Introduction to Debate

Presentation: Lesson Content

1. Basic Terms

- _____: a game in which two opposing teams make speeches to support their arguments and disagree with those of the other team.
- _____: the opinion about which two teams argue.
- _____: agrees with the resolution.
- _____: disagrees with the resolution.
- _____: explains why one team disagrees with the other team.
- _____: decide the winner.

2. Opinions and Reasons

- A resolution is an **opinion** about which there can be valid disagreement. The students either agree or disagree with the resolution regardless of what they personally believe. An opinion can be introduced by an **opinion indicator**:
  - ✓ **"I think/believe that** smoking should be banned in public places..."

- A **reason** explains why that opinion is held and can be introduced by **a reason indicator**:
  - ✓ **"...because/since** secondhand smoke is harmful for nonsmokers."

3. Types of Opinions

There are three types of opinions: Value, Policy and Fact.
- Value (X is better than Y) – Opinions of value state that one thing is better than another.
  Example: I think that dogs are better pets than cats.

- Policy (X should do Y) – Opinions of policy say that the government or some other person should do something.
  Example: I feel that the government should lower taxes.

- Fact (X is/was/will be True) – Opinions of fact state that something is true, was true, or will become true.
  Example: The Earth is getting warmer.

4. Strong Reasons Versus Weak Reasons:

- According to LeBeau, Harrington, Lubetsky (2000), a strong reason has the following qualities:
  - o it logically supports the opinion.
  - o it is specific and states the idea clearly.
  - o it is convincing to a majority of people.

  Example: Smoking should be banned in public places because: **Check the best Reason.**

  - ▪ it is bad.
  - ▪ it gives people bad breath and makes their teeth yellow.
  - ▪ secondhand smoke is harmful for nonsmokers.

  Why did you choose that answer:

Practice:

1. Complete the Opinion of Value, Policy and Fact handout in your Workbook.
2. In the space below write your own opinion for each type based on the topic your instructor will give you.

Opinion of Value:

Opinion of Policy:

Opinion of Fact: