

You are a new member of the English Debating Club. Mrs Karen Lam, the advisor of the club, is introducing the new members to the major components of a debate and some effective ways to prepare for a debate speech. Listen to Mrs Lam's speech and complete the notes below.

Major components of a debate:

1. A debate topic: _____
2. The team that speaks for the topic: the affirmative or _____ side
3. The team that speaks against the topic: the negative or _____ side
4. Arguments criticising the points presented by the opponents: _____

Writing an effective debate speech:

What to do		Why
1. research the topic and gather evidence	→	back up the arguments
2. use quotations from the speeches of famous people or statistics from research studies	→	
3.	→	strengthen the arguments
4.	→	make the audience think

Major components of a debate:

1. A debate topic: motion
2. The team that speaks for the topic: the affirmative or proposition side
3. The team that speaks against the topic: the negative or opposition side
4. Arguments criticising the points presented by the opponents: rebuttals

Writing an effective debate speech:

What to do		Why
1. research the topic and gather evidence	→	back up the arguments
2. use quotations from the speeches of famous people or statistics from research studies	→	<i>add force to the speech</i>
3. <i>include the pros and cons of the issue/ include arguments of both sides</i>	→	strengthen the arguments
4. <i>use questions</i>	→	make the audience think

Transcript for Audio Clip 3.1

Mrs Lam:	Good afternoon, students. Welcome to the first workshop of the English Debating Club. I'm Mrs Karen Lam, the advisor of the club. Today, I'm going to introduce the major components of a debate and explain how to prepare for a debate speech. As you are new members, I won't expect you to participate in a debate right after today's workshop. Instead, I will focus on some reasoning and critical thinking skills, which are essential in debates. I also hope that you will have learnt how to write a debate speech by the end of this workshop.	5
	Well, I guess all of you may have some idea of what a debate is. In a debate, there must be a topic to discuss or argue. The topic for a debate is called 'motion'. Motions are often about current issues of public concern. In a debate, there are two sides to discussing a motion. The team that agrees with the motion is called the 'Affirmative' or 'Proposition' side whereas the team that disagrees with the motion is called the 'Negative' or 'Opposition' side. In a debate, each team will present reasons to support their side. They will also respond to the reasons presented by the previous speaker. This is called 'rebuttal'. 'Rebuttal' is part and parcel of a debate because it helps you persuade the audience to accept your views and make your opponents' arguments sound unconvincing.	10 15
	Well, I've more or less covered the major components of a debate. Now, I'd like to give you some tips on writing a debate speech. There is no hard and fast rule in writing a debate speech. But first and foremost, you should gather information related to the debate topic. Arguments without evidence are empty words, so you should make use of references, like the Internet, newspapers or magazines, to back up your arguments. Don't forget to use quotations from the speeches of famous people or statistics from research studies to add force to your speech.	20
	After researching the topic, you may study the subject from different angles. In this workshop, all of you have to write a debate speech either for or against the motion 'The Internet does more harm than good to our everyday life.' You need to think up all the questions that may be brought up. Think about the pros and cons of the issue, analyse the arguments of both sides and state your opinions on why you believe you are right. In fact, we can strengthen our arguments and make them convincing by including different views in the arguments. To engage your audience, ask them some questions in your speech to let them think about the issue more carefully.	25 30
	After you have drafted your arguments, putting the bits and pieces together is fairly simple. Later on in the workshop, I will give you a sample debate speech for your reference and you can understand better how you can structure a speech.	35
	I have always enjoyed the cut and thrust of a clever debate. I hope that you can gradually pick up the skills of debating in the workshop and enjoy the fun of debating.	

- A. Idiomatic pairs are formed by pairs of adverbs, nouns, prepositions, adjectives and verbs. When taken together, they have a different meaning from that of each individual word. They are often used by native speakers of English in both writing and speaking. These pairs of words are usually linked by 'and' or 'or'. Below is an example of an idiomatic pair.

‘“Rebuttal” is part and parcel of a debate because it helps you persuade the audience to accept your views and make your opponents’ arguments sound unconvincing.’

Idiomatic Pair	Meaning
part and parcel	an essential part

- B. Below are the idiomatic pairs used by Mrs Lam in her speech. Match the pairs with the appropriate meanings.

Well, I’ve more or less covered the major components of a debate.

There is no hard and fast rule in writing a debate speech. But first and foremost, you should gather information related to the debate topic.

Think about the pros and cons of the issue, analyse the arguments of both sides and state your opinions on why you believe you are right.

After you have drafted your arguments, putting the bits and pieces together is fairly simple.

I have always enjoyed the cut and thrust of a clever debate.

Idiomatic pair	Meaning
1. part and parcel	d
2. more or less	
3. hard and fast	
4. first and foremost	
5. pros and cons	
6. bits and pieces	
7. cut and thrust	

Meaning		
a. advantages and disadvantages	b. fixed	c. the most important, coming before all other things
d. an essential part	e. the energetic exchange of words and ideas in an argument	f. roughly or approximately
g. small parts		

- C. Since idiomatic pairs are mostly made up of words with one syllable or words beginning with the same initial sound, they create a rhythmic cadence when used in a speech. When read aloud, 'and' or 'or' should be unstressed, and the ending sound of the first word and the initial sound of the conjunction should be linked together. The following is an example:

hard and fast
 ● ● ●

part and parcel
 ● ● ●

Now, practise reading aloud the idiomatic pairs with the one sitting next to you. Remember to use the correct stress and links.

B.

Idiomatic pair	Meaning
1. part and parcel	d
2. more or less	f
3. hard and fast	b
4. first and foremost	c
5. pros and cons	a
6. bits and pieces	g
7. cut and thrust	e