



Sample of debate script & expressions

Children's Literature (University of Northern Iowa)

Opening the debate:

[some nice opening, e.g. quote]

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to this debate.

Welcome from this side of the house...

The motion for debate today is: ...

Defining the motion:

Now we as today's proposition/opposition strongly believe that this is true/not true, but before we come to our actual argumentation, let us first define some important terms in this debate.

We believe that what is meant by ... is... / that ... are ...

When we say ... should ... we mean that ...

Presenting the teamline:

We as today's proposition/opposition have structured our case as follows:

I, as the first speaker, will be talking about ...

Our second speaker, ..., will elaborate on the fact that ...

And our third speaker, ..., will do the rebuttal.

Rebutting arguments, rebuilding your case:

But before I come to my own arguments, let us first have a look at what ... has said.

I will continue our case in a minute, but before that there are some things about the ... speech that need to be addressed.

The first prop/opposition speaker has told us ...; on the contrary ...

He/She also said that ...; but in fact..

He/She was claiming that ...; but as my first speaker already told you, ...

Introducing arguments:

Let me come to my first/second/.../next argument: [concise label of argument]

My first/... argument is:

The first/... reason why we're prop/opposing this motion is:

explaining arguments:

[rather abstract explanation on how the argument should work]

Giving examples:

There are many examples for this/for ..., for instance.

In fact, you can find many examples for this in real life. Just think of...

And there are similar cases, such as ..., ...

So in this simple example we can clearly see the effect of ...

Summarizing & linking the argument:

So as we have seen [argument label], and therefore [motion].

Now because of this ..., we have to support this motion.

Summarizing & ending your speech:

So Ladies and Gentlemen, what have I told you today? Firstly ..., Secondly..

[some nice closing words]

And for all of these reasons, the motion must stand/fall.
making/rejecting/accepting/answering points of information:

Point of information, Sir/Madam.

On that point.

Wouldn't you have to agree ...? / Doesn't what you're saying contradict with ...? / What about the ...? / How would you explain, that ... ?

No, thank you, Sir/Madam.

Declined.

Yes, please. / Go ahead.

Thank you very much, Sir/Madam, I'm going to come to this very point in my second argument in a minute.

Giving reply speeches:

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome for the last time from today's prop/opposition. It is now my pleasure to summarize this debate, take a look at what both sides have said and see what the outcome of this debate actually is.

A first/second/... major clash was: ... Today's prop/opposition told us ...; we had to find ...

[some particularly nice closing words]

And for all these reasons, I beg you to prop/oppose

Informal Debate Phrases

When you are listening to the other side.

I see your point, but I think...

Yes, I understand, but my opinion is that...

That's all very interesting, but the problem is that...

I'm afraid I can't quite agree with your point.-

I think I've got your point, now let me respond to it.-

We can see what you're saying. Here's my reply...

When you need to say something now.

I'm sorry to interrupt, but you've misunderstood our point.-

Excuse me, but that's not quite correct.-

Sorry, I just have to disagree with your point.-

Let me just respond to that, please.-

Forgive me for interrupting, but I must respond to that.-

Hold on a moment, that's not correct.-

If you would allow me to add a comment here...-

If you don't mind, I'd like to take issue with what you just said.

When you haven't replied yet.

The other side will have to explain why.... otherwise we win that point.-
We said that...but the other side has not replied to our point.-
I'd like to focus on two points that the other side has failed to address.-
There are two points that we have succeeded in establishing...
I want to call your attention to an important point that our opponents have not addressed yet.-
I'd like to point out that there are two issues our opponents have failed to dispute, namely...
I must stress again that our point has not been refuted by the other side.
When you give your rebuttal.

The first point I would like to raise is this...
Our position is the following...
Here's the main point I want to raise...
I'd like to deal with two points here. The first is...
Our opponents have still not addressed the question we raised a moment ago...
The other side has failed to answer our point about...
Notice that the affirmative side has not addressed our main point.-
Let me just restate my position.-
Just to be clear, here is what I mean...
When you give concluding statements.

To sum up, here are the main points our opponents have not addressed...
We pointed out that...
Our opponents have claimed that...
To recap the main points...
Let's sum up where we stand in this debate.
Let me summarize our position in this debate.
In summary, we want to point out that...
Let's see which arguments are still standing.-
Let's take stock of where we are in this debate.

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