finding research, have students use databases and/or Google Scholar to find at least one article that could be used for affirmative and one for negative on a topic used in the resolutional analysis lesson. Use this evidence for the next lesson.

DAY TWO

HOOK

5 minutes

Have the students think of examples for a conservative biased source, a liberal biased source and see if they can give one for a moderate source. Do they find themselves reading biased sources often?

BODY

20 minutes

Bias Sources

This lesson will focus on identifying credible sources and authors. Debaters have argued about source credibility and dates for many, many years. When students dig deeply into the research of any topic, they will often discover that they have more questions than answers, and that particular authors or publications have specific political or policy agendas that they are working on. Not all research is unbiased or apolitical. While objectivity is typically a goal in academic research, students should be aware of potential biases or political leanings, in particular in more advanced research. In addition to helping you craft a credible defense of your arguments in a round, understanding an uncredible and/or biased source can be helpful as a refutation tactic in a debate round.

Today, even long-standing sources of news and information with substantial histories are being questioned by political figures. A source that may have been presumed as credible by virtually anyone in the past may now find opposition. One of the best ways for students to familiarize themselves with this landscape is to examine media bias charts.

DAY TWO

1. Discuss with students what types of organizations might have bias. Questions to consider: What kinds of bias might specific government agencies have? What kinds of bias might specific business organizations have? Education? How would you research the credentials of an author?
2. Discuss with students whether bias impacts any aspect of research. Have them think about the possibility that people or organizations have an agenda or something they want the audience to think, believe, or do.
3. Share the media bias charts with students. Call on 2-3 students to share their sources from the homework and look them up.

The *Ad Fontes Media Bias Chart* is one of the most popular online. This interactive chart allows you to examine the credibility of various news sources based upon the depth of fact-reporting, the reliability of the news source, and whether it is neutral, left, or right in political position. Each dot on the chart represents a different news source. The lower the position of the source, or the further away from the center the source is located, tells you that the source is lower in credibility or features bias (or both).

AllSides shows you popular news articles on different sides of the political spectrum. The methodology mixes authoritative news reviews along with a rating that is determined by AllSides users that measures the perception of media bias. You can search for hundreds of journalists and sources of news on the site to determine a bias rating.

CLOSURE

10 minutes

After the lesson, have the students work independently or in pairs to evaluate the articles they found for homework on Day 1, checking the source on the charts. Where did their sources fall on the charts? Were any not on the charts at all?

DAY THREE

HOOK

5 minutes

Distribute sticky notes and ask students to write down a subject matter that changes frequently (like the stock market) and stick it on the board. Discuss any common themes.

BODY

15 minutes

Source Recency

Show students a short clip from this 2011 Policy round to demonstrate the importance of up to date evidence. ([Click here](#) and jump to the 26:20 minute mark. Play video until 29:21.) Ask the students who came off stronger in the cross. Did the student on the left effectively draw the evidence into question? Did the student on the right adequately defend their position?

Explain to students the importance of checking the dates of their source material. When the content is published may be as important as the information itself. To narrow down the date parameter, go to advanced settings in your search engine or database and narrow the date parameter. You may want to focus your search within the past month, six months, or even the prior 24 hours. If your topic relies upon news reporting that may change on a daily basis or weekly basis, you will want to find the most recent and credible information you can.

CLOSURE

20 minutes

Have students complete an online research scavenger hunt to find five pieces of information. We have included a *sample* of what this could look like, but feel free to create your own.

After the activity, take 5 minutes to discuss with the students how their search went. How quickly were they able to find the evidence? Was there evidence they could not find?

Follow-up reflection with students: Is it more or less difficult to find quality research on databases as opposed to Google or another search engine? Which search option provided the most credible research? From where is the more recent research culled (can you be sure of the date/recency of research found on Google/search engines)?

HOMEWORK: Have students read pages 115-118 in the *Public Forum Textbook*.

Then have students write a small response to the following questions:

Why is research important in debate? Is all research created equal?

ASSESSMENT:

- Did the student bring outside research to use on Day Two?
- Did the student answer the questions from homework Day Three?

LESSON 5: HOW TO CUT CARDS

TOPIC:

In this lesson students will begin to read and organize research for use in an argument.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What is a card? How do I cut evidence to fit argument structure?

How is the best data culled and organized for use in an argument?

1. Students will cut evidence and distinguish between quality levels of pieces of evidence.
2. Students will write appropriate and accurate tags for multiple pieces of evidence.
3. Students will identify and include correct citations according to the rules for evidence.

MATERIALS:

- *Video on cutting cards*
- *Using Verbatim*

OPTIONAL LESSON EXTENDERS:

- *Evidence card matching game from NAUDL*
- *Evidence finding game from NAUDL*

Insight:

The term card cutting may seem like a festive craft or diy project but to debaters this is the process of gathering evidence. Pre-electronic debate, evidence needed to be printed out and placed on index cards. Debaters would carry index card boxes with their carded evidence to debate tournaments and read off their cards when presenting evidence. A lot has changed since then, but we still continue to refer to evidence as cards.

THREE-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- *Google Docs Verbatim template for card cutting*
- *Paperless debate template for Word*
- *Examples of cut cards from the THAAD topic in 2017*

HOOK

10 minutes

Hand students a long passage, we recommend *something fun and light hearted*. This passage when read word for word should take 5 minutes to read. Tell the students they will only have 2 minutes to read the whole passage. They will need to cut down and highlight only things that can be said in 2 minutes. Have the students work for a couple minutes on this task then ask them how it went. Was it hard? What tactics did they use to condense the passage so it didn't change the meaning but fit the time?

