

The Karl Popper Debate Format*

In this chapter we describe the format of Karl Popper debate. We want to emphasize that Karl Popper debate is a format applicable to a variety of types of debate resolutions, not simply “policy debate” or “value debate.” It can be used to debate any kind of propositions, including those of definition, description, relationship, or evaluation. The kind of proposition will dictate the types of arguments that debaters choose to construct. The standards for constructing these arguments should be consistent with the logical requirements of the proposition as well as the demands of the audience.

INTRODUCTION TO KARL POPPER DEBATE

Karl Popper debate targets the core elements of a controversial issue, emphasizing above all else the development of critical thinking skills and tolerance and appreciation for multiple viewpoints. As a result, these debates have the following goals:

- Critical thinking
- Tolerance for different views
- Education
- Respect for general ethical principles
- Humbleness when debating opponents
- Creation of an informed, democratic citizenry

THE SECTIONS OF KARL POPPER DEBATE

Two opposing sides meet in each debate. One side, the affirmative, supports the proposition and the other, the negative, opposes it. These two teams exchange arguments according to a strict format that allows both sides equal time to present

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