

# Oxford-Style Debate

## Preparation:

1. Students will research the topic and, using reliable sources, write a 2.5 minutes prepared statement. Coordinate your statement with teammates in advance and practice delivering it! **Do not simply read your statement to the class.**
2. Students will create an annotated bibliography (10 sources *minimum* for the team). All sources must be reliable.

## Guidelines for Debaters:

- 1) Each member of the team must participate equally.
- 2) Each team must demonstrate thorough research and will turn in a summary including bibliography at the beginning of the debate. (Late bibliographies will NOT be accepted.)
- 3) Each team member must turn in their individual prepared statement after the debate.
- 4) Sources must be cited during the debate.
- 5) Each team must adhere to the format and guidelines as described below.
- 6) Teams will be judged on understanding of topic, quality of evidence, and persuasiveness.
- 7) Points will be deducted from teams with tardy or absent members.
- 8) An absent student will not receive any points.
- 9) **YOU SHOULD MEMORIZE YOUR PART!** – Using notecards, pieces of paper, phones, computers, etc. of any kind will be an automatic point deduction

## Guidelines for Audience:

Before the debate, the audience will write down their overall stance on the topic (for or against). Audience members should take notes on what they learned and, at the end of the debate, write down something they've learned and, again, their overall stance on the topic (for or against). Note: saying you didn't learn anything is not acceptable.

## Debate Format

1. Secret ballot of the audience on the overall topic. Votes will be tallied, but results will not be revealed until after the debate.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> supporting speaker (PRO) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. A good introduction that attracts the audiences attention and interest in the topic
  - b. Should include a complete response in support of the proposition.
  - c. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.
3. 1<sup>st</sup> opposing speaker (CON) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. A good introduction that attracts the audiences attention and interest in the topic
  - b. Should include a complete response in opposition of the proposition.
  - c. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.

4. 2<sup>nd</sup> supporting speaker (PRO) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include a complete response in support of sub-topic A. Response should provide a different angle than the first speaker, or serve as an elaboration on the first speaker's speech.
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.
5. 2<sup>nd</sup> opposing speaker (CON) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include a complete response in opposition of sub-topic A. Response should provide a different angle than the first speaker, or serve as an elaboration on the first speaker's speech.
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.

Q&A: One team (decided on by TA) will ask an appropriate question and the other team will have 3 minutes to respond

6. 3<sup>rd</sup> supporting speaker (PRO) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include a complete response in support of sub-topic B . Response should provide a different angle than the first speaker, or serve as an elaboration on the first speaker's speech.
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.
7. 3<sup>rd</sup> opposing speaker (CON) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include a complete response in opposition of sub-topic B . Response should provide a different angle than the first speaker, or serve as an elaboration on the first speaker's speech.
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.

Q&A: Other team will ask an appropriate question and the team that asked the first question will have 3 minutes to respond

8. 4<sup>th</sup> supporting speaker (PRO) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include a complete response in support of sub-topic C . Response should provide a different angle than the first speaker, or serve as an elaboration on the first speaker's speech.
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.
9. 4<sup>th</sup> opposing speaker (CON) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include a complete response in opposition of sub-topic C . Response should provide a different angle than the first speaker, or serve as an elaboration on the first speaker's speech.
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.

Q&A: One team (decided on by TA) will ask an appropriate question and the other team will have 3 minutes to respond

10. 5<sup>th</sup> supporting speaker (PRO) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include the closing summary and statements of the group
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.
  
11. 5<sup>th</sup> opposing speaker (PRO) - 2.5 minutes
  - a. Should include the closing summary and statements of the group
  - b. Speech should make use of facts, statistics, and anecdotes as supporting evidence.

Open Discussion (at least 5 minutes). Audience is encouraged to ask questions

**12.** Final secret vote of the audience.

## Debate Topics

**Topic 1: Assume climate change occurring on Earth is NOT due to human activity.**

**Reason A:** Climate change is due to a naturally-occurring physical process such as volcanic activity, shifts in Earth's orbit, varying Sun output, changes in Earth's albedo, etc. Choose one and argue how it could be the only major reason for climate change.

**Reason B:** Climate change is due to a naturally-occurring physical process such as volcanic activity, shifts in Earth's orbit, varying Sun output, changes in Earth's albedo, etc. Choose one and argue how it could be the only major reason for climate change.

**Topic 2: Should there be criminal penalties for forecasters who incorrectly forecast the weather?**

PRO: There should be criminal penalties for forecasters who incorrectly forecast the weather.

CON: There should not be criminal penalties for forecasters who incorrectly forecast the weather.

