

to her own side (in BP, disproportionately to her own team). However, where the other side has made a serious mistake, she should feel free to spend time exploiting that fact.

It's important that the debater acts more like an editor and less like a reporter, selecting stories that lead the listener to a particular conclusion rather than regurgitating an account of events. She's had the chance to listen to the debate and should be aware of which arguments were persuasive and which were not. Her job is to accentuate the successes of her team and the failures of the opposing team. A slightly weak argument on the other side of the house should be presented as a disaster, while an adequately workable argument on her own side should become a triumph.

Although a summation by speaker should aim to mention all of the speakers in a debate, there is certainly no requirement to divide time evenly between them. The speaker should begin with some immediate rebuttal of the previous speaker, but should do so with an awareness that she is about to address the ideas of that team more generally and select those of the previous speaker's remarks that segue neatly into a broader attack on the opposing side. She should aim to finish the speech talking about the strongest points her own side made—that is, after all, what she wants the adjudicator to remember, so it's worth making sure that it's the last thing that the judge hears. The division of time should run along the same lines, giving slightly less time to the weaknesses in the other side's arguments than she gives to the strengths of her own.

SUMMATION BY THEME

Summing up by theme requires the speakers to look inside the debate. A concluding speaker taking this approach needs to focus on those issues that she sees as key to the debate. Sometimes these will be those arguments that were explicitly stated and provided the main basis for clash between the earlier speakers. Sometimes she will have to look a little deeper into the issues and establish the broader themes that underlie all of those arguments. Whichever approach she takes, she is trying to develop an interpretation of the facts that most suits her side's interests.

This is where active listening and critical thinking skills really come into play because previous speakers may not have explicitly identified themes, thus the closing speaker must ask herself "looking back, what was this debate really about?" It's difficult to see the debate from the outside when in the middle of it, but it can be done. For example, in a debate about government regulation of online material, the speakers may have focused on the technological possibilities, the existing legal framework, and commercial sensibilities as points of clash. However, depending on how the debate has flowed, the external observer may see the debate as centering on the issue of privacy or the relationship