



4.7 Signposts and Numbering

This activity develops note-taking skills. This demonstration activity helps students understand that structure (such as signposts and numbering) makes a speech easier for a judge to flow and understand. Students will flow the same speech twice, with and without stated structure. Students will also generate strategies for flowing when presented with unstructured arguments.

Time Allotment

15 minutes

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- practice identifying and recording the critical ideas presented in a speech.
- understand the importance of explicit structure in speeches.

Materials and Preparation

One or more pre-written 2AC blocks against disadvantages on the current resolution. Any pre-written argument will work (such as a 1AC or disadvantage shell) but 2AC blocks are well-suited to this activity because they are short, contain both evidence and analytical arguments, and are particularly difficult to understand without numbers and argument headers (like "No Link", etc.).

Method

Select two students to present the pre-written 2AC block to the class. Pull the first speaker aside and instruct her to read the 2AC block to the class, but to omit the structure - she should not read the numbers, the argument headers like "No Link" or "Non-Unique". Request that she not use indicators such as "my next argument is" either. Don't let the class overhear your instructions to the speaker.

The first speaker should present the block in the manner outlined above and the class should attempt to flow the speech. After the first speaker has finished, ask the second speaker to present the same block, this time including the structure.

Once both speakers have finished, discuss as a class the reasons why the first presentation was more difficult to flow than the second. Ask questions until the class comes to the conclusion that the lack of explicit structure makes it difficult to determine and record the meaning of each argument. Be sure that the class understands that explicit structure is an important component of all speeches, not just the 2AC.

Even though structure is important, students will sometimes encounter speeches by opponents that do not have a good structure. Talk with students about how they managed to flow the first speech, and generate a list of ways to flow and respond to speeches that are not well structured.