

# **DEBATE ASSESMENT CRITERIA.**

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION TO SPEAKING**

### **SECTION B FOR NATIONAL OLYMPIAD IN ENGLISH**

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# SPEAKING/DEBATE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

## **A. Content**

- Content covers the arguments that are used, divorced from the speaking style. It is as if you are seeing the arguments written down rather than spoken. We must assess the weight of the arguments without being influenced by the magnificence of the orator that presented them.

Content will also include an assessment of the weight of rebuttal or clash. *This assessment must be done from the standpoint of the average reasonable person.*

- **Arguments about the topic and relevance of ideas**
- **Explanation and Support (evidence, examples, statistics) for arguments/counter-arguments**
- **Weight of rebuttal and/or clash (counter-argumentation)**

# SPEAKING/DEBATE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

## 1. Arguments about the topic and relevance of ideas:

- Debaters should prove a deep understanding of the debate topic and its relevant aspects, and fully cover them in their arguments

## 2. Explanation and Support (evidence, examples, statistics) for arguments/counter-arguments:

- Every argument should be structured properly: **Statement** of the claim, **Explanation, Illustration** (Examples, statistics etc.)
- Every major point should be based on relevant facts, statistics, and/or examples

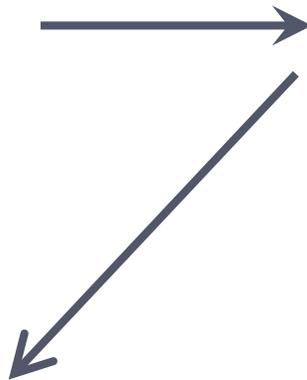
## 3. Weight of rebuttal and/or clash (counter-argumentation):

- **Debaters should put forth strong counter-arguments that are both accurate and relevant to the topic under discussion;**
- It is a waste of time for a rebuttal speaker to deal with trivial points if crucial arguments are left unanswered.

# SEXI Argumentation

# The proper Form of an Argument

S – Statement  
(Title)



EX – Explanation  
(Train of Thought)

I – Illustration  
(Example, Statistic,  
Quote etc)

# Argument

Legalizing Marijuana will increase hard drug consumption. Marijuana is a gateway drug – that is to say, once you start smoking MJ, you feel the need to use something more powerful as your body gets accustomed to the substance. You’ ll jump to opium and then to heroine as they’ re both analgesics. In the Netherlands and Portugal, in the years after the legalization of Cannabis, hard drug use rose by 40%. Legalizing marijuana will make for a society full of drug addicts – welfare prices will rise (due to rehab) and so will violent crime rates.



# SEXI

- S – Legalizing Marijuana will increase hard drug consumption.
- EX – Marijuana is a gateway drug – that is to say, once you start smoking MJ, you feel the need to use something more powerful as your body gets accustomed to the substance. You’ ll jump to opium and then to heroine as they’ re both analgesics.
- I – In the Netherlands and Portugal, in the years after the legalization of Cannabis, hard drug use rose by 40%.



# SPEAKING/DEBATE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

## **B. Strategy** - covers **two concepts**:

- 1. The structure of the speech, and**
- 2. Interaction (questions & answers/comments)**

These matters are sufficiently important to justify taking them separately.

### **1. Structure**

➤ A good speech has:

- A clear **beginning, middle and end**.
- Along the way there are **signposts** to help us see where the speaker is going
- The **sequence of arguments is logical** and flows naturally from point to point.
- **Good speech structure, therefore, is one component of strategy.**

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## 2. Interaction during the debate (questions & answers/ comments)

### ➤ What are interactions?

- ❖ Questions/comments meant to counter the opponent's arguments and
- ❖ Answers/comments aimed at supporting own arguments

### ➤ How should they be delivered? There are a few pointers to remember when delivering them:

- ✓ They are never conversations. Deliver and sit down!
- ✓ The question/answer/comment should be relevant to what is being discussed at that time;
- ✓ Avoid excessively general questions that simply allow the speaker to expound the values of their argument: the best questions are short ones!

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## C. Style

The term is perhaps misleading. We are not looking for speakers who are stylish, but rather we are looking at the style of the speakers.

- ❑ **Style covers the way the speakers speak.**
- ❑ **Style refers to the ‘presentation’ aspect of debating:**

### 1. Verbal presentation

- **Clarity of expression is the most important aspect of verbal presentation**
- **Cohesion (cohesive devices)**
- **Fluency**
- **Lexical range & Appropriacy/Accuracy**
- **Grammatical range & Appropriacy/Accuracy**
- **Pronunciation**

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## 2. Non-verbal and para-verbal presentation

### ➤ Non-Verbal (Visual)

- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Facial expressions

### ➤ Para -Verbal

- concerns the way that you enunciate and deliver your words to the audience:
  - **speed** - often the most important issue concerning vocal presentation ;
  - **tone**
  - **volume**
  - **variation**
  - **pronunciation**- sounds, weak forms, stress, intonation

