



# DEBATE MASTER

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## SUMMARY

- \_ Select a topic and moderate the debate,
- \_ Time limit for entire session is ten minutes,
- \_ Choose two teams of three people each from the audience to support *for* or *against* a motion,
- \_ Timer transitions among speakers through a directed applause,
- \_ Audience “shows hands” to determine winning side.

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the exciting world of extemporaneous speaking in a debate setting! Debate master has the opportunity to lead two teams each consisting of three members from the audience in a mini debate.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the debate session is to test each participant’s logic, organization, and persuasive speaking skills in an impromptu setting. Team members will have to quick thinking skill-sets to convince the audience that their opinion should be supported. A second purpose is to provide speaking opportunities to club members who do not have a role.

## TOPIC SELECTION

Prepare background and choose an appropriate topic far in advance of the meeting. The allotted time is only ten minutes from start to finish. The topic is often lighthearted. Avoid serious topics so as not to unnecessarily offend an audience member. Also, topics that are heavy in nature will require more than the allotted time and might bring down the audience mood. Topic creativity is highly encouraged; do ensure the topic invokes a clear opinion from team members to facilitate involved discussion from the participants.

## EXAMPLE TOPICS

Some examples of fun debate topics are provided below. The following are merely suggestions but pick topics similar in mood to the ones listed.

- \_ Chocolate should be banned as gifts on Valentine’s Day.
- \_ All cars should be colored red.
- \_ Everyone should avoid buy an Apple iPhone.
- \_ The official English name for the popular rice wine *makgeolli* should be Drunken Rice.

## DEBATE TEAMS

Comprise two debate teams each of three club members. Their purpose is to convince the audience that their position on the topic the debate master has presented should be supported. Teams are limited to two.

- \_ Pro (for) Team; supports the chosen topic,
- \_ Con (against) Team; rejects the chosen topic.

The first two speakers each have thirty seconds. The third speaker on each team is the concluding speaker, and the last to speak in support of the team. Both concluding speakers are allotted forty-five seconds to make closing remarks.

#### GENERAL PROCEDURE

Debate master moderates the entire session. Timing is **most** critical. Work very closely with the timer to ensure a timely debate; typically thus:

- \_ Debate master selects six volunteers from the audience and divides them into two teams each of three. Selection is random into Pro and Con teams.
- \_ Debate master presents topic to both teams and the audience.
- \_ Team speaking order is quickly determined. A coin may be flipped. Winning team can choose to, or let the other team, speak first.
- \_ Timer marks one-minute preparation time for both teams.
- \_ When the one-minute preparation time expires debate master prompts first speaker to begin for thirty seconds. Introductions are unnecessary. Debate master may just let the debate proceed without any halts for names or positions. Timer leads the applause to end the speaker after thirty seconds.
- \_ First speaker from the other team speaks for thirty seconds. Timer repeats action.
- \_ Repeat pattern for each second speakers and concluding speakers. Concluding speakers receive forty-five seconds. Timer leads action.
- \_ Debate master asks the audience by "show of hands" (keep both teams on stage to avoid counting their own votes) which team most convinced.
- \_ Return control back to the toastmaster.