BODY

25 minutes

★ *Watch Video on Cutting Cards*

The video discusses what to do having already found articles on the topic. It would be a good time to review what makes good research/evidence from the previous lesson. If students ask about the tools the person in the video is using, let them know you'll circle back to that in the next lesson. Distribute the *Card Cutting guide* and talk students through the requirements for cutting a card. Then give students time to find two articles from different authors on the *current topic* or a topic of your choosing that the class will be debating in later lessons. Students should put together a full written citation.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Students should turn in the citations created at the end of Day One to make sure no one is incorrectly creating the first part of the card. The final assessment will be looking at the entire card, so it's important that the first step is at least checked upon.

HOMEWORK: Read Chapter 3 of the *Public Forum Textbook* and take notes on the main concepts of claim, data, warrant, and impact.

DAY ONE

BODY

35-45 minutes

Using Templates

In debate, the most widespread card cutting template used is *Verbatim*. Show a few *examples* and then cut a card of your choosing on the topic at hand live for students.

The beginning of the class period should be used to walk students through how the cards were cut using the template of choice. Verbatim is excellent but requires the use of Microsoft Word. If the school provides Chromebooks or does not provide that specific word processor, a *replacement template* for Google Docs can also be used. While not as responsive as Verbatim, it follows similar formatting standards and allows all students to participate. For future file creation, the add-on isn't meant to handle large file sizes and you will notice lag.

Students should take the period to begin fully cutting the articles they chose on Day One into cards. Remind students that articles can contain more than just one card and reading to the end of the article is valuable in the research process regardless. From the research lesson, they should prioritize the use of peer-reviewed articles and papers rather than just page long news articles. If students finish early, they should find additional articles to cut cards from.

HOMEWORK

5 minutes

HOMEWORK: Have students cut and tag the other articles they found from lesson 4 so that the discussion on Day Three can be productive.

BODY

35-45 minutes

Group the students into groups of three. Have each student read what they believe is the best card from their article. Have them defend why that card is a good card.* Looking at the example of a bad card in the *Using Verbatim* document, are they making cards that have a claim as a tagline and warrants in the card text? Or are they using the card text to make claims without any warranting? After defending their card, have them continue to cut cards from their article and/or find additional articles to work with.

***THINGS TO CONSIDER:** what the purpose of the card might be, the connection of the card to the argument, the length of the card (e.g., does shortening the card cause it to lose value in the argument?).

DAY TWO

DAY THREE

NOTE that there are two additional games provided by NAUDL in the materials section. These are specific to Policy Debate but the games can still fit for PF. Use these if you have extra time to fill or want to add more games to this lesson.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

After completing all days of this lesson, have the students return to the initial passage used in the Day One hook. Give them the same instructions, but now they need to fit it into 1 minute and 30 seconds and see how they do. Was it easier this time around?

ASSESSMENT:

After completing this lesson have each student submit two completed cards (1 pro, 1 con) to use on a topic of your choosing. These cards need to be properly cut and tagged. When assessing the card check for the following:

- Is there an author or organization listed?
- Is the name of the article listed?
- Are credentials provided?
- Is there a publication date?
- Does the claim match the evidence?

LESSON 6: ARGUMENTATION

TOPIC:

During this lesson, students will learn the basic elements of argumentation. They will define claim, data, warrant, and impact and begin to create their own arguments using claim, data, warrant, and impact.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What are the elements of an argument?

What is a good argument?

1. Students will be able to define claim, data, warrant, and impact.
2. Students will be able to distinguish between claim, data, warrant, and impact.
3. Students will be able to construct arguments that include all four parts.

MATERIALS:

- *Chipotle Scarecrow Commercial*
- *5 Most Memorable Political Ads of 2016*
(use with your discretion and school policies)
- Note taking materials

Insight:

The saying goes you must first learn how to walk before you can run. Well, in debate you must first learn how to argue before you can debate. This lesson will break down the parts of an argument so your students can form complete refutations.

Claim, warrant, data, and impact are the building blocks of an argument. Every speech in debate is made up of these four things. Understanding each component to an argument is integral to debating. If your statement is missing one of these elements, then you don't have a complete argument and thus no ground to stand on.

ONE- OR TWO-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Chipotle Scarecrow Commercial*
- *5 Most Memorable Political Ads of 2016*
- *Public Forum Textbook*

HOOK

10 minutes

Watch the *Chipotle commercial* as a class. Ask the students, what did the commercial make them feel? What is Chipotle trying to make you think from this advertisement?

BODY

30 minutes

Discuss the concepts and explanations of claim, data, warrant, and impact.

Claim: *what's the statement or key phrase to summarize what you are about to argue?*

Data: *What proof are you using to back-up your claim?*

Warrant: *Why does the data provided fulfill the claim?*

Impact: *If this claim is true, what is the impact?*

Ask them how their understanding of these concepts is different after reading Chapter 3 of the textbook.

PART 1: After watching the Chipotle scarecrow commercial, work with the students as a large group to determine how each of the elements fit the argument.

NOTE: under the overall argument, you will likely have multiple of each.

* example you can walk the students through:

Argument: *Eat Chipotle*

Claim: *Better treatment of animals*

Data: *sad cows, shots in chickens to make them larger, assembly line vs. no mistreatment when main character makes his own food*

Warrant: *having sad animals is bad, so better treatment of animals is good, and since no mistreatment by Chipotle, eat at Chipotle*

Impact: *Better treatment of animals = fewer chemicals in food which is healthy*

DAY ONE

LESSON 6: ARGUMENTATION

DAY ONE/TWO

Claim: Fresh ingredients are better

Data: mistreatment and chemicals

Warrant: having chemicals in food is bad, so fresh ingredients are healthy, so eat at Chipotle because they use fresh ingredients

Impact: Fresher ingredients = more health and nutrients so important

PART 2: Have students watch the **5 Most Memorable Political Ads of 2016** and then determine how each of the elements fit the argument. Break the students into groups of 5 and assign each group one of the political ads.

