**Urban Debate League**

September Curriculum (Education)

1. **Week One**
   1. Introductions (10 minutes)
      1. If you are going into your school for the first time, spend a few minutes introducing yourselves. Ask the students their names, grades, and why they want to participate in debate.
      2. Make sure to figure out the balance of students who did and did not participate in debate last year. Sometimes it can be helpful to split up the sessions into beginners and non-beginners.
   2. Discuss Upcoming Tournaments (Sunday, October 13)
      1. Our first tournament will be in mid-October. It will focus on education, which we will discuss in September and October.
      2. Spend a few minutes describing the tournaments. Make sure to tell students that they are:
         1. Not a huge time commitment
         2. Fun
         3. A great learning experience, especially for first-time debaters

Answer any questions the students have, but if a student asks a tournament-related question you cannot answer, email the question to Erin at [erin.cofrancesco@yale.edu](mailto:erin.cofrancesco@yale.edu) or Lea at [lea.winter@yale.edu](mailto:lea.winter@yale.edu).

1. Education (10 minutes)
   1. Hold a discussion with the students about education as a general content area. What do they think the goals of the American educational system should be? Is it achieving these goals? What does it need to work on? What are the challenges facing American high school students, and what do they think we could do differently to overcome those challenges?
   2. Make sure to emphasize that all of these questions are very relevant in debate. Debates offer a mix of real-world facts and knowledge as well as moral and ethical questions. Almost every single debate they have will feature a mix of these types of arguments.
2. Explain Parliamentary Debate Format (20 minutes)
   1. Parliamentary debate features two teams: a Government (Gov) team and an Opposition (Opp) team, each of which has two members. Each team will compete against a different team during every “round” (debate) of the tournament.
   2. The teams debate a new “resolution” every round. Resolutions are phrased as “this House believes” or “this House would” statements (e.g. “This House would legalize assisted suicide” or “This House believes democracy should be spread by force”)
   3. On each team, there is a leader (the Prime Minister on Gov and the Leader of the Opposition on Opp) and a member (the Member of Government and the Member of the Opposition). The leader delivers the opening and closing speeches for his or her team and the member delivers the middle speech. We’ll teach more about each individual speech in the weeks to come.
   4. Basic argumentation:
      1. A good argument MUST have three parts:
         1. Claim – what argument are you trying to make?
         2. Warrant – why should the judge believe your argument is true?
         3. Impact – why should the judge believe your argument is important?
      2. Ask them to complete a few arguments on their own.
      3. We’ll learn more about coming up with good claims, warrants, and impacts in future weeks as well.
3. Walk Through a Round (30 minutes)
   1. Discuss Content Area: School Uniforms
      1. We’ll be walking students through a round on the resolution: This House believes that all American public high schools should require students to wear school uniforms.
   2. This is also a good point at which to briefly discuss flowing. We’ll go more in-depth about flowing soon, but when you’re writing on the board to illustrate each speech’s arguments, write them in the same way students should be flowing them in a round.
   3. Prime Minister Constructive (PMC): 4 minutes
      1. Outline your case by making 2 to 3 major arguments to support the resolution.
         1. Ask students to brainstorm what arguments they could use to support the resolution, and make sure that you get the three parts of each argument.
         2. Example:
            1. Claim: School uniforms help promote equality among students within a school
            2. Warrant: Because everybody has to wear the same clothes, clothing operates as less of a status symbol (i.e. rich kids can’t wear really nice clothes to school).
            3. Impact: This makes students feel more comfortable in their school environment because it’s not immediately obvious how much money their parents have by looking at what they are wearing. 🡪 when kids are more comfortable it’s easier for them to learn
   4. Leader of the Opposition Constructive (LOC): 5 minutes
      1. Present your case of 2 to 3 arguments opposing the resolution, then refute the arguments the Gov team made.
         1. Ask students to brainstorm what arguments they could use to oppose the resolution, and make sure that you get the three parts of each argument.
         2. Example:
            1. Claim: Clothing choice promotes freedom of expression.
            2. Warrant: Kids need a way to express themselves. Allowing them to wear clothing that sends a certain message is a way of doing so.
            3. Impact: (A) Kids will feel that their identity is valued and given an outlet. (B) In a democracy, it’s important that people feel comfortable expressing their ideas because it leads to better societal discourse. Allowing kids to do so from a young age better prepares them for life in a democracy.
         3. Refute the arguments made in the PMC
            1. Ask students how they would respond to the claim that “School uniforms help promote equality among students.”
   5. Member of Government Constructive (MG): 5 minutes
      1. Refute the arguments made in the LOC and make new arguments or summarize the arguments your partner made.
         1. Ask students how they would respond to the claim that “Clothing choice promotes freedom of expression
      2. How can they respond to other arguments that were brought up? (Both those new in the LOC and the responses to PMC arguments).
   6. Member of the Opposition Constructive (MO): 5 minutes
      1. Refute any new points the MG made and present new arguments or summarize the arguments your partner made.
   7. Leader of the Opposition Rebuttal (LOR): 2 minutes
      1. Emphasize your team’s strongest points and explain why you should win the debate by comparing your points to your opponent’s points. You can present new examples in this speech but you cannot make new arguments.
   8. Prime Minister Rebuttal (PMR): 3 minutes
      1. Emphasize your team’s strongest points and explain why you should win the debate by comparing your points to your opponent’s points. You can present new examples in this speech but you cannot make new arguments.