

Essential Debate Terms and Definitions

Affirmative (Aff):

The side that supports the resolution and argues in its favor.

Negative (Neg):

The side that opposes the resolution and argues against it.

Resolution:

The statement or topic that is being debated.

Contention:

A main argument or claim presented by a debater.

Rebuttal:

A response to an opponent's argument, aiming to weaken or refute it.

Cross-Examination (CX):

A period where debaters ask each other questions to expose weaknesses.

Constructive Speech:

The initial speech where debaters lay out their main arguments.

Flowing:

The method of taking notes during a debate to track arguments and responses.

Turn:

Using an opponent's argument to support your own side.

Drop:

Failing to address or respond to an argument made by the opponent.

Impact:

The significance or consequence of an argument.

Framework:

The lens or set of criteria used to evaluate the debate.

Voting Issues:

Key points that a debater emphasizes as reasons to win the debate.

Prep Time:

Time allotted to each team to prepare between speeches.

Spread:

Talking very fast in order to present more arguments within time limits.

Tagline:

A short summary of the argument that introduces a contention.

Evidence:

Facts, quotes, or data used to support an argument.

Burden of Proof:

The obligation to prove one's assertion in the debate.

Standard:

A method or criteria to weigh impacts or judge arguments.

Concede:

To admit that an opponent's argument is valid or to not respond to it.