In groups, have them practice creating the argument from the beginning. Have students write down the overarching argument. Then, work with them to create the claim, data, warrant, and impact.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Write a value statement on the board of your choosing and have the students take a minute to write one complete argument either for or against.

| *Example: The drinking age should be lowered to 18.*

HOMEWORK: Students read Chapter 7 of the Public Forum Textbook and answer the following questions:

What are observations and why do they matter?

What makes a good contention?

ASSESSMENT:

Collect the written arguments from the closure as an exit slip.

- Did the student write a complete argument with claim, data, warrant, and impact?

LESSON 7: WRITING THE CASE

TOPIC:

Students will learn the fundamentals of writing a good Public Forum case, and then they will work with a partner to gather material and write cases.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

How do I write a case for Public Forum?

How do I write a persuasive speech that includes all the necessary debate elements?

1. Students will be able to gather a list of arguments for both sides of the topic.
2. Students will be able to identify the key components of a Public Forum case.

MATERIALS:

- Personality Assessment
- *Storytelling in Public Forum Debate*
- *Casing lecture slides*

Insight:

The case, or the constructive speech, is the first speech that will be heard in a debate a round. The case is the foundation for what will be discussed and reads like a persuasive essay you might write for a class. The case is telling the judge why your side is the correct one and what you will be advocating for. A well written case will set you up for the rest of the round. Gaps in the case, or poorly selected evidence may mean you spend the rest of the debate round playing defense.

Cases in PF have made a major shift from carded evidence to essay format. We have included some *sample cases* that use carded evidence. The benefit to this style is it showcases the complete evidence/text the student is reading from. You will find many newer PF cases will be written in essay format where the student pulls just 1-2 sentences from the article and does not show the full context of the quote. This can be misleading. While your students are writing their cases, encourage them to include the full paragraph/text their source is coming from. As discussed in the research lesson, evidence transparency is extremely important in debate. Academic standards that the students see in school on honesty and transparency also carry over to a competitive activity based on research like debate. By including the full source, students will be prepared to defend the integrity of their evidence if challenged.

This lesson will also have the students start to think about their debate partners. There is a personality test included because certain personalities can perform better with different

LESSON 7: WRITING THE CASE



speeches. The first speaker is responsible for the pre-written speech and the summary. The second speaker handles the first rebuttal and last speech of the round. We'd encourage your students to try both roles and figure out which one they like best. Some tournaments students may even flip flop their roles or switch positions based on which case they wrote. Both roles in a debate round are important, but what's even more important is how well partners can work together.

THREE- TO FOUR-DAY LESSON

HOOK

10 minutes

Have the students all come to the middle of the room. Read the statements from the personality test and have the students move to the side of the room that matches the statement. *i.e. Study Environment: if you like to work in groups go to the left side of the room. If you prefer to work alone go to the right side of the room.* This can either be just a hook to get students interested, or you can take note of who might pair well together.

BODY

30 minutes

- ★ Review Chapter 3 before starting Day One lesson.
- ★ Prior to starting the lesson, copy or project the case outline on the board, or distribute it to students (see **Case Outline Activity**).

Watch **Storytelling in Public Forum Debate**. After watching the video, review Chapter 7 in the Public Forum Textbook.

Review contention/case structure through the **casing lecture slides**. The structure of a contention can be found on slide 6. Typically a PF case is made up of 2-3.

These contentions act as topic sentences for the case and are the main arguments the debater will be focusing on.

CLOSURE

5-10 minutes

Have students partner up, and spend a few minutes brainstorming case arguments on the current debate topic, or whatever topic you've been working with throughout the other lessons. Assign half the class pro and half the class con. Within this partnership it should be doable to create the contention outlines which then become the targeted research goals for the following days. This activity will continue at the top of day 2.

HOMEWORK: Have students work with their partner to find two pieces of evidence they can use in a case.

DAY ONE

DAY TWO

HOOK

10 minutes

Have the students share with their partners the evidence they found as homework.

BODY

25 minutes

Keep students in pairs. They should continue working on argument ideas and begin to outline a cohesive case, adding in their evidence or looking for more if needed. If you're working with the same topic as lesson 5 on research, encourage students to see if the cards they previously cut would work well. At this stage, the speech may still read more like an outline than a fine tuned speech. That's fine!

CLOSURE

5-10 minutes

Pair one pro team with a con team and have them review each other's cases from the day before. Encourage them to critique the case. What is argued well? What could be clearer? Does an argument seem to be missing an important link? These cases shouldn't be close to done, so the exercise is more to keep the students refining what cards they'll need to be looking for in the future.

RESOURCE

- *Public Forum Textbook*

DAY THREE/FOUR

HOOK

15 minutes

Have the groups from day 2 share one argument from each side that they liked from the day before and compile a list on the board. Ask the students which arguments would pair together well. (A well written case tells a cohesive story.) After compiling a list of arguments for both sides on the current topic ask the students if they think one side will be easier to argue. Why do they think that? Is the topic balanced or does one side seem to have an advantage?

BODY

30-40 minutes

Give pairs independent work time to further develop their speech and smooth transitions between cards. Set timed goals - for instance "In ten minutes you should have your uniqueness card for your first contention" in order to keep the students on track. They should conduct more research, learn from the critiques they heard on day 2, and select their final 2-3 contentions from their original list of arguments and/or the class list from Day Two.

