



# DebateFest Curriculum

We are providing a curriculum to help you prepare for success at DebateFest Competitions. Follow these steps and we will see you at one of our events.

## Program Structure

Duration: **6 Weeks**

Frequency: **5 days per week**

Time: **60 minutes per session**

Target: Grades **3–12 (scaffold by level)**

## Program Goals

### 1. Academic Development

- Improve reading comprehension through evidence use
- Strengthen writing using claim, evidence, reasoning (CER)
- Build mathematical reasoning and explanation skills

### 2. Communication & Behavior

- Teach students **how to disagree appropriately**
- Reduce conflict through structured discussion

- Increase respectful communication and listening

### 3. Debate Readiness

Prepare students for:

**Argumentum (debate)**

**Solve & Defend (math reasoning)**

Build confidence for **competitive performance**

#### Core Skills Built Daily

Claim → Evidence → Reasoning

Active listening

Perspective-taking

Public speaking

Team collaboration

Conflict resolution

#### Daily Structure ( 60 Minutes)

##### 1. Warm-up ( 10 Minutes)

- Quick discussion prompt / scenario
- Turn & talk / quick write

##### 2. Skill Mini- Lesson ( 10 Minutes)

- Teach 1 focused skill

##### 3. Guided Practice ( 20 Minutes)

- Small group activity / structured discussion

##### 4. Application Activity (15 Minutes)

- Debate, challenge, or presentation

## 5. Reflection (5 Minutes)

- “What did I learn?” / self-rating
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# WEEK- BY- WEEK CURRICULUM

## ◆ WEEK 1: FOUNDATION OF DISCUSSION & BEHAVIOR

### 🎯 Objective :

Students learn **how to communicate respectfully and participate in structured discussion**

### Key Skills:

- Listening
- Turn-taking
- Respectful disagreement

### Sample Daily Activities:

#### Day 1: What is Debate?

- Activity: “Argue vs Discuss” sorting activity
- Practice: Students compare arguing vs structured discussion

#### Day 2: Rules of Respect:

- Create class norms (anchor chart)
- Role-play good vs bad discussion behavior

#### Day 3: Sentence Stems:

- Teach:
  - “I agree because...”

- “I disagree because...”
- Practice structured partner discussions

### Day 4: Listening Skills:

- Activity: “Repeat what your partner said”
- Focus: Listening before responding

### Day 5: Mini Discussion Circle

- Topic: “Should school uniforms be required?”
  - Reflection on behavior and participation
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## ◆ WEEK 2: BUILDING ARGUMENTS (CER MODEL)

### 🎯 Objective:

Students learn to support ideas with **evidence instead of opinion**

### key Skills :

- Claim
- Evidence
- Reasoning

### Activities:

#### Day 1: What is Claim?

- Students turn opinions into claims

#### Day 2: Finding Evidence

- Use short articles/videos
- Highlight evidence

#### Day 3: Reasoning

- Explain: WHY does evidence support your claim?

### Day 4: Build an argument

- Students create CER responses

### Day 5: CER Challenge

- Teams compete to build strongest argument
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## ◆ WEEK 3: RESPONDING & COUNTERARGUMENTS

### 🎯 Objective:

Students learn to **respond instead of react**

### Key Skills:

- Counterarguments
- Rebuttals
- Staying calm under pressure

### Activities:

#### Day 1: What is a Counterargument?

- Practice seeing “both sides”

#### Day 2: Rebuttal Practice

- Students respond to sample arguments

#### Day 3: Emotion vs Logic

- Identify emotional vs logical responses

#### Day 4: Debate Circles

- Structured small debates

## Day 5: Reflection Debate

- Focus: respectful disagreement
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### ◆ WEEK 4: ARGUMENTUM (STRUCTURED DEBATE)

#### 🎯 Objective:

Students apply skills in **formal debate structure**

#### Key Skills:

- Team roles
- Speaking structure
- Evidence use

#### Activities:

##### Day 1: Debate Roles

- Speaker 1, 2, 3, 4 roles

##### Day 2: Organizing Arguments

- Intro → Evidence → Conclusion

##### Day 3: Practice Debate ( Small Groups)

##### Day 4: Timed Debate Rounds

##### Day 5: Feedback+ Coaching

- Peer scoring using rubric

### ◆ WEEK 5: SOLVE & DEFEND (MATH REASONING)

#### 🎯 Objective:

Students learn to **explain and defend mathematical thinking**

### Key Skills:

- Problem-solving
- Explanation
- Justification

### Activities:

#### Day 1: Non- Routine Problems

- Solve challenging problems

#### Day 2: Explain Your Thinking

- “How did you get that answer?”

#### Day 3: Defend Your Answer

- Students present solutions

#### Day 4: Challenge & Question

- Students question each other

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#### Day 5: Solve & Defend Competition Practice

- ◆ WEEK 6:COMPETITION PREP + SHOWCASE

#### 🎯 Objective:

Students demonstrate mastery and prepare for DebateFest

### Activities:

#### Day 1: Full Practice Debate

## Day 2: Strategy & Improvement

- Review weaknesses

## Day 3: Mock Competition

- Argumentum + Solve & Defend

## Day 4: Final Prep & Coaching

## Day 5: 🎉 DEBATEFEST SHOWCASE

- Live competition
- Awards:
  - Best Speaker
  - Best Team
  - Best Reasoning
  - Most Improved

## ✂️ DIFFERENTIATION (GRADES 3-12)

### Elementary (3-5)

- More visuals
- Sentence stems
- Shorter debates

### Middle (6-8)

- Structured CER writing
- Small group debates

### High School (9-12)

- Research-based arguments
- Advanced rebuttals
- Timed formal debates

## ASSESSMENT & TRACKING

## Pre/Post Measure:

- Speaking confidence
- Writing samples
- Participation levels

## Rubrics:

- Argument quality
- Evidence use
- Communication
- Teamwork

## PROGRAM IMPACT (WHAT YOU CAN PROMOTE)

This extension program directly supports:

- ✓ Improved behavior (less conflict, more structure)
- ✓ Increased engagement (active participation)
- ✓ Higher academic performance
- ✓ Stronger communication skills
- ✓ DebateFest competition readiness

## WHY THIS WORKS ( KEY MESSAGE YOU CAN USE)

“This program doesn’t just teach students to argue—it teaches them how to think, communicate, and handle disagreement in a structured, respectful way. That shift alone transforms both academic performance and student behavior.”