



# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY DEBATE

A DEEPER LEARNING APPROACH TO DEBATE EDUCATION

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Debate Institute – Great Pumpkin Debates

Welcome to the **Great Pumpkin Debates**, which takes place on Saturday, October 28, 2023, from 5pm to 9pm (Eastern), which is Sunday, October 29th in China/Korea. This will be a virtual event (Zoom) for students in grades 3-9 (grades 1-2 with permission). [[Registration & Resources](#)]

This event is meant to be a fun experience for students and an excellent volunteer opportunity for the older and more experienced students as well. All are welcome and this “seasonal” event is open to everyone and some of the events are completely free. There will be prizes for the top teams, speakers, and costumes (as well as a “crossfire” event).

We at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Debate Institute believe debate education to be a powerful vehicle for delivering a deeper learning experience to our participants. We want this to be a low-stress, fun, and meaningful opportunity for everyone who attends.

**“Skills” Debate Topic:** *On balance, self-driving vehicles are desirable.*

**Public Forum:** *U.S. government should substantially increase its military presence in the Arctic.*

**Costume Contest:** Prizes are awarded for the best costumes displaying excellence in...  
*Quality, Accuracy, Effort, and Presentation.*

**Description:** Costumes of all age-appropriate types (homemade or store-bought) are allowed. *For example...* Superheroes, puppies, pirates, wizards, and robots; all are welcome! We are looking for colorful, exciting, well-crafted, and creative costumes in this Halloween-themed event.

Everyone is welcome to participate in the Halloween costume contest! Debaters, judges, and observers are all welcome to wear costumes and win prizes. It’s all about having as much fun as zoom events allow.

### Steps Involved in the Costume Event (See Last Page for More Details)

1. **Initial Interview:** Judges will ask you to describe/explain your costume.
2. **Speaking in Character:** Judges will ask you to speak in the voice of your character or use a “catchphrase,” based on your character.
3. **Act/Pose in Character:** Judges will ask you to “strike a pose,” to leave a lasting impression.

**“Thank you,” to those volunteering your time and energy** to this worthy cause – we are deeply appreciative of your support, and we hope we can count on you to volunteer again. Being a judge requires no previous experience. All we ask is for you to be fair-minded in your decision making and for you to provide objective and honest feedback. It is the job of the debaters to convince you about their arguments and ideas, so please don’t feel as if you (the judge) need to do any prior research about debate or the topic. Young elementary students can also volunteer to be a judge!  
**IMPORTANT:** Please stay off the phone and give the debaters your *undivided attention*.



# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY DEBATE

A DEEPER LEARNING APPROACH TO DEBATE EDUCATION

## Guiding Principles of the Event:

**Three Burdens in Debate:** Proof, refutation, and rejoinder.

[https://debate.uvm.edu/dcpdf/Gary\\_Rybold\\_Speaking\\_Listening\\_Understnding\\_2006.pdf](https://debate.uvm.edu/dcpdf/Gary_Rybold_Speaking_Listening_Understnding_2006.pdf) (pp 12-14)

For a better understanding, please refer to Dr. Rybold's textbook. Here are my (Coach Bill) comments:

1. **Proof:** Students are expected to have researched their arguments and ideas. Please try not to be overly critical about how the student cites their sources. If a student is explaining ideas with how and why (using "because") and not just 'what' trains do, then that student should be credited with having met their proof burden.
2. **Rebuttal:** Students are expected to disagree with an argument made by their opponent. This should be well-organized, contain proof (as above), and be spoken with kindness and respect. ex. They said, we say, because, & therefore.
3. **Rejoinder:** At 21<sup>st</sup> Century Debate, we will add more formalized opportunities for rejoinders in the future. As for now, we ask that debaters seek to accomplish this through their questions and answers - particularly during the "grand crossfire".

**Three Modes of Persuasion (Aristotle):** Logos, Pathos, and Ethos.

<http://www.atlas101.ca/pm/concepts/logos-ethos-and-pathos/> (Rhetorical Appeals, Aristotle)

1. **Logos:** The speech is expected to last no more than 90 sec (2 min max). The student is providing an introduction, one argument, and a simple conclusion. Was the speech organized? Could you understand their explanations? Does the speech make sense? Please give positive encouragement about this.
2. **Pathos:** Students were asked to engage the listener by speaking in a convincing manner. Did the speaker look and sound like they were concerned about the topic? Did they have passion and/or enthusiasm in their speaking mannerisms?
3. **Ethos:** Students are expected to speak to you and not just read to you – there is a difference. Can you tell? Are they looking into the camera (or at least in its direction)? Did they speak with confidence (facial expressions, body posture, smooth gestures)? Did they use evidence from what sounded like a credible source? There are many things a speaker can do to gain credibility with you.

## Making the Judging Decisions:

1. **Speaker Rankings:** Each speaker is ranked relative to the others (1-4).
2. **Speaker Points:** Each speaker is given "speaker" points indicating how well they spoke and how well they debated. **(Please... no ties! ".5" = a tie breaker!).**
  - a. 29.5 to 30 = outstanding, nearly perfect!
  - b. 28.5 to 29 = excellent
  - c. 27.5 to 28 = above average
  - d. 26.0 to 27 = average (Please try not to give anyone a "below average" score.)**NOTE:** "Skills" Debate scores each of the skills from 1-10 (Pls... nothing below 6!).
3. **Winning Team:** Which team did the better debating? Please don't choose a side because you personally agree with it. Trust yourself (no ties!).

***Please be kind, objective, and fair-minded!*** 😊



# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY DEBATE

A DEEPER LEARNING APPROACH TO DEBATE EDUCATION

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Debate Institute: The Great Pumpkin Debates The Debate Events

**“Skills” Debate Format:** Coin Flip for *Their Side* or *Speaking First/Second*.

1. **Arguments:** Each speaker presents one argument with some proof (90 sec). The arguments should be unique (not the same).  
Process: Team A goes first, then Team B.
2. **Preparation Time:** Both teams prepare their rebuttals at the same time (2 min).  
IMPORTANT: For some students, two minutes may not be enough time. As a kindness to them, you could start the rebuttals with students who are ready and skip those who are not yet ready. However, we cannot spend too much time preparing, so eventually you may have to insist that they do their best with what they have prepared.
3. **Rebuttals:** Each speaker refutes one argument using some proof (90 sec).  
IMPORTANT: To earn full credit, the speakers must refute one of the arguments made by the opposing team and not just read a bunch of random rebuttals. Prewritten rebuttals that match the anticipated arguments are encouraged. Each speaker is expected to refute a different argument than their partner.  
Process: Team A goes first, then Team B.
4. **Grand Crossfire:** Both teams argue in the grand crossfire style (3 min).  
For those not familiar with the crossfire style of debating, it is a back-and-forth style of arguing. They match their wits and research against that of the opposing team. Try not to allow things to become aggressive during the crossfire – part of their score is based on how *kind & respectful* they are – please don’t reward overly assertive behavior... it is the role of the judge to keep things calm and civil.
5. **Judge Feedback:** Please give simple feedback to each teams (5 min).  
For those not familiar with the crossfire style of debating, it is a back-and-forth style of arguing. They match their wits and research against that of the opposing team. Try not to allow things to become aggressive during the crossfire – part of their score is based on how *kind & respectful* they are – please don’t reward overly assertive behavior... it is the role of the judge to keep things calm and civil.

*One last thing...* try keeping your feedback brief but detailed enough to show that you were interested and please keep it positive (use your best judgment).

**“Public Forum” Debate Format:** Coin Flip for *Side* or *Speaking Order*. (Standard)

1. **Speech Times:** First Speakers (4 min), Crossfire (3 min), Second Speakers (4 min), Crossfire (3 min), First Speakers (3 min), Grand Crossfire (3 min), & Second Speakers (2 min).
2. **Topic:** *U.S. government should substantially increase its military presence in the Arctic.*
3. **Rounds:** 2-3 rounds. Last year we did two rounds +Crossfire debates.



# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY DEBATE

A DEEPER LEARNING APPROACH TO DEBATE EDUCATION

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Debate Institute: The Great Pumpkin Debates Halloween Costume Event

**Categories:** Grades 4-6, and Grades 7-9.

**Prizes:** Prizes are awarded for the best costumes displaying excellence in...  
*Quality, Accuracy, Presentation, & Effort.*

**Description:** Costumes of all age-appropriate types (homemade or store-bought) are allowed. For example, \*Superheroes, villains, puppies, pirates, wizards, and robots are all welcome! We will look for colorful, exciting, well-crafted, and creative costumes in this Halloween-themed event.

**Everyone is welcome to participate in the Halloween costume contest!** Debaters, judges, and observers are all welcome to wear costumes and win prizes. It's all about having as much fun as zoom events allow.

### Steps Involved in the Costume Event

1. **Initial Interview:** Judges will ask you to describe/explain your costume.
2. **Speaking in Character:** Judges will ask you to speak in the voice of your character or use a "catchphrase," based on your character.
3. **Act/Pose in Character:** Judges will ask you to "strike a pose," to leave a lasting impression.

### Costume Contest Judging Criteria

**Quality:** Whether a costume is handmade or store-bought, we may look at the stitching, material, and fit. Handmade costumes deserve a bonus. If you have compiled your costume from things found around the house, we look at how you have modified them, how you paired them and how creative you were. We also consider wig styling and make-up.

*Tips...* If your costume is handmade, make sure to let the judges know how you made it, and if not, then try to put more emphasis on something you styled, like your wig, make-up, or props.

**Accuracy:** How faithful is your costume, hair/make-up, & props to the character being portrayed?  
*Tips...* Print (or share screen with) a picture of your character. If you're not dressing as a specific character, try mentioning what your inspiration was for your costume choices. :)

**Presentation:** One of the goals of wearing a costume is to look as much like your character as possible, which includes body motions and any phrases that you say. Acting in character should earn bonus points.

*Tips...* Try speaking in the voice and/or tone of your character; saying things how the character would say them – try standing, posing, and moving just as you imagine the character would.

**Effort:** Judges should try to determine how much effort each contestant put into completing the costume. An example would be finding or creating a rare prop, styling the appropriate wig, or doing the make-up.

*Tips...* Make sure to tell the judges how much time you spent working on your costume and please point out any details that required any 'extra' effort to complete.