

# Refutation and Rebuttal

## Adjudicator and Teacher



What separates debating from public speaking is the art of Refutation and Rebuttal.

To refute an argument is to produce evidence (facts and figures) in order to prove it untrue.

To rebut an argument is to disprove or discredit it by offering an alternative and stronger argument.

There are 10 marks available for Refutation and Rebuttal for speakers 2, 3 and 4. The captain can receive up to 10 marks for Refutation and Rebuttal in their closing speech only.

Students must clearly and accurately state the point they will be refuting in order to gain marks.

Quality is the key, rather than quantity. A really good point well delivered, that demolishes the main point of a previous speaker is more significant than a number of throwaway criticisms.

In the debate, there is an expectation that there will be more rebuttals from the third and fourth speakers than from the second, as they have heard more of the opponents' speeches.

It is advantageous for students to pre-empt what opponents may argue, however, this is not enough to score points for Refutation and Rebuttal. Speakers must state the argument they disagree with and why their opposition are wrong, backing up their point with referenced facts.

## Scoring system for marking Refutation and Rebuttal:

### Speaker 2,3,4 speeches

Need for improvement (1-4/10)	Good (5-6/10)	Very Good (7-8/10)	Excellent (9-10/10)
A vague statement prepared in advance, not addressing any member of the opposing school. More of a contradiction than a refutation or rebuttal.	One opposition point disproven with a new point of view, backed up with reputable sources.	Two opposition points disproven with a new point of view, backed up with reputable sources.	At least two points referring to the opposition points. The statement being refuted is clearly outlined. The speaker who said the statement is mentioned. The point is disproven with a sourced fact. Your point of view has been changed. You are left questioning the integrity of the original point made.

# REFUTATION AND REBUTTAL TEACHER AND ADJUDICATOR

## Scoring system for marking Refutation and Rebuttal

### Captain closing

Rebuttal of other team's arguments	<b>Need for improvement</b> (1-4/10)	<b>Good</b> (5-6/10)	<b>Very Good</b> (7-8/10)	<b>Excellent</b> (9-10/10)
10 marks	Failure to mention the other team's arguments equals 0 points. Mentioning the arguments but not backing up the points made with facts.	Contradicting the other team's arguments but lacking strong sources or facts.	Referencing one or two points made by the other team and backing up their point of view with facts and sources.	At least three points by the opposition are stated and clearly disproven with reputable facts and sources.

## Examples of Refutation and Rebuttal

'Speaker 3 claims that child labour affects only a few thousand children around the world, well according to the latest ILO report, that figure stands at 218 million'.

'Our opposition has argued that it is the fault of the people, the everyday consumer. But I disagree, it is the responsibility of government and big business to solve this problem, and I will tell you why....'

'Speaker 2, you said that multinational corporations working in the developing world such as Nestlé haven't cleaned up their act. I believe that it is not the responsibility of the multinationals but the governments, to legislate and enforce human rights and environmental sustainability within their countries, to protect their own nations.'