

CT Middle School Debate League Tournament
Saturday, April 22, 2017, Eastern Middle School, Riverside, Greenwich, CT
Sponsored by the English Speaking Union, Greenwich Branch

Judges' Instructions

Contents

- Tournament Day Schedule**
- Structure of a CTMSDL Round**
- Information about Debating**
- Checklist of Speaker Burdens**
- Rules**
- Judges' Responsibilities**
- Judge Decision Making**

Schedule

Time	Activity	Location
9:30-10:00 AM	Registration & lunch ticket sale	Cafeteria
10:00 – 11:00 AM	Workshops for Debaters, and Judges/Timers	Cafeteria & TBA
11:15 – 12:00 AM	Round 1 (random pairing)	See round schedule
12:00 – 12:45 PM	Round 2 (random pairing)	See round schedule
12:45-1:30 PM	Lunch	Cafeteria
1:30-2:15 PM	Round 3 (power matched)	See round schedule
2:15-2:45 PM	High Brow Low Brow game	Auditorium
2:45-3:30 PM	Final Round between two top teams	Auditorium
3:30-3:45 PM	Awards & Departure	Auditorium

Structure of a Round

Speech	Duration
1 st PROP Constructive	5 min
Prep time	1 min
1 st OPP Constructive	5 min
Prep time	1 min
2 nd PROP Constructive	5 min
Prep time	1 min
2 nd OPP Constructive	5 min
OPP Rebuttal	4 min
Prep time	1 min
PROP Rebuttal	4 min
TOTAL	32 min

Prep Time

Prep time is mandatory.

Grace Periods

Every speech has a 15 second grace period. Judges should stop flowing and cut debaters off when the grace period ends.

Room Set Up

The PROP team sits to the right of the Speaker in speaking order (1st farthest from Speaker, 3rd closest to Speaker). The OPP team sits to the left of the Speaker in speaking order.

Information about Debating

The CTMSDL seeks to encourage students to learn how to be persuasive in a professional, respectful way.

Public Speaking — the primary skills of public speaking include:

Non-verbal communication

- Most eye contact should be with the judge, not with the opponents.
- Gestures should be controlled but animated.
- Supportive desk slapping is encouraged — support for all speakers at the beginning and end of speeches and during a partner’s speech is appropriate.

Verbal communication

- Speeches should be organized with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. It should be easy to follow speakers as they move from making arguments for their side to refuting the arguments of their opponents.
- Slightly louder than conversational volume and slightly faster than conversational pace are encouraged to demonstrate confident command of the material.
- Students should avoid reading and speaking in a monotone.
- The use of emphasis, rhetoric and wit are encouraged to highlight key ideas.

Argumentation

CTMSDL students are taught that good arguments have three components:

Claim — an unsupported assertion or opinion, usually brief and clear for easy note taking.

Warrant — Reasoning + Evidence

Reasoning is the logical support for a claim — the explanation or justification for it.

Evidence is the empirical information that verifies the reasoning. Evidence includes generalizable statistical information, research reports, specific statistical information, historical examples, contemporary examples, anecdotes, expert testimony, and hypothetical scenarios based on well-established facts.

Impact — why we should care about the claim — why it matters.

Refutation

In addition to public speaking and argumentation, debaters learn how to refute their opponents’ arguments. Debaters should identify conflicts, show the judge how the two sides’ arguments clash, and seek to resolve that conflict on behalf of their side of the debate. Refutation is the ability to answer the opposing side’s arguments or use them to your advantage. Refutation is what distinguishes debate from other public speaking endeavors and competitions.

Debaters use direct and indirect refutation. Both approaches can be effective. Direct refutation is the disagreement with the precise argumentation of an opponent. It is based on clash with the details of an opponent’s argument (challenges to its reasoning, evidence, and/or impact). Indirect refutation is new material, relevant to an opposing team’s position that undermines an opponent’s argument.

Checklist of Speaker Burdens

Speech	Duration	Burdens
1 st Proposition Constructive	5 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provides clear definitions of the terms of the Motion. 2. May lay out a plan. 3. Provides 2-4 clear arguments, each with a topic sentence, an explanation with explicit link to the Motion, reasoning, evidence & impacts. 4. Speaks instead of reads 5. Answers 1-3 POIs if offered.
1 st Opposition Constructive	5 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clearly states Opp's case. 2. May lay out a counter-plan. 3. Provides 2-4 clear arguments, each with a topic sentence, an explanation with explicit link to the Motion, reasoning, evidence & impacts. 4. Explicitly refutes all Prop arguments, including restatement of the Prop argument with a directly related refutation of it. 5. Speaks instead of reads. 6. Answers 1-3 POIs if offered.
2 nd Proposition Constructive	5 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May introduce new Prop arguments. 2. Rebuilds and extends 1st Prop's arguments with new analysis & examples. 3. Refutes Opp's refutations. 4. Explicitly refutes all Opp arguments. 5. Speaks instead of reads. 6. Answers 1-3 POIs if offered.
2 nd Opposition Constructive	5 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May introduce new Opp arguments. 2. Rebuilds and extends 1st Opp's arguments with new analysis and examples. 3. Refutes Prop's refutations. 4. Explicitly refutes all Prop arguments. 5. Speaks instead of reads. 6. Answers 1-3 POIs if offered.
Opposition Rebuttal	4 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlights most important points of the round and explains why each of these are more effectively dealt with on the Opp side. 2. Analyzes the impacts on each side of the House. 3. Crystallizes the whole round down to a central value(s) or key issue(s) and demonstrates why the Opposition wins.
Proposition Rebuttal	4 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responds to any new Opp points introduced in 2nd Opp constructive. 2. Highlights most important points of the round and explains why each of these are more effectively dealt with on the Prop side. 3. Analyzes the impacts on each side of the House. 4. Crystallizes the whole round down to a central value(s) or key issue(s) and demonstrates why the Proposition wins.
Total		Speeches: 28 minutes, Prep time: 4 minutes. Total: 32 minutes

Rules & Conventions

- 1. Defining Terms & Narrowing Motions** It is the burden of the **first** Proposition speaker to define the terms of the round. This includes defining general terms like “This House” “good” and “harm” and can also include narrowing the scope of the debate. (For example, schools might be defined as public high schools in the US.) Whatever is defined by the Proposition stands unless the **first** Opposition speaker successfully argues that Prop’s definitions are either unreasonable or narrow the debate so much that Opp has no room to argue. If Opp challenges Prop’s definitions, the judge does not rule who won the definitional battle during the debate but decides at the end when determining the winner of the round. If Proposition fails to offer definitions, first Opp may mention this and offer alternatives. However, if terms are reasonably defined and/or narrowed by the Proposition, the Opposition must argue on the grounds provided by the Proposition. They may not argue another case or argue outside the limits set by the Proposition just because they prefer their own definitions.
- 2. Plans & Counter Plans** The PROP team does not have to present a plan by which they will change the status quo. If they choose to present a plan, it must be done by the first PROP speaker. Similarly, the OPP team does not have to present a counter plan but if they choose to do so, it must be presented by the first OPP speaker.
- 3. Points of Clarification** There are two types of POCs:
 1. If the Opposition team requires clarification of the definitions offered by the first Proposition speaker, an OPP debater should rise after definitions are presented and say “Point of Clarification” or “POC.” The first PROP speaker should then answer all of OPP’s questions about the definitions. This type of POC saves the round from becoming a long argument about what PROP’s definitions were or what they meant. OPP should not challenge definitions in a POC. If OPP wants to contest PROP’s definitions, it should do so in the first OPP speech.
 2. If a speaker says something unintelligible or inaudible, at any point in a round, an opponent may rise and ask for clarification.

Time is paused when the judge hears “Point of clarification” and resumes after the point has been restated or clarified.
- 4. Points of Information** A POI is a question or statement directed to the speaker by a member of the opposing team. To offer a point of information, the debater should stand. She or he may or may not say “Point of information” or “POI” or “On that point.” The speaker holding the floor has absolute power over whether or not to answer a POI. If the point is refused, the asker must sit down. If the point is accepted, the asker may ask a short question or make a short comment. The person speaking should respond to the point. Responses can take many different forms. Points of information should be no more than 15 seconds in length. The clock continues to run throughout.

POIs may be offered during the middle three minutes of the four constructive speeches (the 5 minute speeches), but are prohibited during the last two speeches (the 4 minute rebuttal speeches). Giving and taking points of information can help a debater increase their speaker points and debaters are encouraged to accept and ask points. However, doing so excessively can be distracting and detrimental. It is generally recommended that each speaker accept one to three POIs during her or his speech and offer several during the opponents’ speeches, so long as it does not become overly disruptive. Speakers should not interrupt the flow of their speeches to accept a point of information; instead, they should wait until finishing their sentence or idea before accepting. It is ok to wave a POI down or tell a debater that you will not accept her point at this time, but will take it later in the round.

5. **No new arguments are allowed in the rebuttal speeches.** Rebuttal speakers may offer new evidence or examples for arguments that have already been made. If you decide a speaker made a new argument in a Rebuttal speech, cross it off your flow. Carefully check your flow when examining a possible new argument because deciding what is a new argument and what is a new example can be tricky. If a second speaker introduces a new point in her speech, the third speaker should respond. This can often sound like a new line of argumentation but it's not.
6. **Debaters are expected to speak, not read, their speeches.** Judges should not give debaters who read their speeches scores above 25. Reading is not banned.
7. **Whispering during Rounds.** Team members may confer during opponents' speeches and during prep time as long as they do so quietly. Partners may not communicate with their team member who is speaking.
8. **Observers are welcome to watch Rounds.**
9. **Debaters' Attire.** Judges should not comment on students' attire nor factor it into their scoring.
10. **Research.** Debaters may not conduct online research during rounds. They may do so before and between rounds. Debaters may take papers to the podium with them when they speak.
11. **Two person teams.** Judges should score every speech. The debater who speaks twice must give a Rebuttal Speech.

Judges' Responsibilities

1. **Make sure you're in the right room at the right time.** The schedule will have the names of the two teams, the room number and the judge's name. Proceed to your room as soon as the schedule is distributed and begin the round as soon as all of the debaters have arrived.
2. **Fill out the ballot correctly before the debate begins.** Enter your name as judge and the school you represent (if any). Debaters probably won't speak in the order they are listed on the ballot. Make sure you enter an order of speaker number for each debater.
3. **Manage the debate.** The judge has four tasks during the debate:
 - **Keep the debate moving:** The debaters should be ready when you finish filling out the ballot. Ask the teams if they are ready and give the 1st Proposition speaker permission to begin.
 - **Keep time:** Time each speech and try to signal when students have 2 minutes, 1 minute and 30 seconds left. All speakers are given 15 seconds of grace time to finish up. When the grace period is up, stop flowing. If the speaker continues talking, say "time." Students may time themselves, but you should still keep your own time to be sure. The clock stops during Points of Clarification but not during POIs. Do not allow POIs during protected time.
 - **Keep order:** Judges should intervene as little as possible. Do not interrupt or correct a speaker unless absolutely necessary due to rude language or behavior. Do not "rule" on issues or arguments during the debate, even if asked.
 - **Flow:** Note each team's arguments (contentions, points), supporting arguments and examples. Note how each team replies to its opponent's arguments. Note who asks and who answers POIs.

4. **Provide an oral critique.** For each team or each speaker, try to find something praiseworthy, and something they can do to improve. Please do not tell them who won the debate.
5. **Decide which team won and which lost and assign speaker ranks and points.** See Judging Decisions.
6. **Provide a brief written critique.** You may provide comments for each speaker, or each team, or explain your decision in more detail. You may use the back of the ballot if needed. Try to praise where possible, and to offer suggestions for improvement rather than criticism.
7. **Get your ballot back to the tab room on time.**

Bring your ballot back to the tab room in person. Make sure someone reviews the ballot for accuracy before leaving. Do not go to lunch or to the next round without turning in your ballot.

Judge Decision Making

Ask the teams to leave and close the door before you start. You may take about ten minutes to make your decisions and write up your ballot.

Team Outcome Which team won is decided based only on the arguments presented in the Round. Speaking style and quality do not factor in to the Win/Loss decision. Judges must not add up speaker scores to determine which team won the round. Every debate has a motion or topic. The Proposition team either: a. describes a problem and offers a beneficial solution; or b. tries to prove that the topic is more likely true than false. The Opposition team must prove that: a. Proposition's proposed solution is not more beneficial than the status quo (or their Counter Plan) or is counterproductive; or b. the topic is more likely false than true. By the end of the debate you may have a subjective impression as to which team's arguments were more persuasive. Check your impression by reviewing every argument and decide which team won each. Look for dropped arguments first (ones the opposing team did not respond to at all): those are won by the team making the argument. Weigh the importance of each argument. Proposition has to prove at least part of its case is true in order to win. (If Prop loses all of its own arguments, it cannot win.) If Proposition proves at least one of its arguments or proves that its case is more advantageous than Opposition's case, Proposition wins. If Opposition shows that Proposition's case produces more costs than benefits, or that Prop's case is entirely false, the Opposition team wins. Enter the school name of the winning team on the ballot and circle whether they were Proposition or Opposition and give a one or two sentence reason for your choice based upon the arguments you heard.

