

ENGLISH

DEBATE WRITING

What is a Debate?

A debate is a formal discussion on a subject about which people have different opinions. It is like an argument but in a formal setup. For instance, some people are in favour of lavish marriage ceremonies, while some feel that marriages should be simple and low-key affairs. Some people think that computers are important for children, while others feel that they spoil them. These and many more issues can be debated upon by engaging in a persuasive speech

Debate Writing

- A debate is a formal way of arguing in favour or against a topic.
- It is generally in the format of a speech.
- A debate is presented in front of an audience.
- The audience includes students, the Principal and teachers, and may have a Chairperson or a Chief Guest.
- The speaker's intention is to win the interest of the audience with persuasive comments expressing his stand on the topic.
- A good speaker knows what the opposition is going to say and hence is always ready with a counter argument in advance.

Points to Remember while Writing a Debate

- Address the audience before you begin your discussion.
- Do mention whether you are in favour or against the given topic or motion or issue.
- Write a debate speech of at least 150–180 words.
- Use short and grammatically correct sentences to present your views.
- Use a variety of words and phrases to make the debate interesting.
- Avoid using harsh language or impolite expressions while expressing your opinion.
- Avoid repetition, as this will make your argument weak and uninteresting.



Debate Samples

SAMPLE 1

Students should be held legally responsible for bullying in schools.

For the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I speak for the motion – Students should be held legally responsible for bullying in schools.

Bullying is very common in schools in India. Students often use their strength or power to dominate weaker pupils.

The bullied individual feels humiliated, powerless, traumatised and often also suffers serious injuries. An 11-year-old girl from Kolkata died of shock after she was locked in her school toilet by some senior girls and had to stay there for hours. The girl died before she reached the hospital. In another case, a student from an affluent school in one of the metros suffered permanent brain damage after he was gagged by his classmates in the toilet. The boy was 12 years old and was being bullied for almost an entire semester only because he was from a financially weaker background.

Children who are bullied suffer from depression and anxiety. They are known to isolate themselves from their peers and experience extreme sadness and loneliness. Their health is known to deteriorate; in fact, some victims have suffered serious injuries or have even died as a result of bullying.

Therefore, I consider bullying as a criminal offence and strongly feel the need for legal intervention to deal with bullying in schools. If bullying becomes a criminal offence, it will act as deterrence to this inappropriate behaviour.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I speak against the motion – Students should be held legally responsible for bullying in schools.

I agree that a bully is a quarrelsome, overbearing person who intimidates smaller or weaker students. However, I strongly feel that bullies are mentally and emotionally disturbed, and hence, they need counselling or even psychiatric care rather than punishment.

Research has shown that students who bully may have been bullied in the past in the family or by peers. Children often use bullying to replace the social skills that they lack. Studies and reports have shown that some bullies belong to emotionally disturbed families and hence use bullying to displace their frustration and helplessness.

Children are the future of tomorrow. Bullying should be treated as a behavioural abnormality rather than a criminal offence. If bullies are treated as criminals and punished legally, they can actually become hardcore criminals when they grow up. What they need is care and attention rather than punishment.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 2**Should video games be banned?****For the motion:**

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I will speak in favour of banning video games.

The gap between the real and the virtual world is fast diminishing with video games. However, I strongly feel that the world of video games drags us far away from reality and affects our overall wellbeing.

Children who play more video games are likely to be more aggressive than their peers. They show low level of patience and tolerance in crisis or difficult situations. In some shooting games, the players are assassins who have weapons to kill their opponents. Such games present crime as an enticing and passion-filled world and promote violence and destruction. Some games teach children that breaking rules and risking life are exciting and full of fun.

Increased hours in front of the game screen causes strain to the eyes and the body, which may lead to chronic illnesses at a very young age. A recent study has shown that teenage boys are likely to suffer from poor bone health if they have been spending more than six hours in front of a screen.

When children spend most of their time playing virtual games, they socially isolate themselves as they spend less time with friends and engage in very little physical activity.

Thus, it is clear that video games are addictive and can affect academic performance seriously, as studies have shown that children often skip their homework to play games. Thus, video games should be banned as they hamper the overall progress of a child.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I would like to speak against the motion video games should be banned.

Researchers have listed many advantages of playing video games. Reports suggest that playing video games is like indulging in a brain workout.

Games that stimulate stressful events train an individual for real-life situations. Many action games help children come up with strategic ways to solve problems. They tend to develop a healthier attitude to competition and tricky situations.

The motor and spatial skills and hand–eye coordination of children are sharpened when they play shooting games or games that require the player to react spontaneously to save themselves.

Before a game begins, children are required to read and follow the instructions of that game. This improves their ability to follow instructions and read for a purpose.

