

Scarsdale High School
World History II
Mr. Healy

Debate Project

As a class, we will be having five debates related to World History and culture, but from a contemporary perspective. Every student will participate in one debate as well as judge two others. Further, each student will be required to submit a position paper (at least one full page), outlining his/her arguments with any additional resources or facts compiled. No project credit will be given without this paper.

The debates themselves will be four parts-

- 1) An opening statement from each side
- 2) Rebuttal from each side,
- 3) Crossfire round
- 4) Closing arguments from each side

In preparing for the debate, I recommend that you utilize the textbook, library resources and internet sites. Organize your facts carefully. Obviously, you can and should write your opening statements in advance. While the opening statement is a great chance to get out key facts, you may want to save some for later rounds.

The opening statement should introduce *all lines of argument you wish to present and develop* over the course of the debate. Each team will construct a couple (two to four) main points or contentions that they will share with the opposing team prior to the debate. I will read over and help improve anyone's opening statement if submitted to me early.

The rebuttal might be the hardest part of the debate. In this portion you must be able to respond to any attacks against you as well as attack the facts presented in your opponent's opening statement. Try and anticipate what some arguments against your side might be and be ready to defend.

The crossfire round is when the two teams get to verbally spar and openly converse. The teams will alternate proposing a question or topic they want addressed. Both teams should be alert and quick-thinking while they engage in this round. You may want to create potential questions that may force your opponent into a corner.

The closing statements should offer a final justification for your side. You should restate your team's main point and get out your final attacks against your opponent. You should summarize the debate and offer to the audience why your side is the correct one.

Debate topics:

Capital punishment is never justified.

Napoleon Bonaparte had a positive impact on both France and Europe

The US should pass and use hate crime laws.

A ban on the Muslim burqa is a violation of freedom of religion.