

Rules of Engagement for Philosophical Chairs

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- Maintain your understanding of the prompt or central statement throughout the activity.
- Actively listen to the person who is speaking.
- Wait for the teacher or facilitator to recognize you before you speak; only one person speaks at a time.
- Seek to understand the opposing speaker's point of view, even if you do not agree with him/her.
- Briefly summarize the previous speaker's argument before you make your response.
- Contribute your own thoughts, offering your reasons as succinctly as possible.
- Respond to statements and ideas only, not to the person giving them.
- Change your mind about the central statement as new information or reasoning is presented.
- Refrain from having side conversations during the debate portion of the activity.
- Move to the opposite side or to the undecided position if your thinking grows and changes as a result of convincing arguments from the opposing side.
- Support the discussion by maintaining order and contributing constructive comments.