

Glossary

Active listening—Skill of listening to what is said and not said and interpreting the intention behind the words used. Active listeners are not distracted by style but focus on the logic and evidence an opposing speaker uses.

Adjudication—Feedback provided by judges after a debate, giving the result, explaining their decision and offering suggestions for improvement. Usually this is given in the form of a short speech (verbal or oral adjudication) but can sometimes be written and distributed at the end of the competition.

Adjudicator—Individual who determines the winner of a debate and, where appropriate, ranks the other teams. A judge.

Affirmative—Side arguing in favor of a motion or resolution. Sometimes called “Government,” “Proposition,” “Side Affirmative,” or “Side Positive.”

Argument—Basic component of a case. An argument is a logically coherent line of reasoning used to demonstrate that a particular idea can be considered to be true. A complete argument includes a claim, warrant, and evidence.

Assumption—Claim or statement not supported by evidence.

Audience—Individuals listening to a debate who are not participating as speakers. Frequently an audience is represented by an adjudicator.

Biased adjudication—Reply speech. An overview of the highs and lows of the debate delivered in a manner that encourages the listener to take that team’s perspective on events.

Body—Central part of a speech in which the debater presents the arguments in support of her case and the evidence buttressing these arguments.

Case—Organized series of arguments a team uses to support its side of the debate.

Case-split (case division)—Designation of which members of a team will deal with which issues.