

Dialogic Debating

Format Guide

Dialogic debating is a competitive critical thinking exercise. To succeed, as well as expressing your own ideas clearly, you must also listen carefully to the other team, explore their ideas with questions, and consider how their arguments affect your own conclusion.

Both teams will start from different positions on a common topic, and conclude by explaining how their position was affected by the arguments of the other team.

In each round, you will:

- Present your position on the topic in a speech that explains your point of view and seeks to persuade others.
- Discuss the topic with another team, seeking to understand their position and reflect on how and why your own position has changed.
- Present your final conclusion on the topic, explaining how and why your position has changed and demonstrating how you were influenced by the other team.

FORMAT DETAILS

Teams: 2 teams, each with 2-3 people

Total time: 90 minutes

STAGE ONE - PREPARATION

The competition organiser will give you a topic and a position:

E.g. "Every child should have a pet?" You agree

Each team of 2-3 people now has 20 minutes to consider how they will present this position on the topic. You should consider:

- Who will give the opening speech?
- What are your most important arguments, and key examples?
- What do you expect to hear from the other team, and what questions might you ask them?

STAGE TWO - OPENING SPEECHES

Each team now has 5 minutes to present their opening speeches. During this time, other speakers should listen carefully and take notes. Remember to write down any ideas for questions you have.

STAGE THREE - DISCUSSION

The teams now have up to 20 minutes to discuss the speeches they have heard. Before you begin the discussion, take 5 minutes as separate teams to plan what questions you would like to start with.

Each team should take it in turns to ask and answer questions. Every 5 minutes, you should take a short pause to confer as a team, and decide which questions you are going to ask next. During this time, remember that you are trying to understand the other side, and will need to explain how their arguments affected your own position on the topic in the next stage.

