

Debate Workshop: Blocking Out a Case

Your name:

Your formal project is a debate between the revolutionary and loyalist camps of the American colonists. As part of that project, you have prepared a paper stating your side of the issue. You will find it helpful in debating the other side—as well as revising and sharpening your own case—if you can anticipate what kinds of arguments the other side is likely to make. Split up into two groups—the loyalists and the revolutionaries—and then follow these steps to block out the other side's arguments.

- Make a concise outline of your argument. This should state each of the main points you are going to make in only a few words. The outline only has to make sense to you—it does not have to be a thorough summary of each point.
- Next to each point, write down one or two arguments you think the other side could make. Try to think of what the best argument they could make would be.
- Now, in the next column, write down two responses that you would make in rebuttal to the other side. Number your responses to make them easier for someone listening to the debate and taking notes to keep track.

See the example on the other side of this page. Then use the attached flow sheet for your own arguments. [25 minutes]

After you have blocked out the other side's arguments, read over your flow sheet and think about 1) how it can strengthen your argument to anticipate what someone could say in response 2) why it might be an advantage to make more than one response 3) what to do if the other side ignores one of your arguments. [5 minutes to read, 15 minutes to discuss]

Your Argument

The Other Side's Response

Your Rebuttal

1) Parliament has sent many officers to the colonies to collect fees that take away our hard-earned money.

1) The fees are reasonable and necessary for running a colony.

1) We have managed our affairs ourselves with little assistance from Britain. The fees are a drain on our coffers, not a reimbursement for expenses.

2) Many of the officers are corrupt.

2) Taxes are higher for subjects in Great Britain.

1) Taxes should be higher in Britain because Parliament provides the people in Britain with more services.

2) Parliament's powers are not the same in the realm and in the colonies.

2)

1)

1)

2)

2)

1)

2)

3)

1)

1)

2)

1)

2)

2)

Your Argument	The Other Side's Response	Your Rebuttal
1)	1)	1)
		2)
		1)
	2)	2)
		1)
2)	1)	2)
		1)
	2)	2)
		1)
3)	1)	2)
		1)
		2)
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