

Debates/Arguments

1. A strong argument has the following qualities:

- it logically supports the opinion.
- it is specific and states the idea clearly.
- it is convincing to a majority of people.

— The example of strong reasons versus weak reasons:

- Smoking should be banned in public places because:
 - It is bad.
 - It gives people bad breath and makes their teeth yellow.
 - Secondhand smoke is harmful for nonsmokers.

2. Ways to State Reasons: Review the Following for Linguistic Scaffolding

- Comparison: X is _____ er than Y. OR: X is more _____ than Y.
- Cause-and-effect: X causes Y. OR: If you do X, then Y will happen.

3. Giving Support for Your Reasons

Support consists of evidence. The four kinds of evidence are:

- **Example:** from your own experience or from what you heard or read.
- **Common Sense:** things that you believe everybody knows.
- **Expert Opinion:** the opinions of experts -- this comes from research.
- **Statistics:** numbers -- this also comes from research.

Example:

Statement: Smoking should be banned in all public places.

Example: For example / for instance / let me give an example

Whenever I go to a restaurant or bar and there are people smoking near me, I feel that I am breathing their smoke. This makes me a smoker even though I don't want to be.

Common Sense: Everyone knows / if...then / it's common knowledge that

Secondhand smoke is very unhealthy for nonsmokers.

Statistics:

Secondhand smoke causes about 250,000 respiratory infections in infants and children every year, resulting in about 15,000 hospitalizations each year.

Expert Opinion: According to.../ to quote.../ the book _____ says...

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "secondhand smoke causes approximately 3,000 lung cancer deaths in nonsmokers each year."

4. Four Step Rebuttal

- **STEP 1: "They say ..."**
 - State the argument that you are about to refute so that the judges can follow easily. Take notes during your opponent's speeches so you will be clear about what they argued.
 - **"The other team said that** smoking is harmful for nonsmokers."
- **STEP 2: "But I disagree..." Or "That may be true, but..."**
 - **"That may be true, but** I think that if nonsmokers want to avoid cigarette smoke, they can walk away from it."
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- **STEP 3: "Because ..."**
 - **"Because** nonsmokers should look out for their own health."
- **STEP 4: "Therefore..."**
 - **"Therefore** it is not the responsibility of smokers to protect nonsmokers."

Class Task:

With Your Partner, Think of at Least Two Strong Reason for Each Resolution:

1. Love is more important than money.

REASON:

2. It is better to be married than single.

REASON:

3. Writing by hand is better than writing by computer.

REASON: