

of structuring and delivering a speech. The later chapters of the book will provide plenty of opportunity to put these skills into practice in real debates.

Part 2 explains the workings of four popular debate formats: Karl Popper, British Parliamentary, World Schools, and Asian Parliamentary. In large part, these are four ways of tackling the same task—critically examining an issue—thus, what unites them is vastly greater than what divides them. Each format emphasizes different aspects of debate, but all four demand the same skills—although how those skills are demonstrated may vary. All four require participants to be able to identify a problem with precision, propose and test a solution, demonstrate the merits and weaknesses of that proposal, and prove or bring into question its superiority to the alternatives. There’s nothing magical about any of the rules, and none of the formats is better or worse than the others. If you find one more enjoyable than the others, so be it, but you will gain insights from using all four.

You will notice that this section has no exercises. That’s because the best “exercise” for applying the abstract concepts in these chapters is observing and participating in debate. Inevitably, the description of any set of rules is confusing without seeing them in context, so watching debates will make them far clearer. Read a chapter, watch a debate in the relevant format, read the chapter again, and then organize a practice debate in that format. The rules will then really make more sense.

Part 3 shows you how you put the theoretical knowledge you gained in the previous sections into practice. Its opening chapter views debate holistically and chapter first outlines the process of debate:

1. *Frame the issue.* The Affirmative, the team in support of the motion, addresses the question: What is the question to be answered or the problem to be solved?
2. *Propose the solution.* The Affirmative offers a definition delineating the motion in more detail.
3. *Identify weaknesses.* The Negative, the team in opposition to the motion, describes what’s wrong with the proposal as defined or puts forward an alternative they can demonstrate to be preferable.
4. *Give context to evidence.* The Affirmative offers arguments for and the Negative against the proposal.

And, at the same time,

5. *Respond to criticism.* Both teams offer arguments countering what the other side has said.
6. *Tie the case back to the issue framed in point one.* Each team demonstrates that it has proved their case and the other side has failed.