

THE DEBATE KIT NEGATIVE TEAM STRATEGY

DON'T KNOW WHERE TO GET STARTED?
THIS PACKET WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH
SEVERAL IDEAS YOU'LL WANT TO CONSIDER
AS YOU BUILD YOUR NEGATIVE POSITION.



Yo, I'm Jill!

I live on macha green tea lattes + nerdy lesson planning sessions.

I'm on a mission to flip the script on how we teach today's writers, so...

I provide secondary ELA teachers with the **resources + mindset** they need to make the **writing process** more **relevant + applicable** for today's learners and tomorrow's leaders.

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jill@jillpavich.com



facebook.com/jillbpavich



@jillpavich



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NEGATIVE POSITION

PREPARING TO DEBATE

1 The FIRST STEP in your position as the Negative Team is to analyze the **PROPOSITION** proposed by the Affirmative Team, since this *statement is open to interpretation by both teams*. This will prove beneficial because: you may choose to challenge the **TOPICALITY**, or the intent, of the debate in the beginning of the argument, or you may challenge the opposing team for presenting information unrelated to the proposition later in the argument. o

- For example, if the affirmative team proposes that the federal government should provide comprehensive health care for all U.S. citizens and speaks of free preventative medical services as a means of doing so, the negative team might challenge that preventative care is not necessarily “comprehensive” care. In doing so, you are challenging the intent of the proposition. To ensure your understanding of the proposition, its nature, and its *limitations*, you must also analyze the **TERMS** as defined by the affirmative team.

2 STEP TWO involves **LISTENING** to the Affirmative Team’s establishment of **PRIMA FACIE** in their First Constructive, or *the minimal requirement they must to present in support of the proposition*, and **looking for holes, limits, or weaknesses** in proof and logic.

[TIP] Prima facie is Latin for “at first sight.” So in another words, *their argument, at first sight, must hold up*. By establishing a solid case at the start, they ensure that a debate

3 will take place, so if you can demonstrate that the Affirmative **FAILS TO MEET THE BURDEN OF PROOF**, you can win the exchange almost immediately. Even if the burden of proof is established by the affirmative team, you **MUST** still seek out weaknesses in proof and logic as you prepare for your first speech, which is based upon the opposing team’s allegations of the problem and their plan to solve it.

NEGATIVE POSITION

continued

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STEP THREE involves preparing your **REFUTATIONS**, or your *response to the opposition*, which seeks to attack and undermine or minimize their arguments. As the Affirmative Team begins with their first speech, they are required to present an overview of their *claims* and a glimpse at their plan to purport change.

The *claims* they present are called **STOCK ISSUES**, so your job is to analyze these claims and **PAIR UP RESEARCH** you've found which can **REFUTE** these claims.

As you begin your research, therefore, **ANTICIPATE** how the affirmative might **VIEW** the current system with regard to your topic and what you think they **MIGHT PROPOSE** as a solution to the problem that they allege the current system is causing.

Review the stock issues/claims (see next page) that your opposition will present and begin to consider the strategies for refuting each. Organize your research to respond to these claims!!!!

STOCK ISSUES *continued*


HARM the problem, according to AFF

- To address *harm*, the Affirmative Team will be considering the following questions:
 - Is there a problem caused by the present system that merits the attention of policymakers?
 - What problem(s) is the current system causing?
 - How is the present system harming society?
 - Who/what is being harmed and why?

SIGNIFICANCE the extent of the problem

- To address *significance*, the Affirmative Team will be considering the following questions:
 - Is the problem caused by the current system important enough to dedicate the time and energy to? Is it worth the effort?
 - To what extent is it causing hurt? How “big” of a problem is it?
- **Two ways** they will attempt to EXPOSE the SIGNIFICANCE of the harm:
 - *Quantitative Evidence*
 - SOCIAL harms resulting from the present system
 - *i.e. current system is inhibiting citizens' right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*
 - Violation of core VALUES
 - Threatens fundamental values of HUMAN DECENCY
 - *i.e. the death penalty deliberately takes the life of a human being*
 - *Qualitative Evidence*
 - NUMERICAL data (empirical data/statistics) that reveals any of the following:
 - the presence of a large number of examples involving the harm nationwide
 - *i.e. a multitude of deaths per year as a result of the problem paired with trend data indicating that this number is on the rise*
 - a high level of cases involving harm
 - *i.e. current system is causing a spike in unemployment rate*
 - a drop of some sort as a result of the harm
 - *i.e. current system is causing a drop in participation percentages*