HOMEWORK

10 minutes

HOMEWORK: Have students read pages 73-74 and 79-84 of Chapter 9 in the Public Forum Textbook and answer the following questions:

1. What are three examples of shorthand you could use in a flow?
2. What is sign posting? Why is it important?
3. What are claim- and impact-level challenges? What do they accomplish?

ASSESSMENT:

Have the students submit their final case for whichever side they were assigned during class. For a first attempt, you're not looking for perfection.

Consider:

- Do all the arguments either affirm or negative the resolution?
- Can you identify what their contention, subpoints, impacts, and analysis are?
- Do the arguments fit together to tell a cohesive story?

LESSON 8: FLOWING THE ROUND

TOPIC:

In this lesson students will focus on learning how to take organized notes to track the content of partner and competitor speeches.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

How do I take effective notes during a round?

1. Students will be able to use and demonstrate shorthand for note taking.
2. Students will be able to format notes during a debate round.

MATERIALS:

- *2014 NSDA PF Final Round Video*

Insight:

Flowing is the most helpful skill for a debater to have in their arsenal. Learning how to flow is important for being organized during a round. If you are an unorganized debater it will be really hard to win a round. Flowing is used to track which arguments are still in play and if any arguments have been dropped (not responded to). Oftentimes judges will make decisions based on what is happening on their flow.

There are many ways to flow and the videos provided do a great job of showing you how. Our biggest advice is make sure to use two different colored pens. Assign pro one color and neg the other color. This will help your brain keep track of which arguments belong to which side.

THREE-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- *Flowing Videos*
- *Flowing symbols*

HOOK

15 minutes

Give students the coloring sheet (included after this lesson) and read the following instructions out loud. Do not allow them to take notes. Read them only once and in a quick but not rushed manner. Give them exactly 5 mins to complete the task. Do not repeat the instructions or take questions in the middle of giving them.

NOTE the most important instructions are the colors the rings are supposed to be.

- color the two outside rings first*
- color the two inside rings second*
- color the middle rings in blue and purple*
- color the outermost ring in red*
- color the innermost ring in pink*
- color the second most outer ring in orange*
- color the second most inner ring in yellow*
- color any remaining white within the circle in any color of your choosing*

After they have finished the coloring sheet ask the student to hold them up so everyone can see the differences. Ask the students which instructions stuck out the most and why they followed those and not others. Then, as a class, discuss the importance of each instruction. This should segway into a discussion about the importance of taking notes during the round to make sure you are catching key information. Be sure to put emphasis on taking notes over the important topics and weeding out things that are less important, like what order the rings are colored in, because ultimately the coloring sheet looks the same if you follow the color rules regardless of the order the rings were colored in.

BODY

15 minutes

Watch *Part 1 of the flowing video* and discuss any questions the students may have.

DAY ONE

LESSON 8: FLOWING THE ROUND



DAY TWO

BODY

35 minutes

Watch *Part 2 of the flowing video*. After completing the video have students pair up with their partners and read cases. While one is reading the other should be flowing. We have provided cases in the resource packet, but if you are at the point in the season where you have current cases on the topic those would be great to use too.

The first read through will take longer than expected, have students allow time after each case for the other person to get their flowing caught up.

HOMEWORK

5 minutes

HOMEWORK: Watch *Part 3 of the flowing video*.

DAY THREE

BODY

35 minutes

Watch the *2014 NSDA PF final round video*. Skip the crossfire and stop after the rebuttals. This should be 16 minutes of debate the students just flowed. From your own flow, ask students what card/author follows after. Test their knowledge by seeing if they flowed correctly. Jump around the flow to make sure that students were consistent the entire speech and not just trying to memorize one specific short piece.

Depending on time you can repeat this for the remaining speeches. Ask the students which arguments they flowed all the way through the round. Based only on the flow, take a poll and see who the debaters think won the round. (Many judges in debate will evaluate who won the round only on the flow to try and be as objective as possible.) If you don't have enough time for the lesson assign this as homework and have a quick discussion at the start of class.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