Video games not only boost memory but also cognitive skills. Video games such as *SimCity*, according to reports, are known to have inspired many players, both young and old, to make a career in urban planning and architecture.

Games such as *Farmville* require players to take care of farmlands and animals. These inculcate a sense of compassion and responsibility in children. Thus, playing games helps in the overall development of children, and hence, they shouldn't be banned.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 3**Smartphones should not be allowed in schools.****For the motion:**

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I will speak in favour of the motion – Smartphones should not be allowed in schools.

With great privilege comes great responsibility and risk. When children are allowed to use smartphones in schools, they assume to have the freedom to act according to their will.

Most of the smartphones available in the market have cameras and GPS. While parents might find it easy to track their children's location through GPS, children can learn to manipulate phone settings in no time. In addition, pictures clicked on the smartphone are shared between classmates and uploaded on social platforms, the security of which is highly debatable. Since it is difficult to track the history of how the phone is being used, the safety and security of students are at a high risk.

Students who have short attention spans are likely to go on a texting spree in the middle of a class instead of listening to the teachers. Since it is likely that they would message someone in the same class or school, more than a single student or a class is disturbed. Smartphones allow students to talk to students from other schools and to adults which are not in the school environment or approved by parents.

Parents may argue that smartphones help them to keep a tab on their children. However, the biggest flipside of giving students smartphones is that they can be outside the school and still lie to their parents that they are in class. The best way to keep a track of children is calling up the school.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I will speak against the motion – Smartphones should not be allowed in schools.

Mobile technology is reaching new highs today and it wouldn't be an understatement to say that schools should allow the use of smartphones for faster exchange of information and effective sharing of knowledge.

Smartphones are enabled with all the features of a computer. Students from different classes within a school and those across the world can connect with each other through mobile applications and engage in a global learning experience.

Many leading dictionaries are accessible through mobile applications. All you need to have is a smartphone with an Internet connection, and learning will become more accessible than ever.

A camera-equipped smartphone can make class assignments and school projects an enjoyable experience as students can develop photo essays and use the phone camera to click images needed for the assignments.

Apart from its use for academic progress, in case of an emergency, smartphones are the fastest way children can contact their family and get help. Safety applications on smartphones allow users to activate location tracking, emergency SMS and call services with just a single tap on the application. Such arrangements can save lives and avert dangerous situations.

The uses of a smartphone are not limited to calling and texting. Technological advancement has made it possible to benefit from owning a smartphone. Thus, schools should allow the use of smartphones.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 4**Terrorism can only be countered by war.****For the motion:**

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, today I will speak for the motion – Terrorism can only be countered by war.

The prime goal of the defence system of a country is the safety of the regions and the people. Terrorism has always been jeopardising lives. Therefore, if a country needs to fight against such groups, war is justified. Attack is the best form of defence.

Terrorist groups have a strong and sophisticated network, which can be counteracted only with an equally strong defence system. Therefore, military operation is crucial in breaking the network completely.

Terrorists groups have no regard for rules of international harmony and concord. Therefore, the use of force in the form of war is justified.

The number of terrorists and terrorists groups present in the world today is mind-boggling. The world can be freed from their grips only if they are attacked and wiped out completely.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, today I will speak against the motion – Terrorism can only be countered by war.

Terrorist groups are neither confined nor limited to a single country. Therefore, engaging a country's military to wage war against such groups is inappropriate.

When countries are engaged in wars, there is tremendous loss of life and property. War forces civilians to give up their social rights in exchange for their safety. However, once the war has stopped, terrorists will once again wreak havoc in the lives of people.

The additional power given in the hands of the ruling bodies during wartime is often misused and resources are wasted. A great deal of time and money is wasted in the name of war. It takes years for a country to regain normal function after a war. Therefore, war is not an option to fight terrorism. Terrorist groups entice poor and helpless youngsters by convincing them that becoming a terrorist is a way of getting all your freedom back.

Violence begets violence. If terrorists are attacked, then they are likely to turn their wrath on innocent people. Therefore, war against terrorism is not justified.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 5**Animal testing should be banned.****For the motion:**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Today, I will talk in favour of why animal testing should be banned. The use of animals to test the possible effects of cosmetics and drugs on human beings is an inhuman and an unethical practice. Animals too experience pain and suffering like humans, and they should not be involved in experimental procedures.

Testing involves exposing animals to harmful chemicals. Often, they suffer from reactions and show harmful side effects of the chemicals used on them. Some animals die, while many are crippled or blinded for life.

