**TOP TIPS FOR DEBATING**

* Setting up a formal debate can take time
* Consider: Has everyone made a contribution
* Do you want individuals to speak or will you have students working in a small team with a main speaker.
* Where will the students record their findings as this will be important in developing their viewpoint.
* Does the debate need to be simple hands up to speak debate or do you have time to develop the students skills further with an Affirmation and Negative Team

**If you have time for a proper debate, consider some of the**

**following points:-**

1. Get the motion right. The motion of the debate can determine just how successful the activity is going to be. The best motions are those that are straightforward and accessible by all students.

2. Give them a helping hand. Although one of the perks of debating is that it is a student-led activity most students benefit from having a helping hand. During the first few debates, you may want to give them ideas of the arguments they can use so that they can focus more on the structure and timings of their speech.

3. Rotate the roles. It can be good to assign the roles to students for some debates, rather than them choosing it. This can give the shy students a nudge to speak when they wouldn’t normally choose to do so.

4. Warm-up activities are a good place to start Games which involve students to practice developing their speaking and listening skills are useful before preparing for a debate. My personal favourite is getting them to count from 1 – 100 and giving them different moods in which they have to count in.

5. Positive reinforcement in key Confidence is very important for every student, and their first experience of debating may be quite a challenge. Continued....Using some formal rules can be a big help in making sure the experience is a good one: e.g. • When the chair invites someone up to speak there is a round of applause • When a speaker has finished there is a round of applause • Have set things which the audience are allowed to say during a debate – for example “hear, hear” if they like a point, or “shame” if they don’t. At first this will seem very strange and students may be self conscious but over time it will be normalised and allows the audience to be actively involved but not able to say anything upsetting.

**Debating Templates**

**Affirmation Team Template**

* **Introduction:**
* Good afternoon Mr/Madam Chairman, Ladies and Gentleman
* The topic for our debate is “That.....
* **Definition**
* We define the topic as (Explain what the topic means. Define key or important words in the topic. You could use a dictionary to help. Make sure this topic is clearly explained in a sentence or two.)
* We the affirmation team believe that this statement is true.
* **Arguments**
* I am going to discuss.... points
* My first point is (Write down your first point/argument.)
* This is because/the reason for this is (Explain the reason that supports your point.)
* Now this is my second point (Write down your second point.)
* This is because (Write down a reason that supports you second point/argument.)
* If you have more points continue to list them
* **Ending**

So Mr/Madam chairman, Ladies and Gentleman, in conclusion (finish your debate which sums up what your team believes. You can use humour or a quote or you may say thank you to finish.)

**Negative Speaker Template**

**Introduction:**

Good afternoon Mr/Madam Chairman, Ladies and Gentleman

The topic for our debate is “That.....

We disagree with the affirmation team.

**Rebuttal**

Today as the first speaker of the negative team, I will be talking to you about (Write down the main heading/s of the point/s you will be talking about.)

The first speaker of the affirmation team has tried to tell you (During the debate you will write down what the opposition has said)

This is wrong because (During the debate you will write a reason why that point in wrong.)

S/he also said (Write down another point that was made.)

This is wrong because (During the debate you will write a reason why that point in wrong.)

**Arguments**

I will be discussing.... points

My first point is (Write down your first point/argument.)

This is because/the reason for this is (Explain the reason that supports your point.)

Now this is my second point (Write down your second point.)

This is because (Write down a reason that supports you second point/argument.)

If you have more points continue to list them

**Ending**

So Mr/Madam chairman, Ladies and Gentleman, in conclusion (finish your debate which sums up what your team believes. You can use humour or a quote or you may say thank you to finish.