

Class 10 English: Term 2: persuasive language and debating

The debate: general details

Each speaker will have 2-3 minutes to present their argument.

A bell will ring at 2 minutes, and again at 2.45 to signify final 15 seconds.

Going below time will affect result; therefore, make sure you plan your speech to go for the required duration. Give thought to:

- Take your time – it is more persuasive if the speaker is not in a hurry, and so the arguments have time to ‘land’.
- Consider techniques that take time – e.g. telling an anecdote, or giving testimony from important individuals in the issue, asking the audience rhetorical questions, reading some formal evidence, etc. are all ways you can use time wisely. We will discuss techniques further next Monday.
- Consider how many arguments you will have – this will depend on how many fellow debaters you have on your team, and the issue itself (some issues may only have 2-3 clear arguments! Although most will have more). You will need to work with your teammates to work-out who is going to argue what, so that you all have plenty to argue about.

After all debaters have debated, each team has one minute to confer, and may nominate one speaker, who has 30 seconds to rebut any of their opponents’ arguments, clarify anything, or make any closing statements to the audience.

Potentially after that we ‘may’ open it up to questions from the audience (or we may not; undecided atm).

Individual advice:

It is definitely helpful to write out some form of your debate/speech/presentation/argument (whatever you want to call it!) – whether it is the whole thing written like a speech, or just a dot-point summary of what you plan to say.

However, it is **not** helpful to have a speech with you that you are going to read word-for-word, for a few reasons:

- It may/will come across as stale, and you may find yourself interacting more with the piece of paper in your hand than your audience – and the whole purpose of a debate is to persuade your audience!
- It also helps to be ‘present’ and ‘in the moment’ – a good debater will refer to arguments their opponents make (do some rebutting ‘on the spot’), or support points their teammates make – but you need to be present, and flexible for this to happen. If your speech is written word for word, it makes it very hard to be flexible.
- What I would do: write a speech down first, and then break it into dot-points with a few key words to jog my memory – then I would write these onto bits of cardboard (i.e. **flash cards**) – that may only have a few words on each; **or specific facts and figures to use as evidence.**

You then need to trust that you will remember what you need to say to fill

in the blanks – and the more you practice and learn to trust yourself – the better you will be.

- Also, if you write it down as a speech first (or even if you just write detailed dot-point), then you will know exactly what techniques and persuasive language you are going to use, in order to support your arguments – which will make writing your Statement of Intention much easier.

Advice for working in a team:

- Your initial research should be on the whole issue. Once you have been placed on a team, you should all know the issue well enough that you can start to work-out who should argue what – and divide it in a way that is fair and gives each person enough to say. It may be that you each get one argument each, or that you are able to have two arguments each (more arguments can make it easier), or that some will have one big one, and others smaller, less complex arguments.
- You will need to find a way to communicate together. Whether that's a three-way or two-way conversation. The sooner you can work this out the better, as it means you will be able to start planning exactly what you are going to argue.

Assessment Criteria	NS 0	ED 2	WT 4	S 6	A 8	WB 10
Ability to persuade through strength of argument: <i>use of logic and reason; demonstrated understanding of the complexities of the issue; acknowledgement and/or rebuttal of contradictory arguments (if appropriate)</i>						
Use of evidence to support your arguments: <i>including: accurate acknowledgement of sources where appropriate; annotated bibliography</i>						
Ability to persuade using language and techniques: <i>Thoughtful choice of language and connotations; a range of appropriate and effective language techniques.</i>						
Ability to persuade using voice and body: <i>Voice: tone/s, inflection, pacing, emphasis, clarity;</i> <i>Body: stance, posture, gesture, movement; eyes and contact</i>						
Statement of Intention: <i>how well you can plan your debate and how well you can explain why you plan to use specific techniques to support specific arguments</i>						