

VOICE OF YOUTH

Using Debate as a Tool for Development



Contents



1

Importance of
Communication

Breaking down barriers



2

Debates: An
Overview

- *A powerful communication tool*
- *What do you learn from debate?*
- *Sample debate topics*
- *Building an argument*



3

International
Testimonials

- *Republic of Korea*
- *Malaysia*
- *UK and The Netherlands*



4

The Rules of
Debate

- *Debates around the world*
- *Asian Parliamentary rules*
- *British Parliamentary rules*



5

Organizing a
Debate
Tournament

- *Five important aspects*
- *The tournament rounds*

Message from the Author



Dear young reader,

We live in a world that is more connected than ever. Young people today easily create ideas and navigate through perspectives in order to find solutions to end poverty and other global issues.

To work together efficiently and effectively, we have to engage each other using better communication, and debate is a method that successfully achieves this. Highlighting different perspectives in varying issues, debate hopes that its participants can come to a sense of enlightenment and ultimately, understanding.

As a fellow young person, I invite you to train yourselves to become masters of the art of debate and contribute your enhanced knowledge to creating positive change in our society.

Sincerely,

Weston Lee

Former President, Philippine Debate Union and
ADB Youth Initiative Partner

Importance of Communication

The image features a solid blue background. In the center, there is a white speech bubble with a thin blue border and a small tail pointing to the right. Inside the bubble, the text "Importance of Communication" is written in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. To the right of the speech bubble, there is a solid orange rectangular block.

Breaking down barriers

Throughout Asia and the Pacific, communities are filled with diversity, whether it is in ethnicity, religion, or political belief. With the rise of globalization, these differences are placed closely alongside each other, emphasizing an even greater need for the kind of communication that is able to break barriers. Young people, like you, will find it fruitful to abandon all prejudices in order to create a deeper understanding despite the numerous differences, and communication is an effective tool for this purpose.



Debates: An Overview

A powerful communication tool

Better communication isn't just about how an idea is said; rather it is also about what the idea is and how it is built. You can be the most eloquent speaker there is, and yet still not be able to get your main message across. That said, communicators must acknowledge the need to improve thought processes in creating sound ideas, and this is where debate becomes relevant. Debate is about communicating your ideas, getting your voice heard, and convincing the audience that your ideas are right.



What do you learn from debate?



1. TO STREAMLINE DISCUSSIONS

When you learn the anatomy of an argument, you will realize what ideas are integral to your point and what ideas are unnecessary. You will also learn to refine your thoughts in a way that is clearer and unequivocal.



2. TO UNDERSTAND ALL SIDES TO AN ISSUE

Motions are given by debate organizers. This means that you may need to defend ideas you do not believe in. Because of this, you gain an understanding of ideas you may never have thought of entertaining, and this results in strengthening, or perhaps changing, your belief.



3. TO LISTEN BETTER

To be able to respond to the opposing team effectively, you need to closely listen to what they have said and appreciate the argument in its best form.

Sample debate topics

Debate topics range from a wide set of themes. Some topics revolve around development and integration, some deal with justice and crime. Some will even debate on a fantasy context. Despite the wide variety, debate topics can be clumped into two main types: policy debate and value judgment debates.

Some examples of debate motions are included below.



This house prefers a world with only one language.

This house prefers a world without Facebook.

This house regrets the use of developmental aid as a tool to influence social behavior.

This house believes that governments should not borrow money unless they secure the consent of the youth.

Building an argument

Debates are won with good arguments. A good argument needs to be simple and straightforward. It starts with a need for urgency, which you want to solve with an idea. This idea will be proven by an analysis backed up with evidence.

A sample argument for the topic, “This house believes that animals should have rights” will look like this:



Idea

Animals should have rights because they are conscious.



Urgency

Despite being alive and conscious, animals are treated as mere property of human beings. They are traded, killed, and eaten without any regard for their lives, and ability to feel pain for the selfish benefit of man. If humanity is truly humane, a basic level of protection must be given to these animals.



Analysis

Sentience is the ability to perceive and feel things such as fear and pain, while rights are granted to protect the being from things that are immoral, unjust, and incorrect. Because people are sentient, we understand that subjecting them to experiences that bring out fear and pain is cruel. That is why people are protected with rights.

