

## Strategy

### A. Goal of the lesson

The goal of this lesson is to introduce students to how teams can structure both individual speeches and have set out team goals of what they seek to achieve in debates via strategy. By the end of this lesson students should be made more aware of the likely strategical mistakes and improvements that they can make both individually and as a team.

### B. Activities

#### Lecture (25 minutes)

Explain what strategy is.

- That is, an individual speech has strategy in the sense that a speaker has a limited time frame within which he can present both his rebuttal and his constructive material. Meaning, there is some sort of prioritization of issues he will have to face in order to fit into whatever the time limit of the required format is.
- Meanwhile, on a team scale, a side may choose during preparation time to purposefully focus on a set of issues that they feel are most important. In this case, strategy evolves into other areas, both content and style, in that you must prove why your chosen strategy(issues) are the most important and that your prioritization is good.
- Explain that there are nuances to strategy, that is, in WSDC format raising POIs to bring up points that are strategically important if an opponent fails to engage with your material or simply trying to once again remind the adjudication panel of what you see as the key issues in the debate.
- Explain what are the nuances of strategy, for example, explaining how in some cases prolonged rebuttal of a weak argument is strategically bad as it burns away time that you could use to potentially expand your own arguments. On the same note, strategically simply repeating points you agreed to push forward is also bad strategy, a good team will analyze how these points can link up with others and be elaborated.
- A convenient way to introduce all of these would be by choosing a specific motion and going through each part of building a case, whilst choosing what are the likely rebuttals a team will face and how they will prioritize their further speeches.

#### Exercise (25 min)

Set a motion for students to analyze and build a basic case. Have some of them build proposition, some build opposition case then analyze together what strategies both teams should take and what would be correct.

### C. Preparation

Watch: Debates of high quality tournaments to see how great debaters structure and specify key issues in debates.

Think of examples of bad debates you have judged in the past, where bad strategy meant that generally teams were not only unengaging but also plainly weak in their prioritization of issues.

Read: Simon Quinn “Debating in the World Schools Style: A Guide” p.65- 86 (The strategy of case development)

You can watch these uploaded workshops on Strategy. Although all of them are done with regards to British Parliamentary style most things they are talking about are inherent to any format of debate and can be easily applied in World Schools context.

- [Lecture by Matt Hazell](#)
- [Lecture by Michael Shapira](#)
- [Workshop by Sella Nevo](#)
- [Lecture by Ashish Kumar](#)

#### **D. Hints**

Encourage students to think for themselves, constantly ask how would they set up the debate or interpret certain parts of speeches.

Give feedback as to how teams would likely agree on one strategy – explain that teamwork is key, namely, 3 different strategies that are all good will likely do worse because of inconsistency than 1 weaker strategy that all students wish to run.

During the lecture make sure that students note how important it is to grasp the main problem a motion is trying to fix, think of actors and possible burdens and to tie arguments back to the essential problem and burdens.

#### **E. Verification**

To conclude the training, you can ask your students the following questions:

- What do we mean by strategy in debates and why is it important to grasp this concept?
- What are different things we can think of/do/use during our strategy building?
- Are there any bad decisions we can make during our strategy building?

As a trainer, you should be interested in these questions for your next trainings:

- What kind of impression about debates students take from the lesson? Why is it a positive/negative one?
- What should every trainer do to learn from the lesson for the future?
- What activity/example/discussion had the students engage most?

What was the biggest problem during the lesson? What can be done to prevent it in the future?

