



START HERE: TEACHING POLICY DEBATE



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 lessons were originally created by Pam McComas, Renee Motter, and Sharon Volpe. In 2021, lesson plans were reimaged by Keegan D. Bosch. 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.

Learn more at www.speechanddebate.org



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.



A NOTE FROM THE COURSE AUTHOR:

Welcome to Start Here: Teaching Policy Debate! I'm so happy that you're helping new students to jump into Policy Debate! There are few things in the world that I love as much as the unique intensity and complexity of Policy Debate. I was so excited when the NSDA asked me to revamp this set of lesson plans and resources, because my greatest passion of all is seeing the activity grow! With that in mind, if you ever have any questions along the way, please feel encouraged to reach out to me at boschikdcmich@gmail.com. I want to be a constant resource for new coaches to give their debaters the best possible experience, so please never hesitate to ask if you have questions!

Before we dive into specifics of the program, a little bit about myself. My name is Keegan Bosch. I'm a Professor of Communication Studies at Delta College in Michigan, and the assistant debate coach for Central Michigan University. In my competitive years, I was actually a speech kid more than a debate kid! I competed in college for the University of Northern Iowa, advancing to national final rounds in Impromptu, Extemporaneous Speaking, and After Dinner Speaking. During my time at UNI, I fell in love with the strange world of Policy Debate through watching my teammates on the other side of the squad room. My junior year, I convinced a debater to partner up with me and we travelled to the National Junior Varsity Debate Championships, where we earned first place. Since graduating, I have been a judge for the NFA-LD circuit, a collegiate 1-on-1 Policy format, and as a coach at Central Michigan University I have coached students to a final round closeout at the Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament and double-octos at the NFA National Tournament. Though my debate history may not be "normal," I have managed to cement a place for myself as both a judge and coach. I hope that through the following program, I can help you do the same for yourself, and share your knowledge with the next generation of debaters!

Hopefully that's enough to convince you I know what I'm talking about. But enough about me, let's talk about what really matters. In this program, you will find 20 pre-constructed lesson plans and a collection of accompanying resources ranging from powerpoints to assessments. Each lesson has a number of recommended activities, recommended lecture content, and recommended assessments. With the input of a few trusted coaches, I have ordered these lessons in a way that will effectively prepare your students to tackle their first tournament with confidence and have fun debating rather than feeling overwhelmed by the event. While students will have all the information needed to survive their first tournament by the end of lesson 14, I recommend planning so that you complete at least lesson 17 before the first tournament. Lessons 18-20 are extended lessons, which teach students about specific types of arguments that are not necessary to win debates, but certainly important to understand as they continue through their careers.

Putting these lessons together was an extremely rewarding project, and I can only hope that my work helps you and your students feel confident diving into the wonderful, unique world of Policy Debate. Finally, if you see me judging your students, please let me know! In a way, they'll be my students too. But in a way, every student that we judge is our student for a little bit.

Here's to the continued growth of the activity we love!

— **Keegan D. Bosch** (*they/them*)
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LESSON 1: **WHAT IS DEBATE?**

TOPIC:

The fundamentals of debate and argument structure.

Essential Question + Objectives

What exactly is a debate and how 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 (see following pages)*
- *Timer*
- *Notecards*
- *Sticky notes*
- *Coin (or another way to choose sides)*

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*

Insight:

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.

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:

- ▶ **Claim:** This is the tagline of an argument. Think of this like a topic sentence to a persuasive essay.
- ▶ **Data:** Evidence that supports the claim.
- ▶ **Warrant/Grounds:** Why the evidence meets the claim.
- ▶ **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, 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 for one minute about 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, have 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.

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?

LESSON 2: **WHAT IS POLICY DEBATE?**

TOPIC:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the core elements of Policy Debate and the structure of a Policy Debate round.

Essential Question + Objectives

What are the speech elements of a Policy Debate round?

What is the round structure of Policy Debate?

1. Students will be able to identify all of the elements of a competitive Policy Debate round.
2. Students will be able to recognize the structure of a competitive Policy Debate round.

MATERIALS:

- *Notecards for exit slip*
- *Note taking materials*

RESOURCES:

- *Day 1 PowerPoint Slides*
- *Day 2 PowerPoint Slides*

Insight:

One of the most significant barriers to participation in Policy Debate is students and coaches feeling overwhelmed by the complexity of the format. With eight speeches, four cross-examination periods, and eight minutes of prep time, Policy rounds can be extremely long and extremely daunting. But, like any elephant, we can only eat it one bite at a time!

The following lesson breaks down each piece of a Policy Debate round into a more easily-digestible chunk and helps to eliminate, or at least lessen, the feeling of being overwhelmed that is common when students first dive into Policy Debate.

THREE-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

INTRODUCE “WHAT IS POLICY DEBATE”

5-10 minutes

Show the Day 1 PowerPoint (*slides 3-4*)

ACTIVITY

20 minutes

1. After discussing the parts of a resolution, have students work in small groups to prepare a resolution that they would like to debate.
2. Have each group present their resolution to the class, and discuss if they have all the necessary parts of a resolution.
 - **An Actor**
 - **Direction**
 - **A Subject**
 - **Qualifiers**
3. If students are missing any of the parts of their resolutions, discuss why missing these parts might be unfair to one side of the debate. Help students refine their resolutions accordingly.
4. Have students vote on a resolution that they would like to use for Day Three

FINISH THE DAY 1 POWERPOINT

15 minutes

Show (*slides 5-10*)

DAY ONE EXIT SLIP

5 minutes

1. Make sure the chosen resolution is written on the board.
2. Have students write one reason they would affirm and one reason they would negate the chosen resolution on a notecard.

LESSON 2: WHAT IS POLICY DEBATE?



DAY TWO

REVIEW DAY ONE AND PREVIEW DAY TWO

5 minutes

Show the Day 2 PowerPoint (*slides 2-3*)

DISCUSS THE TYPES OF SPEECHES

15 minutes

Show the Day 2 PowerPoint (*slides 4-8*). Separate students into groups of four, and have them choose teams of two within their groups.

DISCUSS THE ORDER OF SPEECHES AND TIME LIMITS

10 minutes

Show the Day 2 PowerPoint (*slides 9-12*). This discussion should finish with the questions on slide 11 of the PowerPoint; answers to these questions are on slide 12.

DISCUSS THE SPEAKERS AND WHICH SPEECHES THEY GIVE

15 minutes

Show the Day 2 PowerPoint (*slides 13-15*). Have students choose which of them will perform each speaker role.

DAY 2 EXIT SLIP

5 minutes

Have students write their names and speaker positions on a notecard.

DAY THREE

REVIEW

5 minutes

Start the day by handing back the Day Two exit slips, then reviewing the resolution and speech order with students.

THE PLAN FOR THE DAY

1. Students will participate in a shortened version of a Policy Debate round.
2. These speeches will have shorter time limits:
 - 2 minute for constructives
 - 1 minute for rebuttals
 - 1 minute for cross-examination
 - 2 minutes of prep time

LESSON 2: WHAT IS POLICY DEBATE?



PREPARE FIRST CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES

10 minutes

Go over the plan for the day, have students separate into their groups, and give them five minutes to prepare their first constructive speeches.

DEBATES

10 minutes

Start all of the debates at the same time, and before each speech, remind students of the purpose of that speech.

- ▶ **Before 1AC:** “the first affirmative speaker should present their case”
- ▶ **Before CX:** “the second negative speaker should ask questions of the first affirmative speaker”
- ▶ **Before 1NC:** “the first negative speaker should present their case and answer the affirmative case”
- ▶ **Before CX:** “the first affirmative speaker should ask questions of the first negative speaker”
- ▶ **Before 2AC:** “the second affirmative speaker should extend their case and answer the negative case”
- ▶ **Before CX:** “the first negative speaker should ask questions of the second affirmative speaker”
- ▶ **Before 2NC:** “the second negative speaker should extend their case and answer the affirmative case”
- ▶ **Before CX:** “the second affirmative speaker should ask questions of the second negative speaker”
- ▶ **Before 1NR:** “the first negative speaker should extend their case, answer the affirmative case, and give a picture of the round”
- ▶ **Before 1AR:** “the first affirmative speaker should extend their case, answer the negative case, and give a picture of the round”
- ▶ **Before 2NR:** “the second negative speaker should extend their case, answer the affirmative case, and give a picture of the round”
- ▶ **Before 2AR:** “the second affirmative speaker should extend their case, answer the negative case, and give a picture of the round”

LESSON 2: WHAT IS POLICY DEBATE?