STOCK ISSUES *continued*

INHERENCY  the current system is the (inseparable) source of harm

- With this claim, the AFF Team's goal is to prove that the causes of the problem cannot be eliminated without the acceptance of the new proposition/overhaul of present system.
- To address *inherency*, the Affirmative Team will be considering the following questions:
 - Is the problem caused by the current system built into the structure itself? Does the problem lie within?
 - Is the problem an essential/natural part of the current system?
 - Can you prove that removing the current system will remove the harm?
 - Does the harm exist BECAUSE of the system?
 - Can you prove that the harm is UNIQUE to the system itself? (i.e. if it is replaced, will the harm go away?)
 - Does the present system naturally cause inefficiency, duplication, waste, and/or inertia merely because it exists?

SOLVENCY  ability of the AFF's plan to solve the problem

- With this claim, the AFF Team's goal is to prove that the installation of the proposition will solve the problem that the current system is causing.
- To address solvency, the Affirmative Team will be considering the following questions:
 - Will the proposition fix the problem? How? How can you prove this?
- **Strategies for illustrating solvency:**
 - The AFF Team will attempt to Reveal the WORKABILITY of the plan
 - Compare the proposed plan to other, similar plans that have worked in the past; this comparison is called an ANALOGY.
 - Compare to similar, smaller scale plans that worked, say, at the local/state level to show likelihood of same plan succeeding at national level
 - Compare to other countries who have used similar plans to their benefit
 - Compare to pilot programs that have been tested
 - Compare to national programs that have existed but were ignored, put off, or repealed
 - The AFF Team will attempt to reveal that CHANGES IN ATTITUDE will increase effect of plan
 - The AFF Team believes that sometimes people keep the present system because they know it benefits them
 - *i.e. poor people remain poor because there are others who benefit from charging high prices, paying employees below minimum wage, denying credit to blighted areas, etc.*
 - They will attempt to provide the INCENTIVES for those who adopt the new system, thus changing their attitude about the old one

STOCK ISSUES *continued*

ADVANTAGES benefits that accompany change

- With this claim, the AFF Team's goal is to highlight the benefits that go along with the acceptance of the proposition for change to the present system.
- To address solvency, the Affirmative Team will be considering the following questions:
 - Who will benefit from the new plan? Maximize your reach!
 - What perks will result from the installation of the new plan?
 - How will the country progress as a whole?
 - How do these advantages compare to the advantages of the present system? How can you posit these advantages as "better" than that of the status quo?
 - How will the new plan enhance the individual citizen, the citizen's family/work life, the community in which the citizen lives,
 - How will the new plan simplify the procedures the citizen currently goes through regarding the topic?
 - Do the advantages of the new plan outweigh the disadvantages? How can you prove this?

NEGATIVE POSITION

PREPARING TO DEBATE

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STEP FOUR consists of checking the **STRENGTH** of your **RESEARCH** and the power that lies in your refutations as a result. As you refute the claims listed above, you **MUST** accompany **EACH** with **PROOF**, *which consists of evidence and sound, logical reasoning*.

- Questions to consider when evaluating sources for inclusion in your argument:
 - Does this information directly relate to my position on the topic?
 - Is the information contradictory in any way to my point?
 - Where might I insert this information to make my point most effectively? How can I use it to my advantage?
 - Which claim(s) could this information refute? Would it work best in arguing against the alleged harms or would it serve a purpose in denying the new plan?
 - Is the source reliable? Does his/her/their opinion “matter” when it comes to your topic? (i.e. a literature professor’s opinion in the medical field might hold less pull than a doctor’s...know who you are seeking the information).
 - Could the source be challenged by my opposition in terms of bias?
 - i.e. a biased source is likely to provide biased information in favor of their opinion as opposed to a neutral party...
 - the NRA clearly has one-sided views regarding gun control, so this source could easily be challenged by the opposition!
 - What proof can I anticipate that the Affirmative Team might use? How can I challenge their proof with my own?
 - Use **RAVEN** to help you:
 - **R** – reputation of source
 - **A** – source’s ability to observe the issue
 - **V** – vested interest of source
 - **E** – expertise of source
 - **N** – neutrality (or lack thereof) of source