
EXERCISES

- A. Watch a speech by a politician or other social leader, ideally from another country and with whom you are unfamiliar. If possible, find an interview on a subject about which you have no particularly strong opinions. Then:
1. Identify the points in what they say that you feel are the weakest and the removal of which would most undermine their position.
 2. In pairs, discuss why those points are the weakest and what could be done to defend them.
 3. In the same pair, take turns attacking and defending the speech. First, one of you should take a turn pointing out the weaknesses in the speech while the other tries to defend it. After a few minutes, change roles but work on new weaknesses.
- B. Look again at the argument you wrote at the end of Chapter 3. Read it over and then exchange it with your partner—without discussing it first. Now, read your partner's argument. Try to rebut it while she defends it. Then swap roles and defend your own while she rebuts it.
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CHAPTER CHECKLIST

- Debate is a two-way process that involves not only presenting arguments but also rebutting those made by other speakers.
 - Rebuttal is the process of criticizing an opponent's arguments and defending your own.
 - The process of developing your own arguments and critiquing those of the other team should be two sides of the same coin.
 - The purpose of your rebuttal is to persuade the adjudicator, not your opponent; address your remarks to the adjudicator not the speaker.
 - Rebuttal should not take up the major portion of your speech.
 - Rebuttal is both reactive and proactive.
 - Rebuttal can target knowledge or reasoning; it can highlight mistakes of commission and omission.
 - When building your own arguments and case, you should consider how you would attack them and then reinforce those areas in advance.
 - Rebutting an argument is about critiquing the idea that has been put forward rather than criticizing the person who is propounding it.
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