

Refutation and Rebuttal

Student

To refute an argument is to produce evidence (facts and figures) in order to prove it untrue e.g. *'our opposition claim 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.'*

To rebut an argument is to disprove or discredit it by offering an alternative and stronger argument, e.g. *'our opposition have 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...'*

There are 10 marks available for Refutation and Rebuttal for speakers 2, 3 and 4. The captain receives marks for Refutation and Rebuttal in their closing speech.

You need to convince the audience of your point of view using facts to pick apart your opposition's argument. To convince the adjudicator of your point you need to state the argument you disagree with and explain why your point is the correct one using facts.



- 1. State who has said the argument you wish to refute.**
- 2. Accurately state the argument you disagree with.**
- 3. State your pointy clearly.**
- 4. Back up your point with sourced facts.**

Example:

“Speaker 3 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...”

REFUTATION AND REBUTTAL STUDENT

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

Each speaker should make up to three points of refutation in order to gain full marks.

Tips for Refutation and Rebuttal

- Research both sides of the argument so you can pre-empt what your opposition might say.
- Listen to your opposition captain's speech to know what points the other team are going to make so you can have your arguments ready.
- Have a system for note taking during the debate and a structure for you to slot in your Refutation and Rebuttal into your speech easily.
- Use linking statements like "Let me tell you why that statement is simply incorrect", or "Have you thought about the impact of your statement".
- Make sure you accurately state the point you are refuting - if you misquote your opponent you will not receive marks for your rebuttal.
- Watch previous Concern Debates online for tips and sample speeches.



Examples of Refutation and Rebuttal

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.

The proposition have stated that globalisation is a force for good but I respectfully disagree - how can it be when globalisation is responsible for increased emissions across the world due to the transportation of goods. According to a report made by the International Transport Forum, 70% of freight is by ships which disrupt marine biodiversity all over the globe.

Speaker 4 you said that Britain aren't committed to vaccinating those in the developing world, however, according to the BBC News' latest broadcast Britain have vowed to donate all surplus vaccines by the end of the year.

