

(b) Models

The word 'model' needs to be used with care at the World Schools Championships.

As mentioned, there are some competitions where teams are expected to propose specific plans or models. In American 'policy debating', the Proposition will often outline a specific plan for achieving the goal of the motion, and the Opposition will defend the status quo (present situation), attack the Proposition's plan, and/ or present an allegedly better plan. At the World Schools Championships, teams are expected to take the motion as it stands. If it proposes a specific policy, to argue for or against this. If it puts forward a more general principle, to debate whether or not it is valid.

The closest the World Schools Championships come to 'policy debating' is when the motion involves a 'change debate'. This requires the Proposition to propose a change in the status quo (present situation) and will often have the word 'should' in the motion. In order to propose a change, the Proposition will need to suggest there is a major problem and that the change will alleviate it.

The motion 'This House believes that smoking should be banned' is an example of a change debate. The Proposition must first identify the problem that exists (e.g. the health effects of smoking and the costs these impose on society). The Proposition must then propose banning as the solution to this problem and argue that this will be effective (i.e. the solution will in fact solve the problem).

In a change debate, the Opposition may argue one or all of the following:

- (a) the problem is not as bad as the Proposition suggests (costs are borne by individuals who know the risks, and are similar to other legal activities, such as drinking alcohol or driving cars);
- (b) the Proposition's solution will not solve the problem (prohibition only leads to a black market, which causes more problems);
- (c) there are better solutions for the problem (raising taxes, education programmes).

Sometimes it is necessary for the Proposition to set out its proposed solution in a fair amount of detail in order to prove it will be effective. When this occurs, the proposed solution is called a 'model' or 'plan'. As with the definition and any parameters, the Proposition must ensure that its model is a reasonable one if it is to serve as a basis for the debate.

The motion 'This House believes that voluntary euthanasia should be legalised' may require the Proposition to spell out what exactly it means by 'voluntary euthanasia', given that there have been different proposals before different legislatures around the world. So long as the Proposition's model is a reasonable one (looking to common features of these proposals, such as the person being terminally ill and suffering from severe and untreatable pain, the person making the decision by free choice, certified by at least two medical experts), this will be the model to be debated. If the Proposition left out an important part of any scheme for voluntary euthanasia, it would be open for the Opposition to argue that this must also be included.

Debaters at the World Schools Championships can 'use a model' in the sense they are entitled to set out the details of a proposed solution required by the motion, provided that they do so reasonably (detailing what is meant by 'voluntary euthanasia' in the example