

### 3. DEBATE REPORTER

**GOAL:**

To involve students who are attending debate tournaments, but not yet ready to participate.

**METHOD:**

- Ask new or potential team members to attend a debate tournament. Tell them to bring a notebook and ask them to act as a “reporter” for the tournament.
- “Reporters” should make note of the conventions, or informal rules, of debate that they observe in order create a list of the rules of good debates.
- Students can try to identify five things that winning teams do best.
- The resulting essays or lists of rules can be included in the team’s newsletter.

---

### 4. SPAR DEBATES

**GOAL:**

To familiarize students with the idea of making arguments, asking questions, and judging the strength of competing arguments.

**METHOD:**

- List a number of common, easily debatable topics on the blackboard.
- Have two students come to the front of the room.
- After a coin toss, the winning student selects the topic and the loser chooses the side.
- Each debater receives five minutes to prepare.
- Then a very quick debate occurs:
  - Affirmative constructive (90 seconds),**
  - cross-examination (60 seconds),**
  - negative opening speech (90 seconds),**
  - cross-examination (60 seconds),**
  - affirmative closing (45 seconds),**
  - negative closing (45 seconds).**
- To keep the exercise running quickly, two students can be preparing while another two are debating.
- The debate lasts about as long as the preparation time.
- Following the debates the class and the instructor or coach can take the opportunity to discuss strong arguments, strategies, and goals to work toward in the future.

(Courtesy of the Emory National Debate Institute, Gordon Mitchell and the Pittsburgh Urban Discussion and Debate League.)