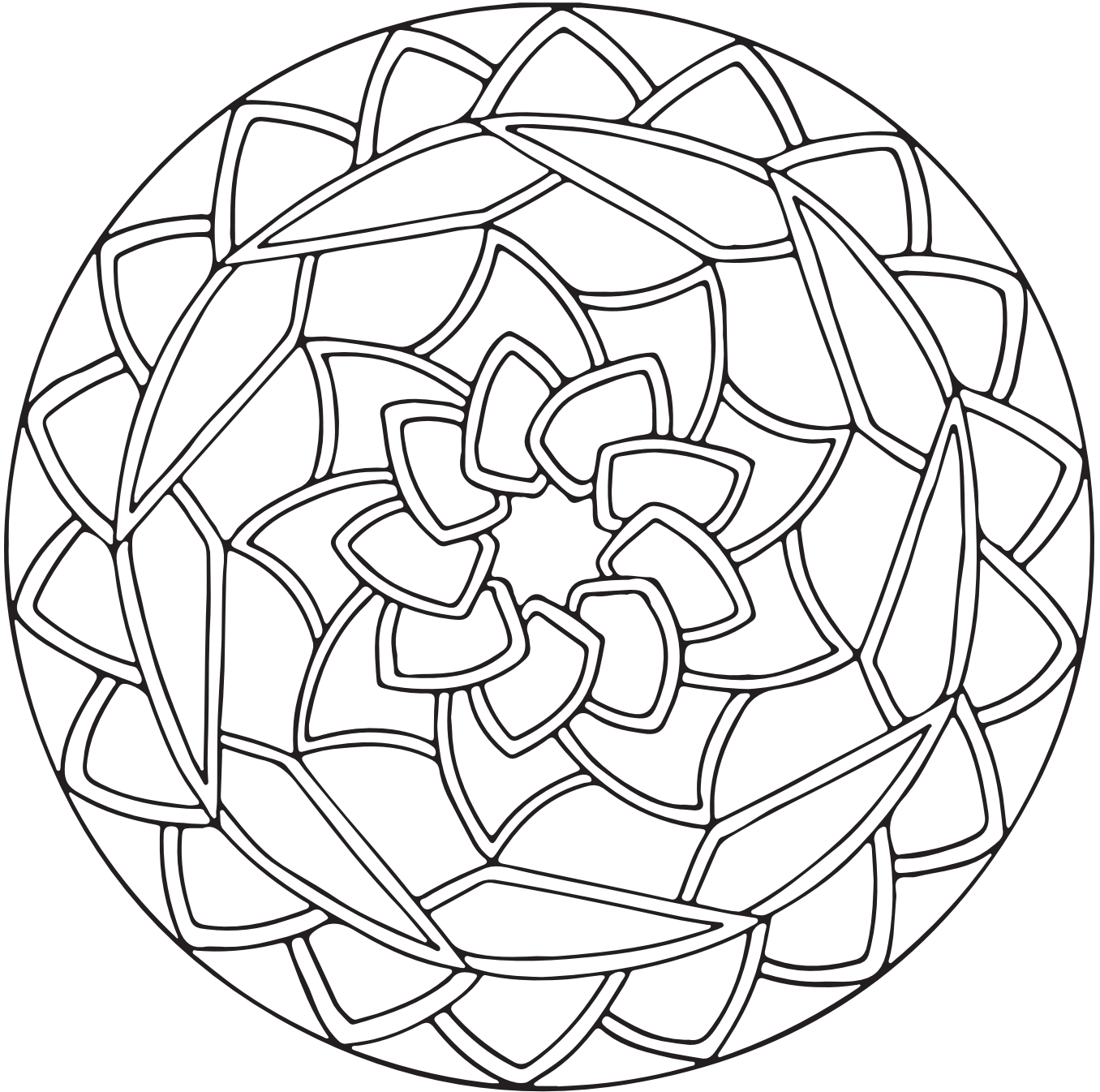
Once you complete the round, have a discussion with the students about who won the round on the flow vs. who won the round in the "bigger picture." Are they the same or are they different teams?

HOMEWORK: Read Chapter 8 in the *Public Forum Textbook*.

ASSESSMENT:

Have students turn in their flows from the PF final round.

- Did the student flow all speeches? You do not need to measure accuracy at this point. Check to see if they were paying attention and flowing through the entire round.



LESSON 9: CROSSFIRE

TOPIC:

Students will cover effective questioning and answering in theory and practice.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

How do I use crossfire in a debate round?

How do I effectively use my time during crossfire?

1. Students will be able to explain how to question and answer during crossfire.
2. Students will be able to effectively and meaningfully question an opponent.
3. Students will be able to coherently and concisely answer an opponent's questions.

MATERIALS:

- *6 tips on effective crossfire*
- *Lecture on cross for novices*

Insight:

Another way Public Forum is a unique format of debate is that it is the only one that shares the questioning period. In all other formats questioning between debaters is direct or one direction, meaning only one debater gets to ask questions. In PF debate, students get to question each other during this time. Many students dismiss crossfire as unimportant because it's not an actual speech, but crossfire can be a great strategic tool. As students become more advanced with their crossfire skills they will learn how to ask questions so they can gain concessions from their opponent. When debaters are first starting out crossfire is also a great way to ask clarifying questions and ensure they caught everything from the previous speech.

NOTE: We intended this lesson to be one day and geared towards beginner debaters. If your students are more advanced, we recommend a second day on this lesson going into crossfire strategy. If you add an extra day to this lesson, we recommend using *this lecture on cross for novices*.

ONE- TO TWO-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- *Supplemental video on crossfire*

HOOK

15 minutes

Remind students of the order of speeches and when crossfire happens.

John Stewart on Crossfire

NOTE: This is a longer video but is a fun way to show how to use humor and take control of questioning.

BODY

20 minutes

Begin by explaining the structure of crossfire

Nuts and Bolts

- *Whichever team speaks first will generally also ask the first question of each crossfire.*
- *The first two crossfires are one-on-one. The two participating debaters face the judge, rather than each other. During grand crossfire, all debaters participate and are seated.*
- *The golden rule of crossfire is to question with a purpose. Ask yourself: What am I getting out of this?*

Importance of crossfire:

It is your only opportunity to clarify your opponents' arguments. It is important to make sure you have an accurate flow of all of your opponents' arguments, and you may use crossfire to clarify their points. However, this takes away from your time to ask more strategic questions, and it also gives your opponents another change to explain their arguments to the judge.

- *Crossfire gives you an opportunity to expose weaknesses in your opponents' case.*

DAY ONE/TWO

ONE- TO TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE/TWO

Potential pitfalls:

- *Not knowing what to ask. It may help to have a few go-to crossfire questions specific to the topic.*
- *Letting your opponent re-explain all of their arguments. Make sure that you politely interrupt your opponent once you have the information you need, rather than letting them ramble on through all of your questioning time.*
- *Pointless questions that don't get you anything. Again, the emphasis should be on asking strategic questions designed to expose flaws in your opponents' reasoning.*
- *Asking the "last" question. In your line of questioning, you may get your opponent to reveal a flaw in their case indirectly. For example, you may find two parts of the case that contradict. Ask your opponent to clarify each part individually and ask questions such that they reveal the question. Do not, however, then ask, "Don't these two things contradict each other?" By asking the last question, you are giving your opponent an opportunity to weasel out of the contradiction. It is extremely unlikely that they would ever concede, "Why yes, that is contradictory!" so there's no reason to ask the question.*

Next, divide the class into two sides. Pick two students to read their cases in front of the class. These can either be sample cases we provided in the resource folder or cases your students have already written for the current topic in lesson 7. This will be dependent on where your team/students are for progress.

