

BRAIN BUSTER CHALLENGE 2012

DEBATE

PROMPT

Due to a large budget deficit, the State of California has decided to close many state parks, including two popular local parks, South Yuba and Malakoff Diggins. The Affirmative team will argue in favor of them doing so, while the Negative team will argue against it.

PROCESS

Teams should arrange themselves as follows:

Member 1	Opening Statement
Member 2	Question Asker #1 and rebuttal
Member 3	Question Asker #2 and rebuttal
Member 4	Responder to Questions
Member 5	Closing Statement

Affirmative and Negative positions will be determined by coin toss prior to the debate. Teams must be prepared to argue either position. Teams will present their arguments before a distinguished panel of two judges according to the following parameters:

1. Affirmative Opening Statement, member 1 (2 min)
2. Negative Opening Statement, member 1 (2 min)
3. Negative Question #1, member 2; followed by Affirmative response, member 4 (1min)
4. Negative rebuttal to Affirmative response, member 2 (1 min); and potential additional response
5. Negative Question #2, member 3; followed by Affirmative response, member 4 (1 min)
6. Negative rebuttal to Affirmative response, member 3 (1 min); and potential additional response
7. Affirmative Question #1, member 2; followed by Negative response, member 4 (1 min)
8. Affirmative rebuttal to Negative response, member 2 (1 min); and potential additional response
9. Affirmative Question #2, member 3; followed by Negative response, member 4 (1 min)
10. Affirmative rebuttal to Negative response, member 3 (1 min); and potential additional response
11. Negative Closing Statement, member 5 (2 min)
12. Affirmative Closing Statement, member 5 (2 min)

RULES

Each team member must speak fairly equally. Time limits will be strictly adhered to. Each speaker will be given a fifteen second warning when approaching the limit. There will be an automatic one point deduction for going over time. Conversely, while it is perfectly OK to complete your statement in less than the maximum time, too short of a response (under 45 seconds for opening and closing statements, and under 15 seconds for all other responses) will also result in a one point deduction. Debaters can use pre-arranged speeches and note cards, and will be allocated pencil and paper for note taking during the debate. Each team will be allowed one whispered conference at any time during the debate lasting no more than thirty seconds.

SCORING

Each team member will be judged according to the following rubric:

- 10 points The speaker displays a thorough understanding of the topic, and remains poised at all times. The speaker is easily understood by everyone in the room, and presents a compelling argument.
- 9 points The speaker displays a fairly thorough understanding of the topic, and remains poised all, or nearly all the time. The speaker is understood by everyone in the room, and presents a good argument.
- 8 points The speaker displays an adequate understanding of the topic, and remains poised nearly all the time. The speaker is understood by most of the people in the room, and presents an adequate argument.
- 7 points The speaker displays a mediocre understanding of the topic, and is unable to maintain complete composure. The speaker is not clearly heard by a number of people in the room, and presents a mediocre argument.
- 6 points The speaker displays a poor understanding of the topic and is clearly rattled. It is difficult to understand the speaker, who presents a poor argument.

NOTES AND SUGGESTIONS

While Opening Statements and questions can easily be read from a prepared text, it should be remembered that responding to questions, and response rebuttals will require a great deal of spontaneity, and a thorough understanding of both sides of the issue. Questions from the opposing side should be anticipated. In addition, the Closing Statement should include arguments not previously heard to “nail” your point.