## Assessment form – Speaking – Debate

	Poor		Average		Good		Excellent
<b>1. CONTENT</b>							
Arguments about the topic and relevance of ideas	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Weight of rebuttal and/or clash (counter-argumentation)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Explanation and Support (evidence, examples, statistics) for arguments/counter-arguments	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
<b>2. STRATEGY</b>							
<b>Structure:</b> Coherence (logical organisation)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Interaction</b> (questions & answers/comments)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>3. STYLE/DELIVERY</b>							
<b>Verbal 1</b> (Clarity of expression, cohesion/cohesive devices, fluency)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Verbal 2</b> (lexical and grammatical range & appropriacy/ accuracy)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Verbal 3</b> (pronunciation – sounds, weak forms, stress, intonation).	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Non-verbal</b> (gestures, eye-contact, facial expression) & <b>Paraverbal</b> (tone, speed, volume of voice)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Total 100</b>							

## Descriptors

CATEGORY	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
<b>Arguments about the topic and Relevance of ideas</b>	The student clearly understands the topic in-depth and presents his/her arguments fully.	The student clearly understands the topic in-depth and presents most of the arguments with ease.	The student seems to understand the main points of the topic and presents those with ease.	The student does not show an adequate understanding of the topic and barely covers it.
<b>Weight of rebuttal and/ or clash /counter-argumentation)</b>	All counter-arguments are accurate, relevant and strong.	Most counter-arguments are accurate, relevant, and strong.	Most counter-arguments are accurate and relevant, but several are weak.	Counter-arguments are not accurate and/or relevant.
<b>Explanation and support (evidence, examples, statistics) for arguments /counter-arguments</b>	Every major point is well supported with several relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.	Most major points were s adequately supported with relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.	Most major points were supported with facts, statistics and/or examples, but the relevance of some was questionable.	Most points were not supported.
<b>Logical organisation</b>	All arguments are clearly tied to an idea (thesis) and organised in a tight, logical fashion.	Most arguments are clearly tied to an idea (thesis) and organised in a tight, logical fashion.	All arguments are clearly tied to an idea (thesis) but the organisation is sometimes not clear or logical.	Arguments are not clearly tied to an idea (thesis).
<b>Interaction</b>	All the questions and answers/comments are relevant and support the argument/ counterargument	Most of the questions and answers/comments are relevant and support the argument/ counterargument	Some of the questions and answers / comments are relevant and support the argument /counterargument	Few of the questions and answers / comments are relevant and support the argument /counterargument
<b>Verbal presentation</b> (Clarity of expression, Cohesion/ cohesive devices fluency)	All the information in the debate is presented clearly. Wide range of cohesive devices, consistently coherent.	Most information in the debate is presented clearly. Cohesive devices just adequate.	Sufficient information in the debate is presented clearly. Cohesive devices just adequate, rambling at times.	The information in the debate has several inaccuracies OR is usually not clear. Lack of specific connectors, overall aspect rambling.
<b>Verbal presentation</b> (lexical & grammatical range & appropriacy/ accuracy)	A wide range of grammar and vocabulary is used accurately and appropriately.	An adequate range of grammar and vocabulary is used accurately and appropriately.	There are frequent mistakes, limited range of grammar and vocabulary.	There are frequent mistakes, which impede understanding, poor range of grammar and vocabulary.
<b>Verbal presentation</b> (pronunciation - sounds, weak forms, stress, intonation)	Pronunciation helps meaning to be conveyed effectively.	Pronunciation helps most meaning to be conveyed.	Pronunciation barely helps meaning to be conveyed.	Pronunciation hinders meaning from being conveyed.
<b>Non-verbal</b> (gestures, eye-contact, facial expression) <b>&amp; Paraverbal</b> (tone, speed, volume of voice) <b>presentation</b>	Uses non-verbal vocabulary to augment the information transmitted. Maintains eye contact with people involved, facial expression is synchronized with the message that is being communicated. Varies tone, speed and volume.	Maintains good eye contact during the debate and uses a fixed set of nonverbal elements to improve delivery of the speech. Varies at least two of the following: tone, speed, volume.	Makes eye contact throughout most of the debate and uses some gestures to improve delivery of information. Varies one of the following: tone, speed, volume.	Has incoherent facial expressions. Body language employed takes away from the understanding of the message. Makes eye contact sparsely throughout the debate. Speaks too loud or too softly and is monotonous.

## Descriptors

Proposition Speech 1 (1 minute)	Interaction (30 sec)	Opposition Speech 1 (1 minute)	Interaction (30 sec)	Proposition Speech 2 (1 minute)	Interaction (30 sec)	Opposition Speech 2 (1 minute)	Interaction (30 sec)
Delivers own argument (Proposition Argument 1)		Refutes Proposition Argument 1					
		Presents Opposition Argument 1		Refutes Opposition Argument 1			
				Presents Proposition Argument 2		Refutes Proposition Argument 2	
						Presents Opposition Argument 2	