Tell students to take notes and write potential questions. After their cases are read, alternate sides (using a hand-raising / you choose system), allow students to ask questions and have students from the other side give the answers.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

After questions, ask if the question was "good" or "bad." Students need to explain why they judge the question the way that they do.

HOMEWORK: Read Chapter 9, pages 87-90 in the *Public Forum Textbook* and watch the video *Six Tips for Effective Crossfire*.

ASSESSMENT:

Have students write down feedback based on the mock crossfire they just heard. Students should submit these as exit slips before leaving class. If students participated in the mock crossfire, they can be excused from this assessment.

LESSON 10: REFUTATION

TOPIC:

Students will cover how to effectively refute the opposing side.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

Because to debate is to clash, how does one refute the arguments of the other side?

1. Students will be able to define clashing in debate.
2. Students will be able to explain the importance of predicted arguments for their own cases.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate refutation on other's cases.

MATERIALS:

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- *“There is clash in good debate” video*
Note: the speech times have changed since this video
- Paper and pencil for notes
- Students should have access to the debate dictionary (*this is one of the places where they can start to update with new terms they've learned. Paper is fine to transfer to electronic notes later*)

Insight:

Ideally this lesson should focus on the rebuttal and summary speeches. Each speaker then technically is needing to prioritize two different things.

The summary speaker needs to look at their own case and figure out how to “frontline” or answer back for the points put against their case, while the rebuttalist needs to be making those answers in the first place.

For more advanced students, they can actually take the refutation points they just made and pretend to be the summary speaker. They should repeat the same process they just did, but now they're focused on proving the case right against the refutation. Placing these in a new document and labeling them as “summary extensions” can make sure that students once they're in a round have content to fall back on besides just arguing strictly against whatever the opposition says.

THREE-DAY LESSON

The lesson should take three days. Each day the focus should just be on each side of the topic. Consider splitting the class in order to make sure not everyone is just repeating the exact same arguments that they hear from the people sitting next to them. Attempt to achieve variety.

RESOURCES

- *Public Forum Textbook*
- *“There is clash in good debate” video*
- *Weighing power point slides*
- *Example block from the medicare for all topic*
- *Guide to rebuttals video from Kentucky Debate*
- *What are impacts from Kentucky Debate*
- *5 tips to power clash like a fashion pro*
- *Power clashing: who, what, when, where, why, how?*

HOOK

15 minutes

Define clash in debate:

- *The direct opposition to a claim.*
- *Clash is engagement with the opponents specific link and impacts. It can't just be “they say ‘x’ but we say ‘y’” statements.*
- *Use your flow to call out specific pieces of evidence and name arguments as their labeled, not just as “their contention one”*

Scroll through *5 tips to power clash like a fashion pro* and *Power clashing: who, what, when, where, why, how?* with your students, stopping to explain how these same ideas can translate to clash in debate.

- **Colors:** be bold in your arguments. Don't be afraid to make them stand out
- **Build to patterns:** Build up to your style. It won't happen overnight, but your refutation and delivery should become unique and have a pattern.
- **Play with textures:** Use different styles of arguing, frame the argument in a different light. Give it a new meaning and play around with its purpose.
- **Monochromatic:** Sometimes it's good to stick with similar styles. Don't mesh too many styles together in the same debate.
- **Maximalism:** When in doubt, throw everything you have into the debate.

DAY ONE

BODY

45-55 minutes each day

- ★ Before beginning the lesson, make sure students have read Chapter 9, pages 125-129 and 136-139 in the *Public Forum Textbook*.

Approaches to Refutation

- ★ Watch the *guide to rebuttals video* from Kentucky Debate.

At the **:42 mark**, the video mentions offensive and defensive arguments. Pause, and reiterate for students what those phrases mean.

All refutation can break down into two overarching ideas of offense versus defense. The sports analogy is pretty clear, offense is how you score points for your side and defense is just ways of stopping the opponent. For debate purposes specifically, offensive arguments are reasons that it's important to vote for you while defense arguments are reasons that voting for your opponent shouldn't matter.

For clarification on types of arguments covered in the video:

- At the **2:01** mark, the video introduces the idea of claiming “no link” when they're talking about attacking the truth of the argument.
- At **2:37** the idea of a turn is introduced. Check the debate dictionary for the terms impact and link turn as there's a difference between the two. Effective refutation cannot include both on the same argument as that results in the double turn, also in the debate dictionary.

- ★ Watch the *what are impacts video* from Kentucky Debate.

The video uses the phrase impact comparison which is more formally known in debate as weighing.

- ★ Weighing: what are the formats you can weigh?

Probability - Easy enough to understand, it's just how probable something is. Look at cards/authors who probably use specific words to describe why the reader should care.

Magnitude - made up of two separate points. First is scope, or how many people are affected by the impact. The second is severity which can be understood as how hurt/impacted people are.

Time Frame - Can be understood in a couple of different ways. How long does the effect last for? How long do we have to avert the impact? Is the impact multi-generational?

DAY ONE/TWO

Beyond that there are more advanced ways to put this all together.