Animals too have a right to life, and it is inappropriate to intentionally cause pain and suffering to another living being, just to ensure that the human race lives a pain-free life. Alternative methods are now available and should be used to test cosmetics and drugs instead of causing harm to animals.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, today I will speak against the motion – Animal testing should be banned.

The human race has evolved to be the most supreme of all because of its intelligence and the ability to find solutions for its problems. It is appropriate to indirectly use animals for experimental testing as they cannot do the actual research and it doesn't make much sense to risk precious human life.

Humans contribute to the economy and productivity of the world. Using them for experiments can affect the economy. However, animals can be put to some use by using them as subjects for bringing about a breakthrough in scientific advancement.

Animal testing has lead to many life-saving cures and treatments. The world sees less of polio patients and is seeing major advances in understanding and treating conditions such as cancer, brain injury and tuberculosis. Animals like mice have a shorter lifespan, which is why it is possible to test the effect of a drug on mice over a period of a lifetime.

Because animals are similar to human beings in many ways, they are appropriate research subjects. Chimpanzees and mice share more than 95% of their DNA with humans.

Necessary safety measures are taken into account while conducting tests on animals. Hence, it is fair to use animals for experiments rather than risking human life.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 6**Uniforms should not be compulsory in schools.****For the motion:**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Today, I will talk in favour of why uniforms should not be compulsory in schools.

A uniform is a set of clothes that is commonly worn by students and other people. However, I think that wearing a uniform makes school life dull and boring. Children are the future of the world, and they should be allowed to dress up the way they like. This is likely to stimulate their imagination and encourage them to have a good time in schools. This will positively reflect on their grades and overall performance.

Uniforms stop students from expressing themselves freely. If they are going to see a uniform dress code everywhere in the school, students might cease to think differently, which will surely kill their unique identity. When they all look the same, children are unconsciously limiting their thought processes and killing their imagination.

Many schools enforce a dress code that strictly requires boys to wear pants and girls to wear skirts. This kind of stereotyping affects how children view themselves and encourages gender discrimination on the basis of attire.

Uniforms make schools an institution where a student might be reluctant to go because of too many rules and regulations. Hence, uniforms shouldn't be made compulsory in schools.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, today I will speak against the motion – Uniforms should not be compulsory in schools.

A uniform refers to an unvarying set of clothing worn by students. A school admits students from different social classes. Wearing a uniform leads to less discrimination among students based on appearance. Students are relaxed when they don't have to show their peers that they follow the latest fashion trends. A dress code enforces fewer fashion distractions and helps students concentrate on studies, helping them improve their grades.

A uniform gives a school its unique identity. Psychological research has shown that students in uniformed schools have fewer absences and less behaviour problems. Uniforms help in creating a sense of modesty and equality.

School uniforms ensure discipline and modesty in the school, and therefore, I think they shouldn't be banned.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 7**College students should be given unlimited freedom.****For the motion:**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I strongly believe that college students should be given freedom. College students are very close to adulthood and it only makes sense that they are given all the freedom they want.

Parents usually tend to shield their children away from difficult and controversial situations so that they are not harmed in any way. As a result, when children assume their own responsibilities, they lack confidence and are distant from reality. If they are given freedom to explore possibilities and think for themselves in their teenage years, by the time they become mature, children will be able to make sensible decisions and handle many situations in life independently.

College students should be given a chance to distinguish good from bad on their own. When they are allowed to do this, they become better at judging people and making decisions. This helps them lead a life with few problems or at least in a way that is hassle-free.

College students are neither adults nor children. You can neither coax them nor treat them too delicately. At such a delicate juncture in their life, they should be given unlimited freedom so they discover themselves.

Thank you

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I strongly believe that college students shouldn't be given unlimited freedom.

College students are teenagers who are curious, carefree and who have little sense of judgement. They cannot identify good from bad, and hence, they should always be given guidance at such a delicate juncture of their life.

At the threshold of adulthood, college students are both curious and confused, and they try to blindly imitate elders to prove that they have grown up. They may end up making bad decisions which may affect their lives. Such disastrous consequences can be avoided if they are guided by mature elders and family members.

The world is not just good or bad. There is a lot of grey to life. Parents and elders are in a better position to help students identify and evaluate different situations in life. Therefore, students shouldn't be given unlimited freedom.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 8**Internet and computers mean the end of books.****For the motion:**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I agree that the Internet and computers mean the end of books. Sales of books have been falling ever since books were made available online. Although the world has come closer than ever via the Internet, it has also made it possible for people to read on the go.

A large chunk of the literate population spends most of its waking hours in front of the computer or on the Internet. People work online, communicate online and even read online. With e-books, one can have access to thousands of books without having to carry them physically. Why then would someone buy a book if the same is available on the Internet?

