

Urban Debate League ft. Fyodor Dostoyevsky:  
**Philosophies of Punishment**  
*with a mild focus on being perceptually dominant and comfortable*



“Raskolnikov felt sick, and he [knew it was because he was incurring guilt]...”--The Punitive Goats

“Are you gonna quote me again in this curriculum?”--Chris Taylor

“I don’t think [Miles] has ever done a wrong thing in his life.”--Xavier Satellite

1. Week One: Oct. 12 - 16

a. Tournament Review (**20 minutes**)

i. Creamsicle/Poopsicle

1. Have everyone say one thing they liked about their tournament experience and one thing they did not. (Try and keep it focused on things relevant to actually debating; I think we know more or less what needs fixing logistically.)

- a. Afterwards, group together bad things-- “I didn’t really know how to respond to this argument,” “this motion didn’t make sense,” “I couldn’t come up with arguments,” etc. and...

- i. Preliminarily address these concerns, offering advice and letting experienced debaters offer advice
  1. Help them figure out ways to respond to arguments that they were concerned about.
  2. If they were stumped on a motion, direct them to arguments they could have made. Show them how to break down a motion
- ii. Make note of it for your future coaching--hone the weak spots

- ii. Have them judge the judges
      - 1. What feedback was particularly helpful? What wasn't? What would they like to be hearing from judges that would help them improve as debaters?
  - b. Mini lecture about philosophies of punishment (**10 minutes**)
    - i. Explain the following two things briefly--preferably on white board
    - ii. [Five philosophies of punishment](#)
      - 1. Retributive
        - a. "You did a bad thing and deserve to have a bad thing happen to you"
      - 2. Incapacitative
        - a. "You did a bad thing and are likely to do a bad thing in the future so we need to keep you from harming innocent people"
      - 3. Deterrence
        - a. "You don't want bad things to happen to you so we will do bad things to some people to deter everyone else from doing it"
      - 4. Rehabilitative
        - a. "We want to make you less likely to do bad things in the future"
    - iii. Two frameworks for assessing the individual's role and moral deserts
      - 1. Individual agency centered
        - a. You chose to do the wrong thing
      - 2. Environment centered
        - a. You were largely influenced by your environment to do the wrong thing
  - c. Discussion about the above (**20 minutes**)
    - i. Group Activity: Have everyone go around the room and pick their preferred philosophy of punishment. They should give 1 argument for the one they've chosen.
      - 1. After a person presents their argument. Ask the students if anyone strongly disagrees with the argument and ask that student to refute the argument presented.
    - ii. Discussion:
      - 1. Trade-offs
      - 2. Should there only be 1 purpose of punishment/combination/etc.
      - 3. Think about how these philosophies play out in the real world?
        - a. What philosophy of punishment does the US criminal justice system use?
2. Week Two: October 19 - 23→ Speaking Drills
  - a. For all of these activities, get in groups as small as possible--split class amongst coaches. If you have extraordinarily strong varsities, consider making them lead a group.

- b. Emphasize briefly the importance of sounding clear and confident and like you know what you're doing. "Fake it till you make it."
- c. Pen-in-mouth **(15 minutes)**
  - i. Have the students put a pen or pencil or some other object in their mouth, and have them recite **for clarity**:
    1. Sally sells seashells by the seashore
    2. Betty Botta bought some butter;
 

"But," said she, "the butter's bitter!  
If I put it in my batter  
It will make my batter bitter.  
But a bit o' better butter  
Will but make my batter better."  
Then she bought a bit o' better  
Better than the bitter butter,  
Made her bitter batter better.  
So 'twas better Betty Botta  
Bought a bit o' better butter.
- d. Reading the dictionary **(15 minutes)**
  - i. Grab a dictionary or some similarly boring text and have them read at random from it, being as clear, emphatic, and engaging as possible.
- e. Impromptu speeches **(15 minutes)**
  - i. Give each student 2 minutes to prepare a 3 minute speech on one of the philosophies of punishment. Emphasize that this speech should be *structured*, so they will have to write tag-lines and fill in the actual wording on the fly.
- f. Argument perfection **(rest of time)**
  - i. Give the students five minutes to thoroughly map out and practice delivering one argument in favor of a philosophy of punishment.
  - ii. Then, they will have to deliver the argument flawlessly. If they use a filler word--um, like, uh, etc.--or stumble, or anything else, they have to start over again.

Week Three: October 23-30→ Practice Round

Motion:

1. THW sanction and encourage the death penalty for high level drug dealers.

Info Slide:

High Level Drug Dealers: managing many low level drug dealers using various intermediaries