

Closing Speeches

Closing speeches are of two types: summations and reply speeches. All formats have summations, but some, including Asian Parliamentary and World Schools, also have reply speeches. This chapter begins by distinguishing between the two types of speeches and then discusses the general functions of both. Finally, it looks at two different approaches to summations and one main approach to reply speeches.

Distinguishing Between Summation and Reply Speeches

The distinction between summation and reply speeches may seem minor, but it is important. Summation speeches continue the debate. These speeches do not present new substantive arguments. Instead, in formats without replies, they briefly make any final rebuttal necessary before offering a summary and conclusion of their side's case. In formats that have both summation and reply speeches, the emphasis in summation speeches is on rebuttal. The speaker must address every significant idea that the opposition has raised or show how it has already been rebutted in another point. The summary portion of the speech is brief. In contrast, by the time the reply speeches are delivered, the debate has concluded. Thus, the goal of the reply speech is not to win *arguments* but to explain why the team won the *debate*.

Role of the Closing Speakers and Speeches

The primary role of the closing speaker—whether she is the reply speaker or summation speaker in formats that have no reply speeches—is to provide a conclusion. She takes the framework set out by the opening speaker and the evidence and arguments that