

Intermediate Rebuttal

A. Goal of the lesson

Debaters should understand the importance of engagement with opponents arguments and basic rebuttal strategies.

B. Activities

Discussion (10min.)

Present motion and basic arguments (one or two) for both proposition and opposition to your debaters. Make sure arguments on both sides are equally valid and relevant and do not clash directly. Then ask debaters which side won the debate. Moderate the discussion. At the end they should recognize that for debate to be measured and judged properly, they also need teams' reactions to the arguments of their opponents.

Lecture (20 min.)

Continue by explaining the importance of rebuttal for debate to have sense and also by its strategical importance (if you will not react to arguments of the opponent properly, you are in danger of losing any debate).

For types of rebuttal please read Quinn, S. 2005. Debating. pg. 10 – 20.

Exercise (15 min.)

Debaters and trainer are seated in a circle. The trainer will present a motion and a basic argument with an explanation. Debater to his/her right hand will try to refute the argument. Next debater will try to rebuild the argument and so on. Trainer moderates the exercise.

C. Preparation

Prepare motion for discussion part of the session and possible arguments for the motion beforehand. Prepare easy rebuttals of those arguments.

D. Hints

When picking the motion and arguments for exercises, try to find such arguments which can be refuted and rebuilt several times. Debaters will then learn that arguments can be developed under pressure of rebuttal, and that to rebuild doesn't mean to repeat argument again.

E. Verification

When recapping, give debaters rebuttals and ask them to identify which type of rebuttal it is

Take at least five minutes to sum up the lesson and verify that the students have internalised the information presented. Here is a list of potential questions you could use, but feel free to think of your own:

- What do you consider to be the most interesting/useful piece of information you got from this lesson?
- What would be the goal you set for your next debate to put this knowledge to use?
- If you pay more attention to applying the knowledge you got from this lecture, what will be different in your future debates?

For a trainer, it is also useful to think back to the lesson and consider aspects that could improve the quality of your future training. Here you can find a set of questions that could help you do that:

- Which practice (exercise/discussion/etc) turned out to be the most useful to fulfil the goal of the lesson?
- What was the problem that occurred in this lesson? How could this be avoided in the future?
- Was I able to avoid mistakes that have happened previously?