**Topic 3: Assume Geoengineering can solve climate/weather problems (carbon sequestration, cloud seeding, etc).**

PRO: Geoengineering should be used to force the atmosphere to behave in a way humans prefer.

CON: Geoengineering the atmosphere should be banned, similarly in the way chemical and nuclear weapons are banned.

**Topic 4: Should the federal government continue to launch and support weather satellites or should this be privatized?**

PRO: The federal government should continue to launch and support weather satellites.

CON: The federal government should not continue to launch and support weather satellites.

**Topic 5: Assume extreme weather events seem more prevalent in modern times.**

PRO: Events of extreme weather are now occurring more frequently and this is a sign of global climate change.

CON: Extreme weather of frequency comparable to today has always existed. We are in an era where we can record and monitor it better, so we are aware of more events

## Individual Write-Up

As part of group projects, each member of the group must turn in an individual write-up describing what their group's project is about, the key discussion points, and their personal contribution. This paper should be a short, well written, and grammatically correct essay with MLA in-text citations. It must be at least one page in length, single-spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides and 12 point Times New Roman font. You must include:

- At least 1 paragraph giving an overview of the group's topic
- 2 to 3 paragraphs on your personal contribution to the project, which includes but is not limited to:
  - o Description of the specific task you were charged with (what research you did)
  - o What you found out (which MUST have in-text citations referencing the information) – be specific and go into some depth about your research
  - o Any information that you or your group found relevant but was not presented in class due to time constraints
- A separate Works Cited page stapled to your paper (minimum of 2 sources)
  - o At least one of these sources should be from a scientific journal, a government website (such as NOAA, NASA or the EPA), or a university website
  - o You must use MLA format
  - o These sources should also be in your group annotated bibliography

*The expectation is that this essay will be an original work and that citations will be used correctly. If a student is caught plagiarizing in any way I reserve the right to give them a zero.*

## **So... What Do I Actually Turn In and How Will I Be Graded???**

### **I must receive the following:**

- 1) Annotated bibliography from each group, containing all sources used by every member, at least five of which must come from a gov/edu website or a journal article **(Due 3/6)**
- 2) Prepared statement from each team member, which should be an outline of what you are going to say and should include citations that refer to the group bibliography **(Due 3/6)**
- 3) Individual write-up **(Due 3/27)**
- 4) Two peer evaluations
  - a. Half way **(Due 2/20)**
  - b. Final **(Due 3/27)**
- 5) Group draft – This will be a word document turned in on elms **(Due 2/20)**

### **Point distribution:**

- 1) Group Presentation: **40 points** (see rubric)
- 2) Individual Effort/Participation/Write-up: **60 points** (see rubric)

## Sample Annotated Bibliography in MLA Format

Aristotle. *Poetics*. Trans. S. H. Butcher. *The Internet Classics Archive*. Web Atomic and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 13 Sept. 2007. Web. 4 Nov. 2008. <<http://classics.mit.edu/>>.

(Insert three to five sentence summary/description of the source here)

"Athlete's Foot - Topic Overview." *WebMD*. WebMD, 25 September 2014. Web. 6 July 2015.

(Insert three to five sentence summary/description of the source here)

Holland, Suzanne. *The Human Embryonic Stem Cell Debate: Science, Ethics, and Public Policy*. Boston: MIT Press, 2001. Print.

(Insert three to five sentence summary/description of the source here)

Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. New York: Anchor Books, 1995. Print.

(Insert three to five sentence summary/description of the source here)

Senior, K. "Extending the Ethical Boundaries of Stem Cell Research." *Trends in Molecular Medicine* 7 (2001): 5-6. Print.

(Insert three to five sentence summary/description of the source here)

**Project Grade: Group**

Section:

Group:

Project #

|  | Possible Points | Total Points |
|--|-----------------|--------------|
| Well organized/<br>rehearsed                         | 10              |              |
| Presented material in<br>allotted time               | 10              |              |
| Quality of draft                                     | 10              |              |
| Overall quality of<br>evidence and<br>persuasiveness | 10              |              |
| Total Points   |                 |              |

Comments:

**Project Grade: Individual**

Section:

Group/Name:

Project #

|  | Possible Points | Total Points |
|--|-----------------|--------------|
| Participation in other<br>presentations/quality of<br>response | 10              |              |
| Quality of Supporting<br>Evidence & Argument                   | 10              |              |
| Participation within<br>group                                  | 10              |              |
| Overall Quality  | 10              |              |
| Quality of written<br>summary (including<br>references)        | 20              |              |
| Total Points   |                 |              |

Participation within your group includes attendance at group meetings, filling out peer evaluations, completing outlines on time, etc.

Comments: