

Debate Tips

Every member is evaluated on debate and are scored on the four highest debates. Each debate should include an opening statement, one or two points, and a closing statement. And no member is allowed to debate on a motion more than four times.

Practices and Customs:

- Maker of the motion has rights to the first debate
- Address all remarks through the chair
- Avoid using other member’s names
- Refrain from speaking against one’s own motion
- Read from reports, quotations, etc., only without objection or with permission

Example Debate Topics:

- Finances: funds, budgets, sponsors, grants, school referendum
- Scheduling: Member availability, conflicting schedules, other organizations with same activity
- Location
- Transportation
- Alumni support
- More opportunities: Chapter Program of Activities (POA), SAE for all, leadership
- Surveys & Statistics

Opening Statement Examples:

- *“I am in favor of this motion...”*
- *“I rise in support of this motion...”*
- *“I support this motion...”*

Closing Statement Examples:

- *“Please vote in favor of this motion.”*
- *“Vote yes.”*
- *“Therefore, I encourage all to vote down this motion.”*

Debate Examples:

Example #1: “Our chapter should do this. We need to show our teachers that we appreciate them. It’s a good idea.”

Evaluation: Poor- The opening statement is weak, and there was not an ending statement. Only one reason was given supporting the motion. “It’s a good idea” is a vague, ineffective statement.

Example #2: “I’m in favor of this motion. We need to show our appreciation to the teachers because they have helped us in many ways over the years. Not only do they teach us during the day, but they spend many long hours in the evenings correcting our assignments. I feel that a teacher appreciation day would show how grateful we are to them for their hard work. I urge you all to vote in favor of this motion.”

Evaluation: Average- Used beginning and ending statements. Inadequate number of reasons for adopting the motion. Used personal feeling statements like “I feel” instead of stronger stated statements.

Example #3: “This motion that our chapter sponsor a teacher appreciation day should be adopted for several reasons. Not only do they teach us during the day, but they spend time after school preparing for their classes and correcting our assignments. In addition, many of the teachers are coaches and advisors of clubs, which demand a great deal of their time. Teacher appreciation day would show how grateful we are to them for their hard work. Our school has never held a teacher appreciation day. For these reasons, I hope the motion will be adopted.”

Evaluation: Good- Used beginning and ending statements. Stated several reasons for voting in favor of the motion that were presented in a logical sequence.

Example #4: I encourage every member to vote in favor of this motion that our chapter sponsor a teacher appreciation day for the following reasons: First, not only do they teach us during the day, but many spend long hours after school preparing for their classes and correcting our assignments. Second, many teachers put in extra time as coaches and as advisors to clubs. We all know that our advisor has devoted many hours after school and on Saturdays for chapter activities. For the reasons I have just outlined, our chapter should take the lead and sponsor a teacher appreciation day. Let’s all get behind the motion and adopt it. Vote **YES!**

Evaluation: Excellent- Used beginning and ending statements. Stated at least two reasons for supporting the motion and arguments clearly outlined and easy to follow.