

GAMES FOR PAINS

BY BILL DAVIS

It's March, and the Young Lions (read "bored debaters") are nuttin' but trouble in the back of the room. "Oh no, ma'am, our files are done." "Why should I? I'm not goin' out to any more tournaments!"

Here are some ideas to get them doing something productive and even maybe fun. I have written these for policy debate, but all are easily adaptable to L/D.

1. Dice debate

Materials needed--one pair of dice, loaded if you like.

Debater's affirmative case pre-flowed.

The dice will determine a 1NC, delivered by a mythical debater. On our squad, his name is Chuck. (Chuck belongs to us. You have to come up with your own. How about Princess Die? Andrew Dice Clay?) You roll the dice, and Chuck gives an argument according to the key below. He gives an overview, an underview, and an argument against each point of the 1AC. The debater flows it.

2--Chuck insults the judge. She slaps him.

3--Chuck says something incomprehensible. The judge vigorously nods her head and flows it.

4--Chuck runs T. You figure out what he said.

5--Chuck runs a nuke war d/a shell. You determine which one is appropriate.

6--Chuck runs an excellent solvency argument. You determine what it is.

7--Chuck drops it.

8--Chuck reads a card directly denying your point, from the same source you quoted.

9--Chuck reads a card that states your source is a liar and a child abuser, and a spy for Albania.

10--Chuck makes an incredible logical argument against your point with no card. Figure it out.

11--Chuck asks the judge

for a date. She accepts.

12--Chuck counterplans with World Peace, mandated by a higher being, of whom he is a prophet.

The debater has five minutes to prepare the 2AC, and then delivers it. You collect the flow sheets, possibly to grade them.

By drawing up your own key, you can practice any speech in the debate. Chuck can do any speech. He also can imitate your likely opponent's styles before a big tournament.

2. Rebuttal practice

A. the 1AR. The debaters must bring a flow sheet from an affirmative round, and catch themselves up in their memories to the 1AR. The debater WRITES out the rebuttal, using the minimum number of words necessary to totally defeat the negative. The debater then delivers the rebuttal without the manuscript. Collect the manuscript and grade it on word economy and quality responses.

(To really make this challenging, limit the debater to one 4 X 6 card)

B. the 2NR. The debater brings a flow sheet from a negative round. She must prepare a rebuttal for a student judge with absolutely no debate training, and without lying or distorting the opponents argument, convince the judge that the negative should win. The judge then fills out a ballot and votes, explaining why on the ballot. This might reveal to the debater why she is not communicating well with lay judges.

3. World debate wrestling

Two teams, debating the usual topic, but with the following changes.

A. Any debater, by tagging his partner, can take over a speech or cross-ex. However, each debater must speak an equal amount of time by the end of the debate.

B. Each side has six minutes of cross-ex, which they may use at any time, includ-

ing the middle of opponents speeches, or at the end of the debate. Each cross-ex must use at least a one minute increment however. If the debater just asks one question, he loses a whole minute.

C. Each team has ONE "argument slam!", which, cried out as the opponent delivers an argument (ONLY during the 2AC or 2NC), immediately wins that argument permanently for the slamming team.

D. If you wish, let the last two speeches be subject to the heckling of the opponents.

4. Contract debate

Using the same affirmative case, two teams debate each other twice. Judges evaluate the debates on a point scale 1-30 on each speech. The debater with the most points wins. You can draw up a rubric which rewards behaviors you are trying to encourage.

5. The ultimate off-topic debates

Each debater secretly prepares a case based on the resolution *Resolved: the Status Quo should be changed*. Every point must be evidenced with legitimate evidence. Then create a tournament with debaters debating each other twice, on each side of the resolution. Negative may not run T, and since he probably won't have any evidence, this side of the resolution will be by wits alone. Multiple judges do not vote for affirmative or negative, but award points for good debating by use of a rubric you draw up to reward debating behavior you wish to encourage.

6. The blast from the past debates

The debater assumes the character of a deceased character of the past. All arguments must be consistent with the knowledge and style of the character. Imagine a round between Adolph Hitler, Ghengis Kahn, Marilyn Monroe, and Jimi Hendrix.

For a twist, run these

debates like a Presidential Sham, er, debate, with student panelists asking questions of the characters, with chances for rebuttals.

Emphasize the insights that a debater gets from taking the different viewpoint than the usual.

(Bill Davis coaches at Blue Valley, (KS) and writes this regular Rostrum column.)