Semi-formal college style debate helps develop language and presentation skills. This handout gives you an outline and description of the debate process.

**Topic for debates:**

*Should bilingual education programs be abandoned? Yes or No opinions.*

**Structure:**

One affirmative team (agrees with topic – Yes) and one negative team (disagrees with topic – No), with 9 speakers in each, present the pros and cons of the topic. The speaking order is:

1. First speaker, affirmative
2. First speaker, negative
3. Second speaker, affirmative
4. Second speaker, negative
5. Third speaker, affirmative
6. Third speaker, negative

“Attack” is a normal part of the debate. All speakers after the first can and should spend about 30% of their time “attacking” the previous speaker of the opposition team.

The first speaker affirmative has a clear run while the last speaker negative has no following attack. The two advantages are considered to cancel each other out and thus provide a level playing field.

**Scoring:**

Each speaker within each debate team has a maximum score of 100 points given as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Allocation</th>
<th>Max. Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Presentation (timing)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument (style &amp; ideas)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic (ideas &amp; evidence used)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance (to the topic &amp; opposition)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery and Gesture (fluency)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate Notes (1 p. minimum)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate Result (win/ lose)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum Score</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Timing:**

Each speaker will have between 2.5 and 3 minutes to make their points and position clear (10 pts.)

Moderator signals the end of each minute to each speaker. In a typical debate, points are deducted from the speaker’s score at a rate of 5 points for every 15 seconds under or over the target time.

Between speakers, the next speaker has 1 minute to prepare. During this time, the speaker may speak to other team members. Debate points are deducted from the next speaker’s score at a rate of 5 points for every 15 seconds over the target time.

**Preparation:**

Before the debate, speakers should:
1. Brainstorm both pros and cons of the issue based on the readings
2. Decide the main points they want to cover
3. Do additional online research as needed
4. Prepare and practice individually.

Main ideas from the readings can and should be used; however, ideas must be summarized and paraphrased into students’ own words. Additionally, specific evidence from the readings **cannot** be used to support your opinions and ideas. If you want to provide supportive evidence, you must conduct Internet research to find new sources of evidence. You are encouraged to provide your own opinions and/or experiences, but they must be logical, relevant, and, if necessary, supported by additional evidence.
For debates, brief note cards may be made and used, but students are not permitted to write out, memorize or read their speeches. Doing so will result in a loss of delivery points (10 pts.).

As an additional requirement of your debate assignment, each speaker must submit debate notes, typed and formatted, 1 p. minimum, based on the position and ideas that you plan to argue (10 pts.).

**Strategy:**
While preparing for your debate, you are advised to keep the following points in mind…

- The first speaker has a relatively clear run and can prepare almost everything in advance.
- The last speaker needs to summarize their team's point of view and devastatingly attack the other team. They need to be able to hear and understand earlier speakers and think 'on their feet.'
- Humor can have a great impact.
- Having many points of detail can help win by providing a 'blanket of snow', which shows how well the speakers prepared.
- Having just a few, well-developed points can help win by demonstrating clarity of purpose and strong logic.
- Each speaker should demonstrate a different style and technique commonly used in debate when they speak. For example:
  - Constant repetition of key points
  - Agreeing with the opposition
  - Thanking the opposition
  - Attacking with humor
  - Creating a snow of information
  - Detailing technical information
  - Reinforcing other speakers’ points
  - Summarizing.

**Teams:**

**Debate 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Debate 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Debate 1: (DATE)
Debate 2: (DATE)