BREAK

After the debate, give students a short break to discuss among themselves and relax. This first activity can be very draining, so an unstructured break is important for them to refresh before the class discussion!

CLOSURE

20-25 minutes

Take 10-15 minutes at the end of the period to discuss the experience with students. Ask them what parts of the debate they liked or didn't like, and what was difficult or fun about the debate.

ASSESSMENT:

Assess students' understanding by observing their debates. If a paper assessment test is required by your administration, a paper assessment has been linked below.

DAY THREE EXIT SLIP

Write the following three questions on the board about what components are in a debate, location of speeches, and time limits. Have students write their answers on a note card and turn them in as they exit.

- How long is a constructive speech, a CX period, and a rebuttal speech?
- True/False: The person who just spoke will always answer questions in CX
- Which side gets the first and last speech in the round; Aff or Neg?

PAPER ASSESSMENT

To be given on Day 2

- *[Policy Debate Test and Key](#)*

LESSON 3: 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 + Objectives

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

RESOURCES:

- *Chipotle Scarecrow Commercial*
- *5 Most Memorable Political Ads of 2016*
- *Policy Debate Textbook*

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-DAY LESSON

HOOK

10 minutes

Watch the *Chipotle Scarecrow 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?

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 take 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*
- 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*, then determine how each of the elements fit the argument. Break the students into groups of five 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 policy question on the board of your choosing and have the students take a minute to write one complete argument either for or against.

| **Example:** *The United States Federal Government should lower the drinking age to 18.*

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 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 + Objectives

What research do I need for debate?

What are the best sources to use for debate?

How do I effectively research 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 different hacks for searching 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)

RESOURCES:

- *Handout on Research Tips*
- *Media Bias Chart*
- *Search Engine Game Example*
- *Policy Debate Textbook*

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 is one 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

DAY ONE

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 with 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.

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 the resolution used in lesson 2. 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

Biased 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.

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 Chapter 2 in the *Policy Debate 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 + Objectives

What is a card?

How do I cut evidence to fit argument structure?

How is the best data collected 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:

- Laptops

RESOURCES:

- *Video on Cutting Cards*
- *Using Verbatim*
- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Google Docs Verbatim Template for Card Cutting*
- *Paperless Debate Template for Word*
- *Examples of Cut Cards from the PF THAAD Topic in 2017*

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

DAY ONE

HOOK

10 minutes

Give students a long passage (like this *excerpt* from Michelle Obama's *Becoming*). This passage when read word for word should take five minutes to read. Tell the students they will only have two minutes to read the whole passage. They will need to cut down and highlight only things that can be said in two 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 discuss 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.

DAY TWO

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.

LESSON 5: HOW TO CUT CARDS



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, there is a **replacement template for Google Docs**. 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.

HOMWORK:

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

DAY THREE

BODY

35-40 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?).*

NOTE: there are two additional games provided by NAUDL in the materials section. 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 one minute and 30 seconds and see how they do. Was it easier this time around?

HOMEWORK AND ASSESSMENT:

After completing this lesson have each student submit two completed cards (*one affirmative, one negative*) 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: INTRO TO AFFIRMATION

TOPIC:

Students will be introduced to the basics of affirming the resolution in a Policy Debate, including necessary vocabulary and impact calculus.

Essential Question + Objectives

What are the fundamental goals and strategies of the affirmative team in a debate?

1. Students will be able to outline the construction of an affirmative case.
2. Students will be able to weigh their arguments against their opponent's.
3. Students will determine best strategies for defending their case from negative attacks.

MATERIALS:

- Colorful cardstock
- Sharpies/markers
- Big poster paper

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Policy Debate Vocabulary Handout #1*
- *Quick Reference Notes for Students – Prima Facie Burden Handout #2*
- *CX Stock Issues Review Assessment Handout #3*
- *CX Stock Issues Application and Key Handout #4*
- *Stock Issues Exercise*
- *Vocabulary Quiz*
- *Day 1 PowerPoint*
- *Day 2 PowerPoint*

Insight:

By now, your students have learned the fundamentals of argumentation and what makes a Policy Debate unique. Now, they're ready to start applying this knowledge to an actual debate! Starting with the affirmative, the next few lessons will cover the basic types of arguments and expectations for each side of the debate and will prepare students to write their first constructives, deliver their first rebuttals, and eventually have their first full practice debates!

TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Remind the students of their debates from the previous “Lesson 2 - What is Policy Debate” by writing the resolution from those debates on the board. Have students share some of the arguments they made or remember their opponents making on the affirmative. For the rest of the lesson, these arguments will be used to explain the stock issues and fundamental burdens of the affirmative.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Work through the **Lesson 6, Day 1** PowerPoint with students. The PowerPoint has discussion questions and activities built in. During this first day, you should cover the following ideas:

- The affirmative defends a plan.
- The negative defends the status quo.
- The affirmative needs to have a plan text to tell the judge what the plan does.
- The basic concept of fiat in a debate round.

CLOSURE

10 minutes

After going through the PowerPoint with students, have them separate into teams of two; either their same teams from the Lesson 2 debates or new teams. In these groups, have the students write a possible plan text for affirming the resolution from the Lesson 2 debates. Collect these as an exit slip.

DAY TWO

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Have students start the day by handing back their exit slips from day 1. Have a few students volunteer to read their plan texts and ask other students some fundamental questions about the plan texts such as:

- Who is the actor?
- What is the action?
- Do they have any clarifiers?
- Does this plan text connect well to the resolution?

BODY

30-40 minutes

Work through the **Lesson 6, Day 2** PowerPoint with students. The PowerPoint has discussion questions and activities built in. During Day Two, you will cover **Stock Issues**:

- ▶ Harms
- ▶ Topicality
- ▶ Inherency
- ▶ Solvency

CLOSURE

10 minutes

As with Day One, after going through the PowerPoint with students, have them return to their teams of two. Give the students 5-10 minutes to write down a short explanation of how their plan meets each of the four stock issues.

HOMEWORK: WRITING A CASE

The best way for students to show mastery of the skills in this lesson is through using a set of supplied evidence to construct a short case. In **this document**, you will find:

- (1) solvency card
- (1) inherency card
- (1) plan text
- (2) harms scenarios with (2) cards each

Students should individually read through these cards and organize them in HITS order, placing the Plan Text under “topicality.”

ASSESSMENT: QUIZZES AND EXAMS

If your administration requires written assessments in the form of quizzes/exams, you can find a few such resources below:

- **Stock Issues Review Quiz**
- **Stock Issues Application Test**
- **Vocabulary Matching Quiz**

HOMEWORK: READING FOR NEXT LESSON

Before the next lesson, students should read Chapter 4 in the **Policy Debate Textbook**. This will help introduce the students to the core concepts introduced throughout Lesson 7.

LESSON 7: INTRO TO NEGATION

TOPIC:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to competing as the negative in a Policy debate. They will start with a review of speech times and order for the negative, as well as learn about the negative block. Students will learn the difference between offense and defense, as well as the difference between on-case and off-case arguments.

Essential Question + Objectives

What are the fundamental goals and strategies of the negative team in a debate?

1. Students will identify the parts of the negative constructive speech.
2. Students will determine the difference between offense and defense in Policy Debate.
3. Students will identify on-case and off-case arguments.

