

Speech and Debate Lesson Plans for 5th – 8th grades

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Lesson Three: Rebuttals

In this lesson we will add the next essential skills for successful debate:

Anticipating responses/ rebuttals to your argument (statement),

AND

Preparing your own rebuttals for these anticipated responses.

Step One: Choose a topic for your thesis statement.

- Even though you don't actually agree with your topic, your goal is present the argument as though it is fact, and attempt to get your audience to agree with you.
- Remember, when presenting a debate your goal is to prove a point through well explained, researched ideas, presented respectfully

Ideas for thesis statement: (or you can always choose your own idea)

- A) Spiders make the best pizza toppings
- B) It is best to wear roller blades while swimming
- C) Pillows full of rocks will give you a good nights sleep

Step Two:

Research your topic and come up with 3 reasons that help to prove your point.

3 reasons for Example Idea A)

1. Spiders are an excellent source of protein
2. The legs provide a nice crunchy texture
3. It's a good way to reduce the amount of spider webs in your home: by eating the spiders

Step Three:

Try to anticipate REBUTTALS (counter arguments) that your opponent may present.

3 possible rebuttals for Example Idea A)

1. Spiders may be a good source of protein but since they are small you must eat a large quantity of them to meet your nutritional needs.
2. Crunchy legs may get stuck between your teeth
3. Spiderwebs are great for reducing the amount of gnats and flies in the home.

STEP FOUR:

Prepare your own responses to the rebuttals you have anticipated.

STEP FIVE:

Write out your debate plan to ensure you are prepared.

Use the format in the attached document “Debate worksheet”

You can hand write your own or print out the worksheet I have provided.

For now, DO NOT, fill out the conclusion part of the worksheet.

We will do that in lesson four.

That’s all for lesson three. Lesson three is a lot of work in the preparedness process.

Take your time and formulate intelligent, well researched, ideas and rebuttals.

HAVE FUN!