Individual Speaker Evaluation

- **Rank order the speakers from 1 to 6**, with 1 being the best, and 6 the worst. There can be no ties on speaker ranks.
- **Assign speaker points** based on the rubric below. Points should agree with the rank ordering, in that higher ranked speakers should not have lower points. Speaker points may be tied for speakers with adjacent ranks, e.g. your first and second place speakers may both receive 25 ½ points. Remember that judging is an art, not a science. For example, if a debater's arguments and refutations are 28s and her or his organization and presentation are a 25, you'll have to decide if the speaker should earn a 26 or a 27.

Low Point Wins Sometimes less polished debaters make superior arguments and the judge wants to award lower speaking points to the team that won the debate. This is fine. We ask that the judge talk to Tab about the decision so we can make sure the rubric is being applied correctly.

Assigning Speaker Points — Half points are allowed between 23 ½ & 29 ½

Point Range	Considerations
29 29 ½ 30	<p>This is an extraordinary, verging on perfect, speech. Speaker’s burdens were fulfilled with aplomb. Speaker demonstrates a sophisticated grasp of debate technique and a superior understanding of the issue under discussion.</p> <p><u>Arguments</u> are perfectly clear with exciting and original analysis.</p> <p><u>Refutations</u>— All points are soundly and irreparably smashed.</p> <p><u>Organization</u>— Speech structure is clearly laid out at beginning and followed to the letter—the structure is clearer than your doctoral thesis; speech finishes exactly as the time expires with no second rushed or wasted.</p> <p><u>Presentation</u>—Speech is fluent, showing wide range of vocabulary and idiom; speaker uses wit, tone and volume to appropriately emphasize points.</p> <p><u>POIs</u>—Offered AND answered with precision and wit.</p> <p><i>The Tab Director will ask Judges to explain and justify point scores this high.</i></p>
27 27 ½ 28 28 ½	<p>Strong, consistent performance in all aspects of the debate. Debater fulfilled all or most of the speaker’s burdens but could have been more precise and witty.</p> <p><u>Arguments</u> are solid and clear, containing topic statement, explanation, evidence and impact with clear connection to motion.</p> <p><u>Refutations</u>— All points are addressed clearly.</p> <p><u>Organization</u>—Structure is clear; all or most time is used.</p> <p><u>Presentation</u>— Speech clear and fluent with effective presentation.</p> <p><u>POIs</u>— Offered AND answered at least 1 effectively.</p>
25 25 ½ 26 26 ½	<p>Solid average performance in all aspects of the debate. Debater fulfills most but maybe not all of the speaker’s burdens.</p> <p><u>Arguments</u> are present, containing most elements.</p> <p><u>Refutations</u>—Most points are addressed, although some inadequately or unclearly.</p> <p><u>Organization</u>—Some organization but some parts unclear; speaker uses time pretty effectively.</p> <p><u>Presentation</u>—Speech is clear; average middle school vocabulary used.</p> <p><u>POIs</u>— Offered OR answered at least 1. They could have been more effective.</p>
23 23 ½ 24 24 ½	<p>Performance is lacking in one or more aspects. Some of the speaker’s burdens are unmet. Debater may miss important issues in the debate and may not use all of the time available.</p> <p><u>Arguments</u> are weak and lack explanation, impact, evidence or explicit connection to the motion.</p> <p><u>Refutations</u>—Points are dropped and rebuttals are weak or unclear, not explicitly addressing opposing arguments.</p> <p><u>Organization</u>—Generally disorganized; time is greatly under or over used.</p> <p><u>Presentation</u>—Speech may be difficult to understand; vocabulary may be limited; general lack of effective presentation.</p> <p><u>POIs</u>—May have failed to ask or answer POIs. If they were offered or answered, they weren’t effective.</p>
22 ½ or less	<p>Scores this low should not be assigned unless the debater has done something—foul language, bad behavior—that the judge feels should be brought to the attention of the debater’s coach. <i>Judge should be prepared to explain the situation to the Tab Director, and the Tab Director will decide whether further action should be taken.</i></p>

