



21ST CENTURY DEBATE

A DEEPER LEARNING APPROACH TO DEBATE EDUCATION

[Research] September/October 2022: U.S. High-Speed Rail

The debate topics for the 2022-2023 Fall Session will be the same for all grades:

Increasing high-speed rail in the U.S. is desirable.



Will a new oversight position help California's high-speed rail plans get on track? (Cal-Matters, 2022-07-07)

BACKGROUND:

The U.S. has no high-speed trains, besides a few small sections of Amtrak's Acela line in the Northeast Corridor. China has more than 19,000 miles of high-speed rail, the vast majority of which was built in the past decade. Japan's bullet trains date back to the 1960s. France began service of the high-speed TGV train in 1981 and the rest of Europe quickly followed. Watch the video to see why the U.S. continues to fail with high-speed trains, and the companies that are trying to fix that. - [CNBC News, May 7, 2019](#)

The main disadvantage of high-speed trains, other than their slow speeds compared with air travel, is that they require a huge amount of infrastructure that must be built and maintained to extremely precise standards. Since the United States is struggling to maintain the infrastructure it already has—particularly its urban rail transit systems and Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, which together have more than \$200 billion in maintenance backlogs—it makes no sense to build more infrastructure that the nation won't be able to afford to maintain. - [CATO Institute, April 20, 2021](#)



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REQUIRED RESEARCH (VIDEOS):

Will A High-Speed Rail Network Ever Be Built In The U.S.?,

NBC News, August 21, 2021 [4 min]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYBSYreY3Ak>

Biden's infrastructure plan and the future of high-speed rail in the U.S.,

Yahoo Finance, July 19, 2021 [7 min]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVdHUpP6z6M>

This high-speed rail project is a warning for the US,

Vox Media, July 29, 2022 [8 min]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0dSm_ClcSw

Why the U.S. has failed with high-speed rail compared to the rest of the world,

CNBC News, May 7, 2019 [16 min]

<https://www.cnn.com/video/2019/05/07/high-speed-rail-in-the-us-is-a-failure-heres-why.html>

REQUIRED RESEARCH (ARTICLES):

Why the U.S. needs to get on track with high-speed rail,

Marilyn Waite, GreenBiz News Blog, August 24, 2021

<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/why-us-needs-get-track-high-speed-rail>

Benefits of High-Speed Rail for the United States,

American Public Transportation Association, March 17, 2021

<https://www.apta.com/research-technical-resources/high-speed-passenger-rail/benefits-of-high-speed-rail-for-the-united-states/>

High-Speed Rail Money Sink: Why the United States Should Not Spend Trillions on Obsolete Technology,

Randal O'Toole, CATO Institute, April 20, 2021

<https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/high-speed-money-sink-why-united-states-should-not-spend-trillions-obsolete>

Note: This is a rather long article, please skim it. Elementary students are allowed to skip it.

CONTACT INFORMATION (Coach Bill):

Bill Eddy,

billeddy@21stcenturydebate.org

714.655.8135 (I prefer text)

When contacting me, please include your name and class information (day/time).

Thanks!