Definitions of risk - When people undergo certain policies, they're typically attempting to mitigate the "risk" of something coming to be. How drastic the policy depends on how probable something is while also understanding the magnitude of it when it does take place. Creating the equation of risk = probability x magnitude gives us an understanding as to why things like nuclear war, which has never happened, is still a huge part of the Pentagon's policy decisions.

When a timeframe of an argument is established, two common answers are made, the prerequisite and the idea of short circuiting. A prerequisite means that some part of an argument, typically on the link level or impact level, cannot happen unless the first argument is taken care of. For instance if the argument is made that the government should spend more money on education, a simple prerequisite of economic growth could be claimed. A government needs tax revenue before it's able to allocate it. If an argument short circuits another one though it does the opposite. Instead of allowing an argument to happen, it instead stops it from taking place.

Exercise One: Outlining Responses to Their Own Case

Have students pre-flow their cases and then write two offensive arguments and one defensive refutation for each argument made in the case. Have students include cards they would use to support their points of refutation.

NOTE: They will probably need to begin this in class and finish as homework.

Exercise Two: Evaluating Refutation

Have students pair with another student and discuss the points they made on their flows. Encourage them to look for what is a carded argument vs what is analytical. Not all responses directly need pieces of evidence to be valid, and if a student makes an analytical answer they should be able to explain the logic to their partner.

Partnerships should evaluate a few things:

1. Are there two offensive arguments made and one defensive one?
If the required minimum is not met, the student should add/
rewrite arguments to make sure they meet this minimum.
2. If a card is being used to make an argument, does the student's card choice support their argument? If not, the student should find a new card.
3. Does the logic of an analytic make sense? If not, the student should rewrite the logic or make a new argument.

DAY TWO

HOMework

5 minutes

HOMework: Taking the constructive criticism and rewriting answers where necessary, students should incorporate write-ups of weighing analysis with their answers. Those answers should then be put together and labeled as “Answers To: ‘X argument’” or “AT: ‘X Argument’”

See here for example.

DAY THREE

BODY

45-55 minutes

Refuting the Opponent’s Case

Have students get with a different student. Students should choose one of their cases to read to the other student. As one student reads, the other should flow. As the student flows, they should write down refutation points for the case. After reading the case, the student flowing should take 2 minutes of prep and then deliver a rebuttal speech for the case. Each student should both read a case as well as give a rebuttal.

The arguments that each student compiled to read against their partner should be put together in a similar fashion to the files they made for homework the night before.

Arguments against pro positions should be put in a file labeled “Con Blocks” and arguments against con positions should be put in a file labeled “Pro Blocks” so that students know what side they would read the answers on.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Exit Slip - Collect the students’ mini-block files that they’ve put together.

ASSESSMENT:

Each block should be evaluated on the same basis that their peers evaluated them on Day Two.

LESSON 11: DEMONSTRATION

TOPIC:

Students will watch a full debate, flow the whole round, and then complete a ballot for the debate.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What does a complete debate look like?

1. Students will be able to dissect a full debate and identify the different components.
2. Students will be able to complete a flow for a final round of PF debate.
3. Students will be able to complete a PF debate competition ballot.

MATERIALS:

- *Final round Public Forum Debate*
- *PF debate ballot sample*
- *PF debate ballot blank*
- Pen and paper for flowing

Insight:

This lesson incorporates the skills students have learned in the previous lessons using separate parts of a debate. Beginning students will certainly still struggle with these skills. It is important for them to reflect on the round as a whole and identify what specific skills they were proficient at and which ones they still need to work on.

One purpose of this lesson is to start to give students an idea of the “feel” of a complete round, especially the on-the-fly adjustments and rebuttals that were not there in the single-speech activities they have completed previously. Therefore, it is important for the teacher to ensure there is enough time to complete the entire debate in one session. While there may be students who struggle with keeping up while flowing, it would be better to wait until after the round is over to review instead of between individual speeches. This would be an excellent opportunity to reinforce the importance of being able to keep an accurate flow at the same pace the presenter is speaking.

TWO-DAY LESSON

RESOURCES

- *Final Round Public Forum Debate*
- *PF debate ballot sample*
- *PF debate ballot blank*

HOOK

NOTE: Watching the round will take the entire class period. No time for a hook with this lesson.

BODY

40 minutes

DAY ONE

Have students watch a *final round of Public Forum Debate*.
Have students flow the debate as they watch.

Tips for viewing:

- You may want to flow the debate for the students so that they can see what you (or a seasoned debater) do to flow. Give students ample time after the round is complete to compare this to their own flow.
- Especially initially, students may have issues keeping up with the flowing. If time allows, you may want to give a few extra minutes between speeches for them to complete their flow, but keep this to the absolute minimum.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Have students jot down their overall thoughts from the round.
This will be discussed during the next class period.

BODY

30 minutes

DAY TWO

PART. 1.

Open the lesson by taking a poll on who voted for which team. Discuss the debate. Try to focus especially on arguments and evidence. You might want to ask students which side most effectively used specific arguments.

Students will probably want to talk about delivery. In the discussion, caution students that the best delivery does not always equal the best arguments.

PART. 2.

Hand out copies of the **PF debate ballot sample** and **PF debate ballot blank**. Discuss each aspect on the ballot. After discussion of the round, have students use their flows to complete the ballots including both feedback (positive as well as areas for improvement) and a Reason for Decision.

NOTE: The RFD (reason for decision) should be a good paragraph and should include specific examples from the arguments made in the debate.

Depending on time, have students pair up and review each other's ballots. Open up to a class discussion and have each pair share one comment that they thought was good feedback and one that could be clarified.