MATERIALS:

- Notecards
- Handouts for note taking activities

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Negative Block – Handout #1*
- *How to Divide the Negative Block - Handout #2*
- *Example of Case Extension - Handout #3*
- *Intro to the Negative – PowerPoint Day 1*
- *Intro to the Negative – PowerPoint Day 2*

Insight:

In the first few weeks, your students have learned the fundamentals of argumentation, what makes a debate different from an argument, and what makes Policy Debate unique amongst debates. After working through the fundamentals of the Affirmative, they are now ready to move further into the debate and look at what it takes to debate on the Negative side.

One of the most fun and most educational things about debate is the opportunity to argue both for and against a resolution, teaching students the importance of understanding both sides of an argument before choosing their own viewpoint. Learning how to debate on the negative can be daunting, but the wide variety of potential arguments and strategies makes it a ton of fun!

TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

NOTE: (Students should have read Chapter 4 of the *Policy Debate Textbook* before class begins.)

- Give each student a notecard and ask them to write down what they think the job of the negative is in a debate.
- Have the students trade cards and give written feedback to their classmate's definition.
- Have students trade again and give feedback to a second student.
- Return the cards to their original owners.
- Have students revise their definitions based on the feedback they received.
- Have students share their answers with the class.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Use the *Intro to Negation PowerPoint* to take students through the following content.

- ▶ **Review the speaking order and speech times for the negative.** Use the chart in PowerPoint slide 3 or have the students create their own and fill in the name of the speech/acronym, speaker position, and length of speech. Pay special attention to the negative speeches that take place back to back called the negative block. Give them Negative Block *Handout #1*.
- ▶ **Discuss the purpose of each speech for the negative team.** PowerPoint slide 4 covers these in detail.
- ▶ **Identifying offense and defense.** Work through slide 5 of the PowerPoint with students, then have students complete the activity on slide 6.
- ▶ **Work with students to develop a formula for how to construct the INC** using Constructing the INC *PowerPoint*_Slide 7.

ASSESSMENT:

The offense/defense activity is an opportunity to assess students' understanding of offense versus defense. Take notes as students present and keep track of their accuracy with categorizing these arguments.

DAY TWO

BODY

30-40 minutes

Splitting the Block – provide notes and instruction as to how debaters should split the block. Work through the day’s *slides* and resources, including “Chart: Splitting the Block,” *Handout #2*, and *Case Extension Activity - Handout #3* (Fordham evidence on page 3).

TEACHER LECTURE NOTES: *The negative block is comprised of the second negative constructive (2NC) and the first negative rebuttal (1NR). It is called “the block” because it is a large block of time (13 minutes) in which the negative gives back-to-back speeches without the affirmative getting to respond.*

Splitting The Negative Block

The strategic value of the block is that it gives the negative a chance to develop their arguments in a great deal of depth. In order to make effective use of this advantage, the negative must “split” the block: the second negative should extend some of the negative’s arguments that were presented in the 1NC and the first negative should extend other arguments in the 1NR. Redundancy between the arguments extended in the 2NC and 1NR negates the benefits of the block.

How Should the Arguments Be Divided?

Negative teams should establish a plan before the debate for which arguments will be in the 2NC and which will be in the 1NR. Both partners should take notes on the whole 2AC. After it has concluded, the debaters should discuss (*during prep time*) whether to alter the pre-round plan. In most cases, negative teams should stick to the original plan. Sometimes, however, the 2AC will do something to change that calculation (*spend a lot of time on a certain position, drop something, etc.*). If that happens, it is okay to switch away from the pre-round plan. In those cases, it is important that both partners are on the same page so that they know what to prep.

NOTE: There is not a “right” answer. As long as the 2NC and 1NR take different arguments, the block has been “divided” and its strategic utility has been maintained.

CLOSURE

10-20 minutes

At the end of Day Two, students should have 10-20 minutes remaining in the class period. With this time, have students work in small groups to construct a 1NC. Make sure students include both on-case and off-case positions. Similar to the 1AC from the previous lesson, these don’t need to be carded cases yet, the goal is just to see that students understand the general concepts!

ASSESSMENT:

The splitting the neg block and extending arguments activities are both opportunities for assessment. Students can either **present their answers out loud to the class**, or **write down answers** for you to collect. Either way, take note of how you see students thinking occurring in these activities. Their answers may not yet be the most strategically sound, but the important thing here is to parse out instances of students thinking about strategy!

Additionally, you may **collect the INC documents from the closure activity** for assessment, making sure that students include both on-case and off-case arguments, and separate those arguments accurately in their documents.

LESSON 8: TOPICALITY

TOPIC:

Students will be introduced to the issue of topicality for Policy Debate, including the four components of topicality and how to construct a INC topicality shell.

Essential Question + Objectives

How do I construct a topicality argument to be read in the INC?

1. Students will be able to identify the four components of topicality.
2. Students will be able to construct a INC topicality shell.
3. Students will be able to explain why topicality is an essential part of debate.

MATERIALS:

- Colorful cardstock strips
- Markers/sharpies
- Dictionaries/internet access

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Topicality Vocab Handout #1*
- *Topicality Student Notes Handout #2*
- *2019 NSDA National Final Round*
- *Topicality Activity Handout #3*
- *Intro to Topicality PowerPoint*

Insight:

Topicality is a debate about the rules of debate. Specifically, this argument centers on whether or not the plan the affirmative team has presented falls within the proposed resolution. The affirmative must prove that their plan is a part of the topic, if they do not, they lose the debate.

In order to prove their point, debaters on the negative define words in an attempt to exclude the affirmative's plan. The affirmative defines words in alternate ways to prove that their plans fall within the resolution. Each side brings up reasons (*standards*) as to why their interpretation should be preferred in the debate. If the negative wins the affirmative's plan does NOT fall within the proposed resolution, the affirmative will lose. This is illustrated on slides 3 and 4 on the *PowerPoint*.

TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Create four groups. Using the *slides*, have students brainstorm answers to the questions below. Once done with each section, move on to the debate application section.

- What are the rules of the classroom? What are rules at school? What are the laws in your town?
- What if there were no classroom rules, school rules, or laws?
- What is a resolution? Why do we have it? What would debate be like if we did not have a resolution? Why might that be a bad thing?

NOTE: The point here is to prove that we need to have rules. Rules keep order. They prevent catastrophic accidents and even minor skirmishes. Without a topic in debate, we'd never be prepared to debate our opponents. The brainstorm activity above helps prove the point that we must stay within the resolution in order for all sides to have a fair and balanced debate.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Students should have read chapter 4 in the *Policy Debate Textbook*.

Place all the vocabulary words on the board without definitions. Pass out copies of *Vocabulary Handout #2*. Give each student a strip of colorful cardstock and a sharpie or marker. Have them pick one word from the list and look up the definition. Go around the room and make sure each word has been used. If they haven't all been used, make sure you create cards for those words. Have each student say their word out loud, give the definition, and put their word on the bulletin board.

Then pass out copies of *Vocabulary Handout #1* for students to keep as a reference tool.

NOTE: If students do not have access to devices or dictionaries to look up definitions, you can either have students brainstorm what the definition might be based on their previous knowledge and context clues, or simply have them use Vocabulary Handout #1 to find definitions.

After the activity, work through *the day's slides*.

SLIDE 3 EXPLANATION: This slide shows a visual example of a common metaphor used to explain topicality. Topical affirmatives live on the island, while non-topical affirmatives live off the island. More often than not, an affirmative will live somewhere on the coast, where it could be argued that they are not topical, but it could also be argued that they are topical. Thus, we debate over the topicality of the plan.

Parts of Topicality

Topicality is introduced in the 1st Negative Constructive. Like other negative positions, Topicality is structured. There are four parts:

- A. Definition** – This is the word or phrase that the negative is “challenging” the affirmative on in the resolution. The negative provides a carded definition of the word in order to prove that something the affirmative’s plan does not do.
- B. Violation** – A brief explanation of why the affirmative’s plan falls outside of the topic.
- C. Standards** – A set of reasons why the definition provided by the negative should be the preferred definition for the debate round to rely on.

Examples: Limits - smaller topics are better; Ground - topics that are predictable for the negative make for better debates.

- D. Voters** – Reasons why if the affirmative falls outside of the resolution the judge should vote for the negative.