But why does it only end with them? Cows are known to cry in slaughterhouses, and pigs run away in terror when distressed. Clearly, they are sentient as well. Some may argue that it is because people are rational and animals are not. But the senile and insane are granted rights for precisely the same reason of sentience.

The lack of rights allows people to put animals in situations that bring out fear and pain, and this is cruel. Because this is wrong, animals should be given rights.



Evidence

Here is an example of an animal exhibiting sentience. Koko, from the Gorilla Foundation in Northern California, is a gorilla that learned 1,000 words in sign language, and is known to care for a pet cat. One day, Koko managed to rip a sink out of the wall in her home. When the caretakers returned, they asked Koko who did it. Koko responded, “The cat did it.” Koko distinguished good behavior from bad behavior, and like some of us, Koko was afraid of punishment, and so Koko blamed it on others.

The Rules of Debates

Debates around the world

Debates are popular around the world. If you join this sport, you will be able to meet some of the most diverse individuals there are.



There are two popular debating formats used around the world: Asian Parliamentary and British Parliamentary. Each format has its own merits, with some countries preferring one over the other.

Asian Parliamentary rules

This format includes two teams of three, where one speaker will have to speak twice. All speakers will have 7 minutes to speak, except for the reply speakers, who have 4 minutes. After receiving the motion, they are then given only 30 minutes to prepare for a debate.

This format is used in the following tournaments:

[United Asian Debating Championship](#) Asian Championship League

[Philippine Inter-Collegiate Debating Championship](#) Philippine League

[JPDU Spring Tournament](#) Japanese League

[KIDA National Championship Spring](#) Korean League

[National Law School Debate Championship](#) Indian League

British Parliamentary rules

This format has four teams of two. The four teams respectfully take the positions of Opening Government, Opening Opposition, Closing Government, and Closing Opposition.

The teams are presented with one motion, and are given 15 minutes to prepare for the debate.

This format is used in the following tournaments:

[World Universities Debating Championship](#) World League

[European Universities Debating Championship](#) European League

[North American Debating Championship](#) North American League

[Asians British Parliamentary](#) Asian League

[National Debate Championship](#) Philippine League

[JPDU Autumn Tournament](#) Japanese League

[KIDA National Championship Fall](#) Korean League

International Testimonials



JOSHUA PARK (KYU IL PARK)
Daejon, Republic of Korea



Professor
SolBridge International School of Business Juris Doctor
Harvard Law School

“Exposure to debate did much to turn an extremely shy, introverted young immigrant to America into a confident student leader who would later become a valedictorian and a graduate of Harvard Law School. I believe that debate is one of the best educational tools for cultivating critical thinking and leadership qualities for young students, regardless of current academic status and social background. I hope as many students as possible can experience the truly transformative effects of debate, just as I have.”

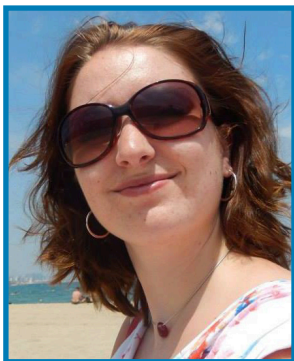


SYED SADDIQ
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



Was awarded The Merderka Youth Award by the Minister of Youth and Sports; executive intern to Malaysia's De Facto Minister of Law; speechwriter and part-time Lecturer in IIUM

“Debating actually changes lives of people. Prior to my debating years, I was a bigot who embodied sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and racism and was a borderline religious fundamentalist. I was an awful person. I couldn't care less about worldly issues. When I first subscribed to competitive debating in 2009, I was slowly liberated from the clutches of ignorance and bigotry. This newfound passion enabled me to challenge entrenched dogmas and recalibrated my life's trajectory. In summary, debating made me a better human being.”



DANIQUE VAN KOPPENHAGEN

London, United Kingdom and Utrecht, the Netherlands



Regulatory manager for Lloyds Banking Group; uses both her masters degrees every day while debating on the work floor

“Debating has taught me not only to come up with and structure arguments, but also to explain difficult concepts in clear and accessible language. Communication is key in most jobs and being able to reflect on how you come across helps your skills. Another important skill debating has taught me is how to listen. You need to understand what’s being said to respond well, and learning how to do that will enrich your life. It has impacted my personal opinions, broadened my world, and got me in touch with standpoints I’d never even thought of. Debating has made me who am I today, and I am grateful for that every day.”