NOTE: Good feedback focuses on what the student can control. Ballots should never comment on the students appearance, reading fluency, or accent. Ballots should also try and be balanced in their feedback so each team is receiving praise and criticism. A good ballot will help the debater understand why they won/lost and what they could clarify or change for their next round. *i.e. This analysis didn't make sense, work on flushing out. I don't think your evidence is matching your claim. I really liked your case. I thought you were organized and easy to follow.*

CLOSURE

10-15 minutes

End with an open discussion about what students believe is important to look for in a round. Was this reflected in their ballots? *i.e. did the student look for the clearest speaker or did they vote for someone off impacts.*

Explain to students that judges are going to have different philosophies on how they evaluate rounds much like the class has different philosophies on how they evaluated this round.

ASSESSMENT:

Have the students submit their ballots.

- Did the students provide a complete RFD?

LESSON 12: DELIVERY

TOPIC:

Students will discuss and practice effective delivery skills for their cases.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

What delivery practices make the most effective speeches in debate.

1. Students will be able to identify and discuss effective delivery skills.
2. Students will be able to implement delivery skills
3. Students will be able to identify and evaluate other's delivery styles and skills.

MATERIALS:

- Sticky notes and pencil
- Students' cases
- Notes

Insight:

This lesson is an easy one to use to replicate the judge-competitor rotation. The best practice for debate as a whole is to put yourself in the judge's position, so giving repeated feedback after watching other students internalizes a lot of the instruction and comments that the teacher themselves would give.

This lesson as a whole is still well suited for the classroom and doesn't need a lot of modifications. For partnerships as they've been established in class, the first speaker of course can use the constructive as their delivery example, and for the second speaker reading through a written block also allows commentary on the choices of answers that they made as well. It's much better to catch repetitive arguments in a non-competitive setting in terms of consequence but students are much more open to the criticism when in that more relaxed/casual setting.

It would also be helpful for students to record their speech as they're giving it. A good follow up for the first round is to incorporate the changes/criticism that the other students gave. Being able to compare the two speeches allows for the difference to be heard by the student, rather than just a mental reflection. The recordings can also be shown to parents during conferences or whenever there's a teacher-parent interaction.

TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

15 minutes

Have students write three different effective delivery practices on three different post-it notes and stick them on the white board at the front of the room. Make a class list of delivery skills (eliminate repeat answers) and have the students take them down in their notes.

BODY

50-60 minutes each day

As a class, discuss the different skills, paying particular attention to vocal inflections, facial expression, rate, volume, gestures, etc.

Have students read through their cases and make delivery notes as they go.

Examples: highlighting words to emphasize, writing in places to slow down, making note of gestures.

In partners, have the students read their cases, practicing their delivery notes. As one reads, the other students should be flowing AND making comments about the delivery of the case.

NOTE: students should try for 2 positive comments and 2 areas of improvements.

Have students pair with a different partner. They should share the feedback their old partner gave with their new partner. Then each student should read their case again taking into consideration the areas of improvement.

DAY ONE/TWO

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Have students write a short reflection on their deliveries. Where did they need improvement? What went well? If they were to give themselves speaker points, how many would it be? (Speaker points in debate are out of 30 but start at 26.)

ASSESSMENT:

Have the student record themselves delivering one case and submit to you.

LESSON 13: PRACTICE

TOPIC:

Students will participate in a debate which adheres to the timing and structure of a round of Public Forum Debate.

Essential Question + SWBAT Statements:

How does a full debate look and feel as a participant?

1. Students will be able to differentiate between using cases and evidence inside and outside of a round.
2. Students will be able to implement delivery skills.
3. Students will be able to identify and evaluate other's delivery styles and skills.

MATERIALS:

- Pens and paper to flow
- Timer/phone for keeping time
- Research material in whatever form that might be *recommend checking in to see what exists for these and making sure the students followed formatting instructions/recommendations*

Insight:

A Public Forum round is going to take 41 minutes as long as everything is running on time. If class periods are long enough, it makes sense to have one debate/class and each student not currently competing should be expected to make a cohesive RFD/ballot and turn in their flow of the debate along with it at the end of the class period.

Instructors should make sure to note that the debaters who are going the next day/period need to have their preflows and other materials gathered the night before. For online systems, having them turn in those are a sort of precheck could cut down on wasted time in class.

Space permitting, this could also be a time to split the class to speed up the process of getting through the debate. Odd numbered panels could make the students feel like their “decision” matters more and ups engagement.

So as to how long, depends on if you want the class split. There are also online recording options. Uploading individual speeches to a shared google drive folder or using something like *Flipgrid* could make the debate itself a homework assignment. Otherwise for an hour long period it's going to be one a day.

Consider recording these debates and having the students put together a portfolio to see growth. It would be good to keep some of these portfolios for recruitment efforts, being able to showcase what is actually learned in the class has a lot of value.

ONE-DAY LESSON

HOOK

5 minutes

Select teams to participate in the first debate. Students can volunteer or you can use some competition like rock, paper, scissors as a determiner. Also choose a student to time the speeches and give time signals.

Give the teams a few minutes to get their evidence, cases, and pre-flows out. While the teams are preparing, have all other students prepare to flow the round as the other students speak.

Do the coin toss. **Allow the team who wins to choose EITHER the side (pro or con) or the position (first or second speaker).** Team two will decide the other.

BODY

40 minutes

Have the students complete the debate following all speech, cross examination, and prep times.

As the students are debating, have students who watch flow and complete a ballot for the debaters. As they are doing this, give some feedback to the students who debated. Discuss with them their delivery, refutation, and use of evidence specifically.

ASSESSMENT:

After each round, collect ballots and flows.

- Do ballots follow best practices for giving appropriate feedback?
- Are flows clear and capturing main arguments?