Examples: Fairness - being outside the topic gives the affirmative an unfair advantage; Education - being outside of the topic kills topic education; Jurisdiction - it’s a stock issue; if they lose a stock issue, they lose the debate.

ACTIVITY

Watch the beginning of the following INC from the **NSDA National Final Round 2019** (23:52 to 24:39). Have students write down the definition, violation, standards, and voters in the examples column of **Handout #2**.

DAY TWO

ACTIVITY

30-40 minutes

Pass out the topicality activity (**Handout #3**) and explain that students will be writing their own INC Topicality arguments from the perspective of the high school administration. Announce four groups and assign each group to one of the four scenarios.

LESSON 8: TOPICALITY



Instruct the class as a whole to read through the scenario within their groups. Groups will have 10 minutes at each station to read through the scenario and construct a 1NC Topicality argument on their worksheet.

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT:

Have each group share the 1NC Topicality argument they constructed for the station they are presently at (*the final of the four stations*). Collect the worksheets as the students' exit slips and check for understanding.

LESSON 9: DISADVANTAGES

TOPIC:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the disadvantage. Students will start by learning the parts of a disadvantage introduced in the 1NC. They will then learn common affirmative responses recalling the information they learned in the previous lesson about offense and defense. Finally, students will learn how to extend a disadvantage through the block, both answering affirmative arguments and extending arguments of their own.

Essential Question + Objectives

What is a disadvantage, and what is its utility in a debate round?

1. Students will be able to identify the parts of a disadvantage.
2. Students will be able to extend a disadvantage through the negative block.
3. Students will be able to kick a disadvantage in the block or 2NR.
4. Students will understand the basic methods of responding to a disadvantage.

MATERIALS:

- Note taking methods for students

RESOURCES:

- *DA Vocabulary Handout*
- *Day 1 PowerPoint*
- *Day 2 PowerPoint*

Insight:

As we continue to dive down the rabbit hole of off-case positions, it is important that students understand the most common off-case argument: the disadvantage. Many debates can be won without reading topicality, counterplans, or kritiks, but rarely is a debate won without a disadvantage from the negative team.

In the following lesson, students will learn the parts of a disadvantage, how to argue against a disadvantage as the affirmative, and how the negative team should handle disadvantages later in the debate by either choosing to “go for” the arguments in the 2NR or “kick” the arguments by conceding them in the 2NR.

TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Give the students a proposal (*choose from the “light” or “serious” list*) and have them brainstorm reasons why that proposal is a bad idea. Encourage them to get creative!

WARM UP: PROPOSAL LIST

LIGHT LIST

- ▶ I should have McDonalds for dinner.
- ▶ I should go to a movie this weekend.
- ▶ I should use my summer job money to buy a new computer.
- ▶ My school should adopt (*or get rid of*) a dress code.
- ▶ I should eat pizza for breakfast.
- ▶ I should sneak out of the house at night.

SERIOUS LIST

- ▶ The United States federal government should make higher education free.
- ▶ The United States federal government should make paid maternity/paternity leave mandatory.
- ▶ The United States federal government should ratify the Trans Pacific Partnership Trade agreement.
- ▶ The United States federal government should allow offshore oil drilling in the Arctic.
- ▶ The United States federal government should ban the use of handguns in America.
- ▶ The United States federal government should increase its military spending.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Introduce disadvantages (*DAs*) and their parts using these *slides*.

The PowerPoints include activities as well as lecture notes for the material.

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT:

You may collect students' disadvantage "shells" to assess for comprehension. Make sure that students include at least three parts of the shell (*uniqueness, external link, and impact*) and an internal link if necessary. The most common mistake you will find is students failing to include an internal link chain between the plan and the impact, which is a good habit to notice early and teach early, so this activity helps you pinpoint that issue right away!

DAY TWO

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Start the day by having students revisit their ideas from day one. Write a list on the board of all of the reasons why the proposal might be a bad idea, grouping similar ideas to save time and space. Once all the ideas are listed, let students know that they must pick only one of these ideas that is the "best" or most competitive. Have students discuss amongst themselves which idea they believe is best and why. After 5-10 minutes of discussion, vote on the winner.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Discuss the strategies and methods for using DAs in debates, including extensions and kicking DAs, using these *slides*.

The PowerPoints include activities as well as lecture notes for the material.

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT:

Collect students' responses to their partners' disadvantages as an assessment tool. Look for at least two of the following argument types: non-unique, no link, no internal link, impact uniqueness, link turn, impact turn. You may also collect students' overviews, though I recommend holding off on assessing overviews until a later date, as they take a bit of time to learn the structure, and students will easily pick up that structure with experience.

LESSON 10: **IMPACT CALCULUS**

TOPIC:

In this lesson, students will use the skills they've learned in the previous lessons to weigh the benefits (advantages) of the affirmative against the harms (disadvantages) presented by the negative in a process called "impact calculus" or "risk analysis."

Essential Question + Objectives

With multiple impacts in the 1AC and multiple disadvantages in the 1NC, how do debaters convince a judge that their impacts are most important?

1. Students will examine the importance of impacts in a debate round.
2. Students will compare their impacts to that of their opponents using specific metrics.
3. Students will communicate the importance of their impact versus that of their opponent.

MATERIALS:

- Notecards

RESOURCES:

- *Impact Calculus PowerPoint*

Insight:

More often than not, the final speeches in a debate round come down to a simple question: does the plan do more good or more harm? The affirmative wants to convince the judge that the plan solves impacts with no negative outcomes, while the negative wants to convince the judge that the plan doesn't solve anything and has a number of negative side effects. But what if the judge believes there are both positive AND negative impacts of passing the plan? How should they evaluate the round then?

The answer is **impact calculus**. Impact calculus is the process by which debaters argue which impacts are most important in the round, and it is arguably the single most important skill for winning debate rounds, so it's definitely important for students to understand!

TWO-DAY (+) LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Warm Up – using the practice debate resolution from previous lessons, have students list potential impacts that their plans could solve.

▶ **Common impacts include:**

- Global Warming
- Economy
- War with a specific country
- United States hegemony (*global leadership*)

Next, have the students list some disadvantages they might run on the negative against these plans. Then, ask students how they might argue that one impact or disadvantage is more important than another. This sets the foundation for the formal impact calculus they will do later.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Take students through the **Impact Calculus PowerPoint**, which includes lecture notes and activities.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Collect students' notecards with their advantage and disadvantage for the tournament. You may use the notecards to select seeds for the bracket or as an assessment tool. To assess these impacts, make sure students are told to include all of the "big three" on their notecards, and then assess the inclusion of all three: magnitude, timeframe, and probability.

DAY TWO +

HOOK

5 minutes

Begin the day(s) with a reminder of the rules for the bracket tournament, and get into the tournament as soon as possible so students have as much time as possible!

LESSON 10: IMPACT CALCULUS



BODY

30-40 minutes

Starting on Day Two and lasting as many days as needed, the students will compete in an **“impact calculus tournament”** using their advantages and disadvantages that they selected during day one. Have students give short (*30-seconds to one-minute*) speeches comparing their impact to their opponents’ impact, and either have the class vote on a winner or make a decision on your own, depending on preference. Tips for assessing these debates are included below.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

At the end of each day of the tournament, give students a brief recap of the day and discuss some strategies for improving their impact calculus moving forward (*either in the next day of the tournament or in their future debates, depending on the time you have*). For assessment, take notes during tournament debates on how well students address the big three (*magnitude, probability, timeframe*) and if students include “turns the case” arguments in situations where they are relevant. Generally, “turns the case” arguments should be considered extra at this point in students’ development. If they understand the concept well enough to execute it, that’s amazing! But it’s okay if they don’t get it just yet, it’s a very complex argumentative approach.

LESSON 11: CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES

TOPIC:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the constructive speeches and will learn how to put together their own constructives in rounds.

Essential Question + Objectives

How do I handle constructive speeches in a debate round?

1. Students will be able to identify the unique goals and parts of the four constructive speeches in a Policy Debate round.
2. Students will be able to make strategic decisions about how to write constructive speeches.
3. Students will be able to give constructive speeches in practice debates and competition.

RESOURCES:

- *Lesson 11 PowerPoint*
- *Constructive Speech Worksheet*
- *NSDA Policy Debate Final Round Video 2018*

Insight:

The majority of the debate round is made up of the constructive speeches and CX periods between constructives. The constructive speeches are when teams present their arguments, define what the debate will be about, and set themselves up for success in the rebuttals.

The following lesson will prepare your students to write their constructive speeches by teaching them the purpose of each constructive and the parts that make up each constructive, before working through some examples and eventually writing their very own constructive speeches!

FOUR-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

To start Day One, have students discuss the stock issues/burdens of the affirmative team. Write the four stock issues (*Harms, Inherency, Topicality, Solvency*) on the board, then ask students how they might fulfill each stock issue as the affirmative. Once they've answered each stock issue, they've essentially written the first affirmative constructive!

BODY

30-40 minutes

Work through the **Lesson 11 - Constructive Speeches PowerPoint** with students. This PowerPoint covers the first three speeches of the debate round:

1. First Affirmative Constructive (1AC)
2. First Negative Constructive (1NC)
3. Second Affirmative Constructive (2AC)

ACTIVITY

After covering the slides on each of the three speeches, work together as a class to create a short version of the speech. Students should make suggestions as to what arguments could be used for each speech, but make sure that their arguments fall into fulfilling the stock issues or burdens of each speech. This could also be a good opportunity to introduce the concept of a disadvantage (*something bad that will happen as a result of the 1AC*) without bogging students down with the language of DAs just yet.

CLOSURE

10 minutes

Have students write a brief 1AC as an exit slip. At this point, students don't need to cut evidence for these speeches. They simply need to show that they understand the fundamental pieces of the 1AC.

LESSON 11: CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES



DAY TWO

BODY

30-40 minutes

Spend Day Two watching the *NSDA Policy Debate Final Round Video 2018*. Have students use the *Constructive Speech Worksheet* to take notes on the arguments being made in each speech. This worksheet provides students with a list of argument types to help them determine what to write down. This will also help guide students towards their first concept of “flowing” a round, which will be covered in depth in a later lesson. Between speeches, pause the video and discuss students’ notes with them. Were all necessary arguments present in each constructive? Pay particular attention to how the 2AC handles strategy in their speech and chooses which arguments to spend the most time on. This exercise will prepare students to write their own constructives on Day Three.

CLOSURE

10 minutes

Collect students’ notes on the *Constructive Speech Worksheet* as an exit slip. This will also serve as a first opportunity for students to “flow” a round. Obviously, they have not learned about flowing yet, so these flows won’t be perfect, but it’s a great opportunity to follow their thought processes as they take notes on speeches and start preparing to teach them formal flowing methods!

DAY THREE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Begin Day Three by having students go over their 1AC exit slips from Day One. Remind students of the stock issues and burdens of the 1AC and have students provide examples of how they fulfilled those stock issues in their own 1ACs. This will prepare students to spend the first half of class improving and updating their 1AC documents.

DAYS THREE AND FOUR

BODY

30-40 minutes

Separate students into groups of two. For the first half, students will work on putting together a more detailed 1AC based on their Day One exit slips. In the second half, students will trade 1AC documents with their partner and put together a 1NC to respond to their partner’s 1AC.

LESSON 11: CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES



There are two ways you can split up this content:

1. Have students complete the full 1AC on Day Three, including one source per stock issue, then do the same for their 1NC on Day Four.
2. Have students complete a “skeleton” version of the 1AC and 1NC on Day Three, then adding research on Day Four.

Of course, if students need additional days for this activity, feel free to add those in! The most important thing is that students leave this lesson with a strong constructive speech for both the affirmative and the negative that can lead them through the rest of the lessons. Students will use their cases beginning in Lesson 15, so encourage them to continue developing them outside of class.

CLOSURE

10 minutes

Collect students’ constructive speeches as an exit slip.

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT:

Students’ constructive speeches from Day Three can be assessed based on their understanding of the basic parts of each speech. Make sure that their 1AC documents include all four stock issues (*Harms, Inherency, Topicality, Solvency*) and their 1NC documents include both offense (*reasons to vote for the negative*) and defense (*reasons not to vote against the negative*), and have answers to the 1AC as well as new arguments in favor of the negative.

LESSON 12: **CROSS-EXAMINATION**

TOPIC:

Students will be introduced to cross-examination in Policy Debate and learn how to properly cross-examine their opponents.

Essential Question + Objectives

How can cross-examination be used effectively in debate?

1. Identify the purposes of cross-examination.
2. Students will be able to explain the different types of ways to cross-examine opponents in debate rounds.
3. Students will build on clarification and argumentative questions from cross-examination.

MATERIALS:

- Completed constructive speeches (*from Lesson 11*)

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Cross-X Video Activity*
- *Cross-X Circle Activity*
- *Cross Examination Period PowerPoint*
- *NSDA Policy Debate Final Round Video 2020*

Insight:

In many Policy rounds, the cross-examination period separates the good debaters from the great debaters. The opportunity to clarify arguments, set up strategic traps, and vie for control of the ethos of the round can make the difference between a close loss and a unanimous win.

In the following activities, your debaters will start learning the fundamentals of the cross-examination period.

ONE-DAY LESSON

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Activity: Choose two students from class. Then, instruct the students that they must have a conversation using only questions. The first student to state something other than a question is out, and a different student from the class should take their place. Continue until all but one student has been eliminated.

When finished, discuss the experience with students. Possible questions:

- Was it difficult to speak only in questions?
- What was the most difficult part?

BODY

30-40 minutes

Introduction Activity: Discuss the *cross-examination video activity* with students. We recommend watching the NSDA Policy Debate Final Round Video from 2020, available [here](#). Although the Zoom format is a bit different, the cross-examination periods in this round were exceptional examples!

Introduce cross-examination basics and purpose, time limit (3 minutes), etc. Use the first few slides from this *PowerPoint*; notes are provided in the notes section of each slide.

Discuss the earlier cross-examination the students watched on the video. Did the students' cross-ex time fit the purpose of cross-ex?

Introduce cross-examination questions and answers to students. Use the next three slides of the *PowerPoint*; notes are provided in the notes section of each slide.

Discuss the earlier cross-examination the students watched on the video. Did the students ask mostly open-ended or close-ended questions? Which questions were more effective? Did they notice any series of questions that progressed to lead the opponent to a specific answer? Did the answers work to eat up time?

Introduce delivery and tips for cross-examination. Use the next section of the *PowerPoint*; notes are provided in the notes section of each slide.

Discuss the earlier cross-examination the students watched on the video. How was the students' delivery? Did one seem more confident and in control than the other? Did any one student do a better or worse job controlling the cross-examination period? Did any student cross the line of rude or aggressive behavior?

Activity: Have students complete the *Circle Activity*. For this activity, either use one of the cases that students have constructed for previous lessons, or borrow a sample case from the *Open Evidence Project*.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Activity: Ask students to write two different series of 4-5 questions each that are based on the topic for which they have written cases. Remind the students that their questions should lead their opponents in a direction that would set up an argument tied to the case they themselves are presenting. Collect these questions for assessment.

Gauge student understanding of cross-examination basics by looking for:

1. Clarifying questions
2. Leading questions
3. Setting up potential 2NR arguments
4. Locking their opponents into advocacies (*conditionality, topicality, etc.*)

LESSON 13: REBUTTALS

TOPIC:

Students will be introduced to the concept of a rebuttal and learn the specific goals of each rebuttal speech.

Essential Question + Objectives

How do I handle rebuttal speeches during a Policy Debate round?

1. Students will be able to identify the unique goals of each of the four rebuttal speeches in a Policy Debate round
2. Students will be able to make strategic decisions about how to give each of these rebuttals
3. Students will be able to give rebuttal speeches both in speech re-dos and practice debates

RESOURCES:

- *Rebuttal PowerPoint*
- *NSDA Policy Debate Final Round Video 2018*

Insight:

Simply put, rebuttals can make or break a round. Lots of teams that excel in reading their constructives struggle when it comes to the rebuttals. Because of the unique skills needed to make strategic decisions on the fly, rebuttals are a challenge even to the most seasoned debaters, and being great at the rebuttals is a lifelong venture for most debaters.

That said, rebuttals are also the most fun part of the round. The strategy, complexity, and nuance of these speeches makes them different every round, even if every constructive is identical, and they are an opportunity for your debaters to really excel and show off their chops; and even to win rounds; if they put in the work to learn! Though it can be intimidating, learning the rebuttal is the first step to really becoming a successful debater!

TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Begin the day by presenting students with an argument. You can either give a resolution, an argument from a constructive speech they've already studied, or even a fun/silly argument. Then, have students write down 3 responses to the argument. Inform students that they now have to cross out one of their three arguments. Discuss how students chose which argument to cross out. How did they make the strategic decision to "drop" one argument in favor of the others? That kind of strategy is the backbone of successful rebuttals!

BODY

30-40 minutes

Take students through the *Rebuttal PowerPoint*.

Watch the Neg Block from *NSDA Policy Debate Finals 2018* (2NC begins at 43:15).

With teacher guidance, students should watch to see how the "negative block" functions. Students should also be taking notes geared toward the closure activity with an eye toward how they would answer these arguments in a theoretical 1AR.

After the video, engage in a discussion that illustrates how the debaters "split" the block.

Sample Questions:

- What arguments were in the 2NC and what arguments were in the 1NR?
- Which arguments from the 1NR might have struggled under the scrutiny of CX?
- Were there any arguments that you feel should have been split differently to account for time?

CLOSURE

5-15 minutes

Give students some time at the end of Day One to prepare a 1AR based on the negative block in the NSDA final round they watched. Students should finish preparing these speeches as homework.

DAY TWO

HOOK

20 minutes

Have students split into pairs and present their 1ARs that they prepared for homework. Give students 5 minutes to present and 5 minutes to give feedback for a total 20 minutes of practice in pairs.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Watch the 1AR, 2NR, and 2AR from *NSDA Policy Debate Finals 2018* (1AR begins at 1:03:30).

Now have students watch the rebuttals from the NSDA final round that they've been watching. Have them take notes comparing their 1AR to the finalist's 1AR. What decisions were different? Why might the finalist have made those decisions?

NOTE: Remind your students that the students in the video are the BEST OF THE BEST, and it's okay if they don't understand every decision just yet! Final rounds can be intimidating to new debaters, but with the right approach they're a phenomenal learning tool!

CLOSURE

5-15 minutes

While students are presenting their 1ARs, observe and assess. You can also collect their notes comparing their own 1ARs to the 1AR in the final round video for a paper assessment. Students may also prepare and present a 1AR redo as a homework assignment. This helps prepare students for future rebuttal redos, which are a fundamental part of improving after tournaments.

To expand this lesson, have students present their rebuttal redos to a partner the next day and get feedback, revise, and go again.

LESSON 14: FLOWING THE ROUND

TOPIC:

In this lesson students will focus on learning how to take organized notes to track the content of speeches throughout a Policy Debate round.

Essential Question + Objectives

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:

- Flow paper (*legal size paper*)
- Pens (*two different colors recommended; one for affirmative and one for negative*)

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Flowing Video 1*
- *Flowing Video 2*
- *2019 Policy Debate Final Round*
- *Coloring Sheet*

Insight:

Flowing (*note taking in debate*) is one of the most helpful skills 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*). Often 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. Make sure to use two different colored pens. Assign the aff one color and the neg the other color. This will help your brain keep track of which arguments belong to which side.

TWO- TO THREE-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

15 minutes

Give students the *coloring sheet* 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.*)

1. Color the two outside rings first.
2. Color the two inside rings second.
3. Color the middle rings in blue and purple.
4. Color the outermost ring in red.
5. Color the innermost ring in pink.
6. Color the second most outer ring in orange.
7. Color the second most inner ring in yellow.
8. 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 segue 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

45 minutes

Watch *Flowing Video 1* (30 minutes) and discuss any questions the students may have.

After completing the video, have students pair up with their partners and read cases. While one is reading, the other should be flowing. Depending on time available, have students only read part of their case. It's more important that all students practice flowing than to practice flowing a full 8-minute speech right now!

HOMEWORK:

Watch *Flowing Video 2: Following a Single Argument*.

DAY TWO (OPTIONAL DAY THREE)

BODY

40-80 minutes

Watch the *2019 Policy Debate Final Round* video. Stop after each speech and compare your flow to students' flows. What information do they take down that you don't? Explain your methods to students and explain why some information might not be necessary to flow while other information is a must-have. Skip cross-examination periods.

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 to gauge 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

5-10 minutes

Once you complete the round, have a discussion with the students about who won the round on the flow. Talk to them about the concept of "round vision" and why their understanding of a round as a debater may be different from the judge's understanding of the round from the flow.

ASSESSMENT:

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

- Did the student flow all speeches?

You do not need to measure accuracy at this point. Simply check to see if they were paying attention and flowing through the entire round.

LESSON 15: DELIVERY

TOPIC:

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

Essential Question + Objectives

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 from Lesson 11
- 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.

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/guardians 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

30-40 minutes

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.

CLOSURE

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:

Collect the students' marked cases and observe where they made delivery notes. If possible, make copies of these marked cases so you can return their copies on Day Two, but have a copy to listen and make further suggestions during Day Two.

DAY TWO

BODY

30-40 minutes

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 two positive comments (glows) and two areas of improvements (grows).

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.

CLOSURE

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 students record themselves delivering one case and submit the recording as a homework assignment.

LESSON 16: **JUDGE ADAPTATION**

TOPIC:

Students will be introduced to the concept of analyzing judges and adapting to multiple judge styles.

Essential Question + Objectives

What elements should be considered when analyzing the judge in a round to most effectively communicate with that judge?

1. Students will understand how to identify and adapt to multiple judge styles.
2. Students will understand how to adjust and adapt to multiple judge styles.
3. Students will learn how to analyze and use judge's comments on ballots or from critiques to improve their overall debate skills.

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Judge's Adaptation Handout #1*

Insight:

When I teach Intro to Public Speaking at the college level, we spend the most time of any lesson on the idea of audience adaptation. In any public speaking scenario, being able to research your audience is a huge benefit, but not always a possibility. We are lucky that, in debate, it is standard practice for judges to share their paradigms online and tell us exactly what kind of debate they like to see so that we can adjust accordingly.

In the following lesson, students will learn about different common types of judges, different parts of paradigms, and how to adjust to judges based on these philosophies. Students will also learn how to read a judge in-round to adjust on the fly or adjust to judges who do not share their paradigms publicly.

ONE-DAY LESSON

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Have students split into four groups. Ask students to choose a presenter for their group who will read their argument to the class. Then, give the students the following scenario:

“Your favorite musician is in town on Friday, but in order to get to the concert on time, you would have to leave school early. Convince your audience that you should be allowed to leave school in order to see the concert.”

Then, assign each group an audience from the following list:

- A Parent
- A Teacher
- A Friend
- A Sibling

Give students 5 minutes to construct their arguments, then read the arguments to the class. Afterwards, discuss as a group how their arguments changed based on who their audience was and why they may communicate differently with different audiences.

BODY

30-40 minutes

What type of judges will be deciding the results?

Explain to students: Debate success, as in all speaking events, is related to the degree to which you can speak to the audience. If you can establish audience rapport, you will be successful in persuading the audience. Judge adaptation is nothing more than determining what motivates the judge and speaking with them about that motivation. There are some general categories that allow for better prediction of preferences.

NOTE: It is a good idea to have the students establish a folder in which they will keep their notes in this unit, their practice analysis using their own cases and filmed debates, and a review of their ballots of the year. This folder may also contain a short evaluation of the repeat judges they encounter and how they might adapt to their preferences and all of their ballots. As students go throughout the year, they will be able to refer to their notes and analysis of judges to better prepare for their debate.

Discussion: As you move through the three types of judges, ask the students to engage by hypothesizing how these judges might factor a victory or loss. Experienced debaters may want to begin blaming judge background as a reason they lose. Try to keep this out of the conversation; when

students take the conversation to this, it often works to remind students that it is best to focus the discussion on what we can control and change in order to get the judge's vote the next time.

THREE TYPES OF JUDGES

- ▶ **Volunteer Community Judges** (individuals from the community or parents who have various amounts of judging experience—from very little to years)

At your league tournaments, you will be judged by a large number of parent and community judges recruited by the coaches to help with judging. The general philosophy behind this practice is that debaters should be able to persuade a wide variety of individuals. These judges have varied life experiences and become good, solid judges as they listen to many debates and increase their knowledge of the format. Having a good reputation with these judges works to your advantage. Knowing that a judge likes a slower, more persuasive, philosophical approach will allow you to adjust accordingly and to that individual. Knowing that a judge makes their career in the field of the debate topic (medicine, law, education, etc.) allows you to frame the debate in more subtle and personal terms. Do not underestimate a parent judge! Many of these judges have a coach at home (one of your competitors) who is teaching them to flow and listen to specific arguments on the topic at hand.

- ▶ **Former Debaters** (most often college students)

If a judge appears to be of college age, it is a good bet that they are probably a past contestant. Therefore, you can expect that the judge has a good grasp of the “event” of Policy Debate. They probably have enough understanding of the event that you can move a little faster in your presentation and assume that the judge understands the meaning of some of the jargon and “stock” issues of Policy. You can also assume that they have an understanding of the rules, speaker burdens, and procedural breaches, which allows you to spend quality time structuring your arguments and attacking the opponent's case. This allows for more direct clash, which past debaters seem to appreciate once they become judges. A bit of caution is necessary if the college judge was/is a team debater. They tend to reject many philosophical arguments in favor of more pragmatic evidence and warrants. They also tend to think of debate as a “game” and may consider arguments and procedural conflicts off the flow as a reflection of what they would have done in the round.

- ▶ **Teachers or Coaches** (some from other schools)

Over the course of the year, many debate coaches will judge you or your teammates. It is to your advantage to get to know these coaches. As you debate certain individuals, note what arguments are prevalent in their cases and note their school. If you have a judge in a later round who is from that opponent's school, use some of the

arguments from that opponent's case. Because many coaches assist debaters in writing cases, the arguments a debater uses are often representative of what the coach (and now, your judge) finds believable. Introducing these same arguments will not require the normal, extensive explanations required to convince the judge of their merit.

ACTIVITY

The NSDA has a plethora of Policy Debate rounds available online. Choose one on a topic your students can access easily. At first you may wish to use recorded speeches like these so you can be in charge of stopping and starting the debate where you want, without spoiling the arguments and eschewing the prep time. At this point, you want students, using the lecture/discussion on the three types of judges, to begin the process of analyzing judge impact on the round.

- Have the students get out their folders and refer to their lecture notes.
- Review the three judge types and the anticipated reactions they may have to the debate.
- Play the first speech and the first cross-examination ONLY.
- Have the students take specific notes on what the first speech said and how it might impact the decision of each judge type.
- Discuss the outcomes OR encourage pair/share answering these questions:
 - What type of judge might like this AC approach?
 - What impact has the cross-examination had (*if any*) on the potential of the case as it moves forward?
- Review findings from the first speech viewed.
- Play the second speech and the cross-examination ONLY.
- Have the students take specific notes on what the second speech said and how it might impact the decision of each judge type.
- Discuss the outcomes OR encourage pair/share answering these questions:
 - What type of judge might like this AC approach?
 - What impact has the cross-examination had (*if any*) on the potential of the case as it moves forward?
 - How might a judge's experience and political thought influence the result?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

To this point, we have discussed the different sources of judges in student debates. Community judges, parents, college debaters, former high school debaters, coaches, and teachers may bring very different approaches to the ballot. Other factors we will want to consider include their life experiences, the manner in which they approach arguments, and their political leanings—

conservative to liberal. To some degree, every judge is the exact same; they just want the best arguments to be made in any given debate. Regardless of the school of thought, or paradigm, to which they subscribe, most judges want to see arguments compared and weighed that interact with one another.

- Have the students get out their folders and refer to their lecture notes. There is something to add today!
- As you move through the material, ask the students to engage by hypothesizing how these judges might factor into a victory or loss. The purpose here is to have students break away from stereotypes. Some young judges are extremely conservative, while some community judges can be very liberal and, because of experience or lack thereof, will allow a great deal of latitude in the debate.

► **Lay vs. Experienced Judges**

Judges with no debate or judging experience are known as lay judges. They usually have their judges' instructions nearby, ask procedural questions, and take few, if any, notes. When encountering a lay judge, remember to keep the rate of delivery slower, to explain thoroughly without becoming condescending, to make connections between your arguments and your opponent's and to make fewer arguments. Do not assume that because a judge has no actual debate or judging experience that the judge is not knowledgeable about the topic. Attorneys and other professionals are often recruited as lay judges.

► **Conservative vs. Liberal Philosophies**

*Because much of what a debater says is related to political topics, it is important that you realize a judge may not share your political orientation. Whether a judge knows it or not, personal beliefs influence the way one perceives and ultimately accepts or rejects arguments. Although the ideal judge is a "blank slate" (Tabula Rasa) upon entering the round, you cannot assume that **any** judge is capable of setting aside all they know and believe for a high school debate round. Nobody can divorce themselves from the context of a given debate round completely; thus, it's your job to make sure that you have all the factors that you can control going in your favor.*

Pair/share a short small group discussion:

- How will experience and conservative/liberal philosophies impact the ballot in all three groups of judges?
- How do I learn a judge's philosophy?

What you coach your debaters to do in this area is largely up to your preference. You must say something because, left to their own devices, problems occur. Student/judge interaction is always an important issue to talk about prior to it happening.

The judge’s paradigm question. It is quite popular to have the judges speak to the debaters before the round begins. You can advise your debaters to ask for this to occur. Be careful that they do not offend the judge. The question phrased as, “Is there anything I can do to make the debate clearer for you today?” or “What are you hoping to see in today’s debate?” is better than “Have you ever judged before?” or “Are you just a parent judge?” Even asking “What is your judging paradigm?” or “What is the calculus of your decision today?” might confuse a lay judge and offend a judge who already is feeling insecure. So, tell your debaters what you want them to say/ask. This is a good time for a team/class discussion. As part of this, you may want to have an older student chime in with advice from the trenches as well.

Observing the flow style as everyone gets ready for the round will also help. Tell students to watch what the judges do to prepare—multiple pieces of paper, multiple pens, etc.—as this will give clues as to the type of notes the judge will take (*one page flow, multi-page flow, or no flow at all*). At this point, it would also be good to point out to students that throughout the round, they should watch how the judge takes notes. If the judge stops writing notes, chances are, the debaters need to slow the speed of their speech so that the judge can take notes.

Judging philosophy online. Some tournaments ask judges to write a judging philosophy and respond to questions about their experience. If these are available, take advantage of them! These will often ask questions about speed of speeches, role of value and criterion, use of evidence, basis for decision making, etc.

NOTE: Today’s lesson should be full of discussion and impacts, along with much sharing by experienced debaters. Don’t overlook fresh ideas that young debaters may come up with, as well!

CONCLUSION

How does a debater adjust to a judge’s preferred debate style?

The most important thing about judge adaptation is that adaptation is not an end, but a process. Adaptation skills come from being able to recognize and adjust to clues. Judge adaptation is simply learning what environmental clues signal the presence of certain judging philosophies. Student debaters do not abandon a prepared case or adapt in an extreme manner. As the topic progresses, the student debater will develop a number of constructive arguments that appeal to different judges. Some adapting may be about language choices used in refutation and final voting issues.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

As an exit slip and opportunity for assessment, have students write down the three common types of judges (*former competitors, coaches, and lay judges*) and one way they might adjust their arguments and delivery to fit that type of judge.

LESSON 17: PRACTICE DEBATE

TOPIC:

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

Essential Question + Objectives

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
- Cases and evidence for debaters

Insight:

A Policy Debate round is going to take around 80 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 reason for decision (*RFD*)/ballot and turn in their flow of the debate along with it at the end of the class period. If your class periods are not long enough to complete a full practice debate in one day, try splitting the debate over two days and stopping Day One after the 2NC.

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 that 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 up engagement.

ONE- OR TWO-DAY LESSON (PER DEBATE)

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.

You may either use a coin toss to select sides (*the winning team chooses affirmative or negative*) or assign the sides in advance.

BODY

80 minutes (if possible) or 40 minutes per day over two days

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?

LESSON 18: EXTENDED NEGATIVE LESSON: INTRO TO COUNTERPLAN

TOPIC:

Students will be introduced to the concept of a counterplan and the different types of counterplans that can be utilized during a debate.

Essential Question + Objectives

What are the different types of counterplans and how can one determine which kind should be used during a debate?

1. Students will be able to define what a counterplan is.
2. Students will be able to identify the different kinds of counterplans.
3. Students will be able to apply the basics of debating theory to a counterplan.

MATERIALS:

- 1AC documents from Lesson 11, (*the “constructives” lesson*)

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *Intro to Counterplans PowerPoint*
- *Debating Theory PowerPoint*
- *Counterplan Vocab Handout #1 (Optional)*
- *CP Theory Study Notes Handout #2 (Optional)*

Insight:

Now that you’ve finished the first 16 lessons and the practice debates, your students are ready to hit the road and travel to a real tournament! First of all, congratulations on getting this far. Bringing students from complete novices to knowledgeable, round-ready debaters is no small feat!

In this lesson and lesson 19, we will further expand your students’ knowledge of some more complex but common arguments, including Counterplans (*lesson 18*) and Kritiks (*lesson 19*.) While your students will not always need to know these arguments to compete at tournaments, they will inevitably run into other teams running these arguments, and understanding how to navigate them will be vital to their competitive success. Eventually, your students should feel comfortable running CPs and Ks themselves to get a competitive advantage in rounds!

TWO-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

On day one, start by presenting students with a plan. This can be a plan text from the current resolution, a past plan, or a fun plan to a silly question. Some example plan texts from the 2020-2021 topic include:

The United States federal government should enact substantial criminal justice reform by abolishing the penal system.

The United States federal government should interpret the Thirteenth Amendment such that being convicted does not deprive persons of their protections against slavery or involuntary servitude.

Then, give students five minutes to come up with a plan that they think is better. Discuss why they think their plan is better. How might they prove to a judge that their plan is better?

BODY

30-40 minutes

During Day One, students will learn the fundamentals of counterplans, including:

- The Net Benefit
- How to debate against counterplans
- Some common counterplans

NOTE: *The content of this lesson, including activities, can be found in the [Intro to Counterplans PowerPoint](#).*

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Have students turn in their counterplan ideas as an exit slip. Make sure the students include:

- The CP text
- The net benefit
- The type of CP
 - Agent
 - Process
 - PIC

DAY TWO

BODY

30-40 minutes

During Day Two, students will learn about counterplan status and how to debate theory on the counterplan.

NOTE: *The content of this lesson, including activities, can be found in the **Debating Theory PowerPoint**.*

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Have students turn in their completed theory shells as an exit slip. Make sure the shells include:

- Interpretation
- Violation
- Standards
- Voters

FURTHER ASSESSMENT:

If you would like, you can distribute the **CP Theory Study Notes Handout** and have students fill out the handout to check their understanding of different key terms. Students may do this as a quiz, or with the **Counterplan Vocab Handout** as a reference guide.

LESSON 19: EXTENDED NEGATIVE LESSON: INTRO TO KRITIK

TOPIC:

Students will be introduced to the fundamentals of the kritik, and will learn how to debate the kritik on both the affirmative and negative sides of the debate.

Essential Question + Objectives

What is the utility of a kritik to a negative debater, and how can the affirmative answer the kritik?

1. Students will be able to identify and discuss the fundamental philosophy behind kritikal arguments.
2. Students will be able to construct and run kritiks in debates.
3. Students will be able to identify the common strategies for debating against kritiks.

RESOURCES:

- *Policy Debate Textbook*
- *kritik Vocab Handout #1*
- *Intro to kritiks PowerPoint: Day 1*
- *Intro to kritiks PowerPoint: Day 2*
- *kritik Notes Handout #2*
- *Capitalism kritik Handout #3*
- *Security kritik Handout #4*
- *kritik Puzzle Handout #5*

Insight:

As your students attend more tournaments, they will inevitably face kritikal arguments in their rounds. While these arguments can be intimidating at first, they're really just like any other argument, and our best line of defense (*or offense*) against them is understanding them!

The following lesson will help your students understand various types of kritiks and how to debate against them (*or run them!*) to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary tools to succeed in any round they enter.

FOUR-DAY LESSON

DAY ONE

HOOK

5-10 minutes

Before beginning the lesson on Day One, ask students how they might respond to an affirmative that used bad words. Some students might say they would tell their coaches or the tournament administrator; some students might call out their opponents on the spot. Try to lead students toward the idea that they could make an argument in the round about the language of the affirmative and win the debate with that argument. That's basically what a kritik is!

BODY

30-40 minutes

Using the *Lesson 19 Day 1 PowerPoint*, introduce students to the fundamentals of the kritik. This first PowerPoint covers:

- ▶ What a kritik is
- ▶ The nine types of Ks in Policy Debate
- ▶ The four parts of a K shell

Distribute the *Vocab Handout #1* and use *handout #2* either for guided note taking or as an assessment/exit slip at the end of Day One.

DAY TWO

BODY

30-40 minutes

Use the *Lesson 19 Day 2 PowerPoint* to teach students some specifics about debating the K. This PowerPoint covers:

- ▶ The common arguments the affirmative can make against a K
- ▶ The most important arguments or “landmines” that the neg might make against the affirmative

DAY THREE**BODY**

30-40 minutes

Begin the day by handing students either the **Cap K** or the **Security K** handout. *(If students have been assigned partners, have them work with their partner.)* Give students 10-15 minutes to read through the handout. Then, give students another 10 minutes to write out a possible 2AC response to the K they were given.

Once students have finished this exercise, have them switch with another team who has a different K *(e.g., Cap K students should now have the Security K and vice-versa.)* Now, have students choose which partner will be negative and which partner will be affirmative. Use the final 20 minutes of class to practice debating the K using the following format:

- 1NC *(reading only the K shell)* - 2 minutes
- 2AC *(responding to only the K shell)* - 2 minutes
- Neg Block - 2 minutes
- 1AR - 1 minute

Teams should then switch and debate the same K on the other side. After the debate, having students share their speech docs as an assessment or exit slip.

DAY FOUR**BODY**

30-40 minutes

I want to preface this lesson with a bit of an explanation. This is the final and most controversial day of Start Here: Teaching Policy. In this lesson, we will cover less-common kritiks, including performance kritiks and kritikal affirmatives. I recognize that these arguments are contentious within the community, and you may be a coach who rejects these arguments on face or feels uncomfortable adjudicating these arguments.

However, our students will inevitably run into these arguments in their rounds, and some of our students may even want to run these arguments themselves, and I feel that I would not be doing my job in preparing this set of lessons if I did not give you the necessary tools for your students to face these arguments confidently in their debates.

The **Lesson 19 Day 4 PowerPoint** contains information on these kritiks, and covers common ways to debate against these kritiks.

CLOSURE

5 minutes

At the end of the unit, for homework or as an in-class activity, have the students complete the student activity kritik puzzles (*Handout #5*). This activity has the students match parts of a kritik and common answer types to the tag in the activity to reinforce what has been learned.

QUESTIONS: *As this is our final lesson, I want to rehash something from the very beginning. If you ever have ANY questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at boschlkdmich@gmail.com. Best of luck to you and your students as you start your journey into Policy Debate!*