Organizing a Debate Tournament

Five important aspects

Adjudication Core

These people set the topics for all the debates.

Debaters

Debaters should be in teams of two or three, depending on the format. They will compete in the tournament.

Adjudicators

They are the people who will judge the debates. It is important that they are objective.

Tabulations team

This is the backbone of the tournament. They are the official scorekeeper of the tournament, as well as the determiner of matchups.

Debate rooms

Of course all debate tournaments must have a venue. These rooms must be big enough, and at the same time quiet enough for people to speak in.

The tournament rounds

There are two parts to a debate tournament: The preliminary rounds and the elimination rounds. Over the span of the tournament, debaters are challenged with a wide range of topics, usually unique per round.

Preliminary Rounds

Typically, there are three to eight preliminary rounds.

The first round matchups is determined randomly.

The next few rounds are power-matched, meaning teams will go against teams with the same number of wins and losses.

Elimination Rounds

Usually, at most 1/3 of the tournament makes it to the elimination rounds.

The matchups are determined by the team rankings from elimination rounds, where the top seed will go against the bottom seed. Second seed will go against second lowest seed, and so on and so forth.

Once a team loses, they are eliminated from the tournament.

The elimination rounds end with the grand final, where the champion will emerge.

Useful Websites

Philippine Debate Union: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PhilippineDebateUnion/>

Asia Debating: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/asiainberlin>

World Universities Debating Championship: <http://www.wudc.info/>

World Schools Debating Championship: <http://schoolsdebate.com/>

World Debating News: <http://flynn.debating.net/>

International Debate Education Association: <http://idebate.org/>



About ADB Youth Initiative

ADB Youth Initiative is a program managed by ADB's NGO and Civil Society Center to mainstream youth participation in ADB operations. It facilitates increased cooperation among ADB, young people, and youth-led organizations.

Because youth and youth-led organizations are important members of civil society, ADB started the Youth Initiative in 2013, to support young people in contributing effectively to development. It aims to empower youth of Asia as development partners by mainstreaming youth participation in ADB's activities, projects, and policies.

Connect with ADB Youth Initiative through social media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/YouthForAsia>

Twitter: @YouthForAsia

Website: www.youthforasia.com

About Voice of Youth Debate

ADB Youth Initiative believes that debate is effective in allowing young people to contribute their innovative ideas, knowledge, and communication skills. In partnership with Plan International, the Voice of Youth Debate started at ADB's Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors in Ha Noi, Viet Nam as a simple high school debate moderated by Plan International's CEO Nigel Chapman. It has since grown into a regular feature of ADB's knowledge and training events.

With debate as a platform, youth have inspired development professionals, government officials, and technical specialists at local and international forum. In Georgia, World Vision also runs its own Youth Debate program that aims to build the public debate techniques of children and youth and give them the opportunity and confidence to debate in front of a large audience.

In partnership with ASSIST and AsianNGO

ADB Youth Initiative has partnered with ASSIST and AsianNGO, a non-profit organization that seeks to achieve sustainable transformation while ensuring improvement of social equity, to create publications and execute initiatives that build the knowledge and capacity of youth in becoming equipped youth development partners.

The partnership launched the Youth4Asia Solutions Search, a series of competitions that seeks solutions for development problems in the areas of Environment, Health and Sanitation, Education and Employment, and Citizenship and Governance in Asia and the Pacific. Additionally, a digital knowledge platform has been developed to showcase these youth-led solutions as well as youth-focused solutions by other organizations.

To find out more about the competition and the knowledge bank, visit <http://www.youth4asia.org>.

ASSIST

Website: www.assistasia.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/assistasia>

AsianNGO

Website: www.asianngo.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AsianNGO>

Resources

http://www.naturalnews.com/038743_primates_liars_gorilla.html

http://www.brockpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/spoken_sunday_debates.jpg

<http://www.wvi.org/georgia/article/empowering-youth-through-debate>

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VOICE OF YOUTH

Using Debate as a Tool for Development

About the publication

This booklet was created by the Asian Development Bank Youth Initiative and Asia Society for Social Improvement and Sustainable Transformation. It provides information about why proper communication is important, an overview of the concept of debate, as well as general rules of debates and debate tournaments. The booklet also shows testimonials from people around the world about the way debate plays an important part in their lives and how being able to debate properly has positively impacted them as a person.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to the majority of the world's poor. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.