



# 10 TOP TIPS FOR DEBATING

## Strengthen your debating skills by following our 10 top tips.

- 1** Debating is a team game – make sure you listen carefully to your teammates and help them to take part.
- 2** Remember to give your argument a clear structure. A good way of doing this is to think 'PEEL' (see box-out, below).
- 3** Think about what your opponent might say and plan your team's responses in advance.
- 4** Before you start your speech, take a deep breath and look at your audience.
- 5** How well you listen is just as important as how well you speak. Make sure you listen carefully to the other team and think about how to respond to their arguments.
- 6** The best debaters work hard to improve after every debate. Once you've spoken, spend time with your team reflecting on what you did well, and what you could do better.
- 7** To win a debate, you have to take other people's ideas seriously. Don't dismiss others as silly – make sure you understand why they have that belief, and how they are arguing for it.
- 8** A good speech has a beginning, a middle and an end. Spend time with your team thinking about how you will introduce and conclude your speech.
- 9** An example is only ever as good as the explanation it comes with. Whenever you have an example for your side, make sure you explain how it supports your argument.
- 10** You will learn lots of things through debating – but most of all, it's a great game! Both winning and losing can be fun, as long as you have the right attitude. Be a positive member of your team – support others and celebrate everyone's successes.

## How to structure your arguments with PEEL

**Good arguments have a clear structure. It can help to plan your arguments by thinking 'PEEL'**

- **Point** – a short statement or headline that makes it clear what your argument is about.
- **Explanation** – an explanation of why the Point is true, and why it is important.
- **Evidence or example** – a statistic or story that illustrates the point and makes it easier for the audience to understand.
- **Link** – a connection back to the Point to bring everything together.

**For example:**

**P** We should ban homework – because it stops young people having fun.

**E** Childhood is meant to be a time to have fun and play about, as well as learning. Homework makes us spend all of our time outside of school working, just like in school, so we don't have time to play.

**E** For example, this week I wanted to go and play football, but I had too much homework, so I couldn't.

**L** So, because children are meant to have fun, and homework gets in the way, we should ban homework.