Parts of a Debate

In this tutorial you will learn the different components of a debate: opening statements, rebuttals, counterarguments Q and As and closing statements.
Opening Statements

Organization
- It must have an intro, body, and conclusion
- Try to think of a slogan to tie everything together

Argument type
- The opening statement should use logic, have information from experts (no personal stories), and have citations on where your information is coming from.
- All of your facts and statistics should be represented in this part of the debate

Word Choice
- Persuasive Word Choice
- Quotes, academic language, interviews and strong sources

Length
- This should be at least 3 minutes in length
Rebuttal Section

**Organization**
- 4-step process
- Always relate it back to your topic

**Delivery**
- Must follow four steps
- You must be a quick thinker

**Scoring**
- Remember to look at the rubric!
- You must speak for 3 minutes
- Don’t ramble or get lost
The 4-Step Rebuttal

1. They Say
   - You repeat what the other team said
   - Practice shortening the quote from the other team

2. But
   - Your transition word (you could use something other than but like “however” for example)
   - You clearly state your counter argument here. “But I disagree…”

3. Because
   - This is your reasoning
   - It can be support for your counterargument or it could be a criticism of your opponents idea

4. Therefore
   - You compare your opinion to your opponents and discuss why yours defeats theirs
   - This is a critical skill for debate
   - Your argument could be: better reasoned, better evidenced, has more importance or experience
Counterargument Q and A

Organization
• Your classmates (both the audience and the other team) will ask you questions about your topic.

Preparation
• You should speak to your teammates and ask what their arguments are. Then think about what questions people could ask about these topics.
• Write down answers and backup information on a paper to bring up with you.

Length
• This should be at least 3 minutes in length.
• The strongest speaker of the group should deliver this part of the debate
Closing Statement

Organization

- Must include an intro, a body, and conclusion
- If you used a slogan in the opening statement you should repeat it here
- Repeat any of your most important facts and statistics from the opening statement, but DO NOT introduce anything new.
- There are no rebuttals allowed in this section.

Argument

- You should be using the emotional argument here.
- This is the last the audience will hear from your side so make it count!

Length

- This should be at least 3 minutes in length.