Books are expensive and need to be preserved and maintained. Over a period of time, the pages tear and information can be lost. However, the Internet has online archives for readers and these can always be sourced through search engines using relevant key words. Moreover, you don't even need to walk up to a book shelf or a library to read online. If you have a smartphone or a computer with an Internet connection, you can read whatever you want wherever you are.

Computers have the space to store and save vast information without having to carry it around all the time. Therefore, I strongly feel that the Internet and computers mean the end of books.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, I don't believe that the Internet and computers mean the end of books. Nothing can replace the joy of holding a book and feeling its print.

The Internet will be of no use where there are connectivity issues. An e-book reader will need regular charging, which may not be possible when you are travelling. On the other hand, books need neither the Internet nor charging. You can read them wherever you are and whenever you want.

You cannot touch or feel the pages when you read it online. Research has shown that readers absorb more while reading a book than by reading online. By feeling the pages of the book, they are able to identify with the characters and the writing. The touch and the feel of a book make reading books a very personal experience.

Research has also shown that students who read texts in print have scored better on the reading comprehension test than students who read texts digitally.

Computers may store a lot of information, but if servers crash and the Internet fails, one can always enjoy books snuggling in a favourite cosy corner and have an enjoyable reading experience.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 9**Juvenile offenders should be tried and punished as adults.****For the motion:**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Today, I will speak for the motion – Juvenile offenders should be tried and punished as adults.

Juvenile offenders are those who are below 18 years of age and have participated in illegal behaviour. One of the six accused in the 2012 Delhi gang rape in India was a juvenile. However, the juvenile justice board said that he would not be tried as an adult. The victim was raped and assaulted with a metal rod, by the accused, and this led to her death.

Researchers have reported that by the age of 14, a person can differentiate between right and wrong. Therefore, juvenile offenders should be tried taking into account the gravity of their crime. For instance, children caught committing petty crimes should be sent to correction centres and not sentenced to harsh punishments. However, those who are involved in grievous crimes should be tried and punished like adult criminals.

One of the prime reasons why juvenile defenders protest against severe punishment for juveniles is a hope that they learn from their mistakes and don't become criminals in the future. But doesn't a juvenile know that he has ruined someone's future by assaulting or killing a person? If he or she didn't think about the victim, why should the law show mercy?

Juvenile offenders should be strictly screened and tried depending on the gravity of the crime committed. This alone will act as deterrence to crimes at all levels.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, today I will argue against the motion – Juvenile offenders should be tried and punished as adults.

Juvenile offenders are below 18 years of age and have their whole life in front of them. If they are tried and punished as adults, the severity of the punishment will destroy their lives.

Conditions in prisons are hostile and can provoke deviant behaviour instead of deterring it. Allowing a teenager to grow up among criminals in a prison is giving him a chance to become a seasoned criminal. On the other hand, if he is sent to correction and rehabilitation centres, the positive environment and appropriate counselling will help him become a better person.

It is very easy to differentiate right from wrong but not many people know how to handle the grey areas of life. It is at such tricky junctures that children take law into their hands and become criminals. The only way to change this is to treat juvenile offenders sensitively instead of punishing them like adult criminals.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 10**Fast food should be banned.****For the motion:**

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, today I will speak for the motion – Fast food should be banned.

Fast food refers to a variety of food items, such as fries, burgers and rolls, prepared and served very quickly. Most of the ingredients used in making these quick meals are either canned, dehydrated or chemically processed.

Some ingredients found in fast food include trans fat, artificial sweeteners and colours, MSG and preservatives. Regular consumption of such unhealthy food leads to obesity, diabetes and heart disease among other health complications.

The ingredients in fast food only add calories to your body and do not supply it with nutrients required to build a healthy immune system. As a result, the person is susceptible to illness, low on energy and stamina, and at the risk of ageing prematurely.

The high fat content and little nutritional value make it obvious why fast food should be banned. Opting for healthy food habits, on the other hand, makes you stronger and improves your quality of life.

Thank you.

Against the motion:

Respected Principal, teachers and dear friends, today I will argue against the motion – Fast food should be banned.

Fast food has made it possible for people to be able to have their meal even if they have little time. This ensures that they don't starve themselves owing to hectic lifestyles.

Cooking a meal takes more time and is not always convenient in today's hectic life. Fast food is filling and satisfies your hunger. Moreover, it is tastier than home-cooked food and makes eating an enjoyable experience.

Although fast food has unhealthy ingredients, outlets have healthier alternatives available in their menus. People should order responsibly so that their health is not affected.

Fast food makes it possible for people from all classes to have a meal. Moreover, fast-food outlets employ millions of people. Therefore, fast food should not be banned.

Thank you.