

BDC's "Winter Invitational" Debate Event

Welcome to the **BDC Winter Invitational** (Feb. 19th, 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM Eastern). This will be a speech and debate contest for students, (grades 4-6). We believe that debate is a powerful vehicle for delivering a deeper learning experience to our students. We at the Bluegrass Debate Coalition (BDC), value diversity, equality, and inclusion and we demonstrate our values through our relationships with communities, schools, and partner organizations. We strongly desire to provide a meaningful and valuable learning opportunity for everyone participating who participates in our programs and events. Respect is of paramount importance. When we show respect for others it speaks volumes on how we see ourselves and our relevance to our community and our relationship to the world around us. The BDC is a non-profit organization run by the University of Kentucky.

Topic: ***On balance, genetically modified (GMO) food is desirable.***

This event utilizes a modified version of Public Forum Debate. Each student presents an argument, refutes an argument, asks/answers some questions, and participates in a "grand crossfire," which concludes the debate. Shortly after the debate, a panel of judges will provide an oral assessment of the debaters' performance. Prior to that, participants will write self-assessments in a journal, which are to be turned in to tournament staff and will be returned to the students via their parent or teacher (or both).

We at the BDC offer an eight-week learning program involving six weeks of classes, two weeks of workshops, followed by a one-day event (online) to celebrate our learning and to demonstrate our skills. We employ an apprenticeship model for teaching students by inviting older and more experienced students to help mentor and judge the younger, less experienced students. We invite adults to also mentor, judge, and supervise the process.

"Thank you," to those volunteering your time and energy to this worthy cause – we are deeply appreciative of your support, and we hope we can count on you to volunteer again.

Guiding Principles of the Event:

Three Burdens in Debate: Proof, refutation, and rejoinder.

https://debate.uvm.edu/dcpdf/Gary_Rybold_Speaking_Listening_Understanding_2006.pdf (pp 12-14)

To better understand these terms, please refer to Dr. Rybold's textbook. Here are my (Bill Eddy) comments:

1. **Proof:** Students are expected to have researched their arguments and ideas. Please try not to be overly critical about how the student cites their sources. If a student is explaining ideas using how and why (using "because") and not just 'what' GMOs do, then that student should be credited with having met their proof burden.
2. **Rebuttal:** Students are expected to disagree with an argument made by their opponent. This should be well-organized, contain proof (as above), and be spoken with kindness and respect. ex. *They said..., we say..., because..., and therefore...*
3. **Rejoinder:** At BDC we will do our best to add more formalized opportunities for rejoinders in the future. As for now, we ask that debaters seek to accomplish this through their questions and answers, and in particular during the "grand crossfire".

Guiding Principles of the Event: Continued...

Three Artistic Proofs for Persuasion (Aristotle): Logos, Pathos, and Ethos.

<http://www.atlas101.ca/pm/concepts/logos-ethos-and-pathos/> (Rhetorical Appeals, Aristotle)

1. **Logos:** The speech is expected to last no more than 90 sec (2 min max). The student is providing an introduction, one argument, and a simple conclusion. Was the speech organized? Could you understand their explanations? Does their speech make sense? Please give positive encouragement about this.
2. **Pathos:** Students were asked to engage the listener by speaking in a convincing manner. Did the speaker look and sound like they were concerned about the topic? Did they have passion and/or enthusiasm in their speaking mannerisms?
3. **Ethos:** Students are expected to speak to you and not just read to you – there is a difference. Can you tell? Are they looking into the camera (or at least in its direction)? They are encouraged to speak from limited notes, but a manuscript is allowed. Did they speak with confidence (facial expressions, body posture, smooth gestures)? Did they use evidence that sounded to you like a strong source? There are many things a speaker can do to gain credibility in your eyes!

Making the Decision:

1. **Ranking the Speakers:** Each speaker is to be ranked relative to the others (1-4).
2. **Rating the Speakers:** Each speaker is given “speaker points” indicating how well they spoke and how well they debated. Please use the “principles” to help guide your decision. Rating: 1-30 (preferably = 24-30 & No ties! .5 = a tie breaker!)
 - a. 29.5 to 30 = outstanding, nearly perfect!
 - b. 28.5 to 29 = excellent
 - c. 27.5 to 28 = above average
 - d. 26.0 to 27 = average(Anything lower? = please check with us before giving a “below average” score.)
3. **Choosing the Winning Side:** This decision is independent of how they spoke. Which team was most effective in presenting/defending their side? Perhaps you may consider the overall impact of one side vs the other? We ask you NOT to choose the side that you personally agree with. Which team did the better debating? You get to decide – no ties are allowed. **Please be fair-minded!!!**

The Modified PF Debate Format: Coin Flip for *Their Side* or *Speaking First/Second*.

1. **Arguments:** Speaker 1 (Team A), presents one argument with proof (Up to 2 min). Speakers from Team B: Each asks one question; related to the argument. Speaker 1 (Team A) answers each question – one at a time (2 total).
[Process Repeats: Team A, then Team B, back to A, ends with B.]

Preparation for Rebuttal = 5 minutes total (both teams prep simultaneously).

2. **Rebuttals:** Speaker 1 (Team A), Refutes one argument using proof (Up to 2 min). The speakers from Team B, each asks one question; related to the rebuttals. Speaker 1 (Team A) answers each question – one at a time (2 total).
[Process Repeats: Team A, then Team B, back to A, ends with B.]
3. **Grand Crossfire:** Both teams argue in the grand crossfire style (3 min).