**Secret Topics**

A- C Grade – Various Rounds

This resource guide considers what teams should aim to do both **before** secret topic rounds and **during** prep time on the night.

**Before** the debate:

* ***Do*** read newspaper articles and pay attention to the news so you get an idea of topical issues that may come up in a debate.
* ***Do*** consider what you might argue in relation to news stories you read.
* ***Do*** print out and bring to the debate any resources that might help you.
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* ***Do not*** bring whole newspapers or heavy textbooks on every topic: This will only slow you down.

**On the night:**

* ***Do*** make sure you arrive *on time* for topic release. You will only have one hour to prepare for the debate and every minute counts!
* ***Do*** make sure you have correctly written down the topic and which side of the debate you are on.
* ***Do*** make sure you follow the rules of secret topic prep. That means:
  + ***Do not*** use electronic devices including iPads, computers or phones;
  + ***Do not*** arrive late to your debate;
  + ***Do not*** speak to or receive help from persons outside your team, including teachers and parents;
  + ***Do not*** prepare with more than five team members, even if your team is much bigger.
  + ***Do*** feel free to speak to the Regional Coordinator if you need to clarify the meaning of the topic or check what side you are on.

**During** prep time:

* ***Do*** spend the first 5-10 minutes of prep time brainstorming arguments.
* ***Do*** remember to think about the big issues in this brainstorming time: Individual Freedom, Role of Government, Ability to Consent, Economic Impact, Impact on fairness, rather than punchy lines.
* ***Do*** chat to your teammates about the most important arguments on your side of the debate and decide which speaker will say which argument. Remember, your most important arguments should be presented by the first speaker and your third speaker should not present any arguments. If you can’t see how the argument furthers your main case, do not include it.
* ***Do*** remember to define the topic, think about a model if necessary, and above all else explain what your team is trying to achieve or prove in the debate.
* ***Do*** write down your arguments on cue cards, try doing this in dot points so you don’t run out of time.
* ***Do*** remember to leave time in your speech for rebuttal, and to think in advance what the other team might say
* ***Do*** leave 5 minutes at the end of prep time to practice your speech.
* ***Do not*** panic – you are going to do just fine!