

Prior to hearing these debates, I side with the _____ (Aff/Neg).
Make sure to recognize your personal bias and remove it from the evaluation of the round.

Your Role

Your most important responsibility is to fill out the ballot. There are six things to fill in on the ballot: 1) The logistical tournament info at the top, including the Aff and Neg codes provided by the debaters (note: this is the only information you should fill out prior to the end of the round), 2) The best case you could make for why the aff wins the debate you heard and any comments. 3) The best case you could make for why the neg won the debate you heard and any comments. 4) The reason the debater you chose to win did the better debating, 5) the side that contestant represented and their code (at the top), and 6) Your name, verifying that the debaters ran arguments about the topic.

Another task as a judge is to take the online post-tournament survey.

During the debate, a judge should keep track of the arguments being made. Organized notes of the important points you thought were raised during the round will help you complete your ballot and may help you make a decision about who was better at debating.

Students are allowed and encouraged to time themselves, but you may also choose to time various parts of the debate, particularly the Question Segments and each student's preparation time.

The Debate

Each round features 2-4 students: one side representing the affirmative and one representing the negative. Each side gives four speeches, and there are two periods of questions. If students are competing in pairs they will alternate speeches. Students will attempt to prove or disprove the statement: "Resolved: Humans are fundamentally different from other animals."

Affirmative Constructive – 5 minutes

Negative Constructive – 5 minutes

Question Segment – 3 minutes

Affirmative Rebuttal – 4 minutes

Negative Rebuttal – 4 minutes

Question Segment – 3 minutes

Affirmative Consolidation – 3 minutes

Negative Consolidation – 3 minutes

Affirmative Rationale – 3 minutes

Negative Rationale – 3 minutes

Each student has 3 minutes of preparation time during the debate, to be used in increments of their choice. For example, a student may elect to prepare for 1 minute for their rebuttal speech, 1 minute for their consolidation speech, and 1 minute for their final speech. Students may also prepare "for free" during each other's preparation time.

Topic Primer

The debate you are about to enter has many aspects and has been debated by scholars for centuries. Debaters will use research to defend or refute the resolution, Resolved: Humans are primarily driven by self-interest. Like in previous years' resolutions, definitions will help determine what the resolution asks, they are also likely to be subjects of debate. Defining some terms narrowly or broadly may give an advantage to one side. The affirmative will likely use evolutionary biology in their arguments. The basic idea of evolution is the survival of the fittest, not survival kindest. Beyond biology, psychology contains a great deal of evidence in favor of the self-interest model. When in laboratory situations, humans often act exactly as one would predict self-interested actors to behave. When abstracted from the pressing realities of real life, humans will often make decisions as if they are the only one that matters. The negative will try to pick apart these arguments by giving examples of seemingly selfless acts. The negative may also use some examples in biology, like cultural evolution; which is the idea that those who are fittest to live in a community are more likely to survive than those who make themselves disliked by other members of the community. The negative will also likely cite psychology studies, many experiments designed to show human self-interest fail outright. Instead, these experiments establish that humans are very interested in fairness and may sacrifice their own self-interest to main a fair outcome. However, they will likely have to defend themselves from arguments that seemingly selfish actions can always be assumed to benefit the individual on some level.