# BP DEBATING: STRUCTURE & ROLE FULFILMENT

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OSDU BP Championships 2023

Land Acknowledgement

- We wish to begin this tournament by acknowledging that the land upon which we gather is the traditional territory of the Wendat, the Anishinabek, the Haudenosaunee, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and the Métis Nation.

- It is currently home to many nations.

- We are grateful to all caretakers of the land, past and present, and encourage you to consider how you honour and care for the land, water and air.

British Parliamentary (BP) Format

- ☐ Four teams of two debaters
- ☐ Opening and Closing Proposition (government)
- ☐ Opening and Closing Opposition
- ☐ Each team is competing with the other **three** teams.
- ☐ Teams on the same side cannot contradict each other.
- ☐ Closing teams must still distinguish themselves from opening teams.
  - ○ Different arguments/actors to analyze or greater depth.
- ☐ Closing teams must refute ALL arguments presented by the other side.
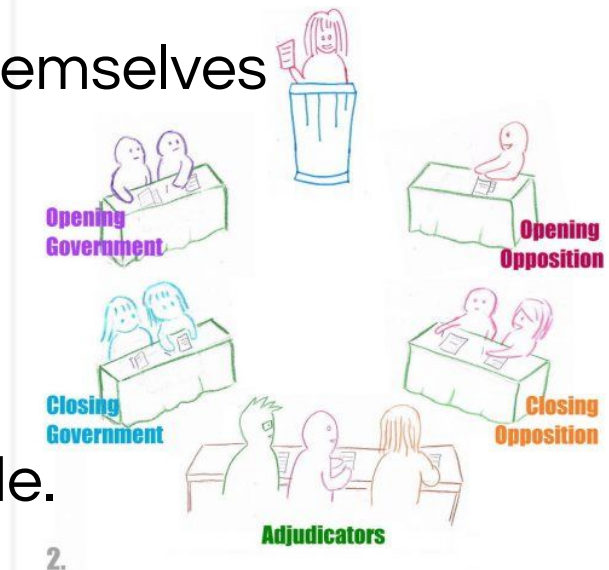
BP Debate Flow

Speaking order:

- 1st Gov: Prime Minister
- 1st Opp: Leader of the Opposition
- 1st Gov: Deputy Prime Minister
- 1st Opp: Deputy Leader Opposition
- 2nd Gov: Member of Government
- 2nd Opp: Member of Opposition
- 2nd Gov: Government Whip
- 2nd Opp: Opposition Whip

Opening Government

Opening Opposition

Closing Government

Closing Opposition

Adjudicators

2.
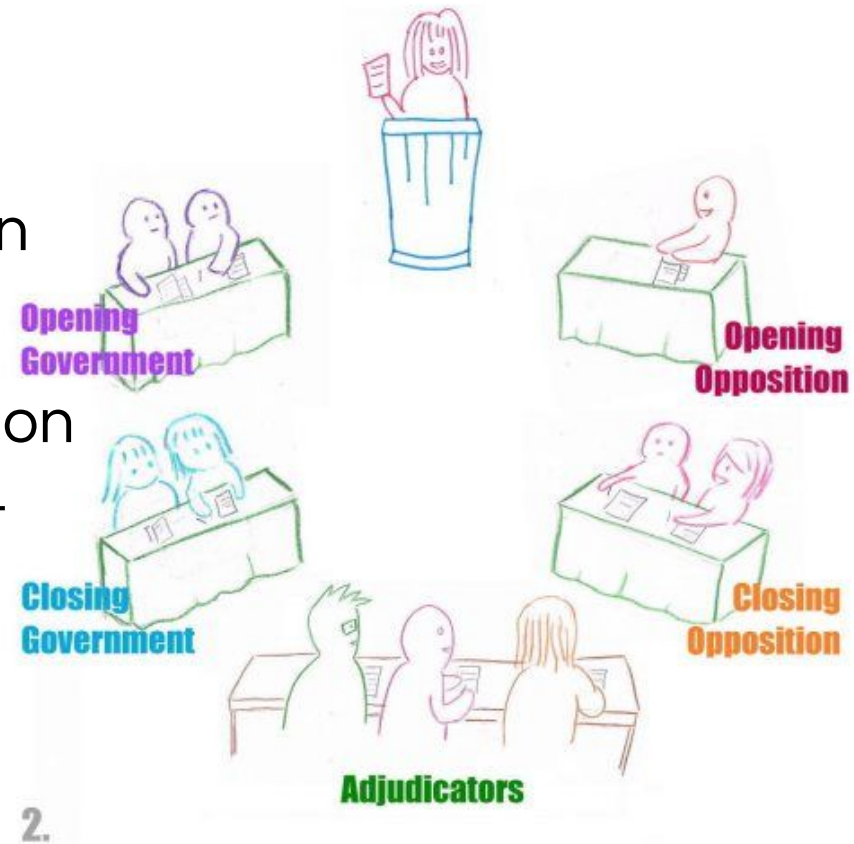
Structure of each speech: general

- Introduction / Roadmap
- Context (Principle / Definition / Model)
- Rebuilding (2nd member of each team)
- Constructive Argument 1
- Constructive Argument 2 (First speaker only)
- Refutation / Counterargument
  (increasing in length as debate progresses)
- Brief summary
  (highlight the impact of your material on the round)

'Front Half' of the Bench

- The two opening teams are often referred to as the "front half" of the bench.

- Much of what they need to do is similar to other forms of parliamentary debate (like Canadian Parliamentary)

  ○ Establish a clear principle

  ○ Present compelling arguments

  ○ Refute opposing arguments

- It is VERY important for the Front Half teams to present as much substantial constructive material as possible.

  ○ The other two teams (closing) will have the last word.

Specific Roles: 1st Gov

Prime Minister:

☐ Explain the problem with the status-quo

☐ Explain what your solution is: the mechanism/model

○ Also, what should be outside the scope of the debate.

☐ Explain how your resolution will solve the problem (constructive arguments x2)

Deputy Prime Minister:

☐ Defend the arguments presented by the PM.

☐ Further explain why it is still a good proposal - add new constructive argument(s).

☐ Explain why the arguments of 1st Opp are invalid, irrelevant or important (enough)

Specific Roles: 1st Opp

Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

- If possible, explain why you disagree with the way 1st Gov sees the problem,

  - and/or why it <u>isn't</u> a (big) problem,

- Explain why the model proposed by 1st Gov will <u>not solve</u> the problem they identified,

- And/Or explain why the proposal of 1st Gov will bring other/bigger/more substantial <u>harms</u> than the original problem.

- Try to avoid proposing alternative solution(s)

Back Half

- Must be consistent with model/stance of the opening team!
  - Disagreeing or being inconsistent is called "knifing".
  - You are not allowed to 'knife' the Front Half teams (especially 1st Gov)!
- Must bring new, substantive material to the round,
- Must also distinguish themselves from the Front Half
  - As politely as possible.
  - Without contradicting the front half team on your side.

Specific Roles: 2nd Gov I (MC)

Extension speaker:

- Must be consistent with OG definition and model.

- Explain that there is another, even more important, reason to agree with the motion.
  - One good **NEW** argument, or
  - An important **actor** that has not yet been considered, or
  - a case study
    - A **detailed** study that applies previous arguments.
  - An **expansion** of an argument from front half.

Specific Roles: 2nd Opp (MO)

Extension speaker:

▫ Similar to 2nd Gov. extension

▫ Engage with the 2nd Gov extension

▫ Should also include refutation for OG arguments.

▫ Give bigger / more important harms than 1st Opp

▫ Again, constructive arguments should **not** contradict OO principle/arguments.

Specific Roles: Whip Speakers

Whip (summary) speaker:

- ‘Summarize’ the entire debate in really <u>biased</u> way.
  - “What this debate boils down to is …”
  - Ideally this should be two or three key issues/questions.
    - For Op, these could be presented as burdens the Gov needed to prove
- Clearly establish why Opp (or Gov) is wrong
  - Why the Gov. (or Op) arguments still stand.
  - Distinguish closing from opening arguments.
- Prove that your partner’s <u>extension</u> argument is the most significant one.
 - Why this argument “won” the debate

Speeches & POIs

- 5-minute speeches
- 1 minute protected time at beginning and end
- 3 minutes for Points of Information (POI)
- You are expected to take 1 POI!
  - This should be ONE short question.
  - Accept a POI only when **you** are ready
  - Limit your POI to 15 seconds
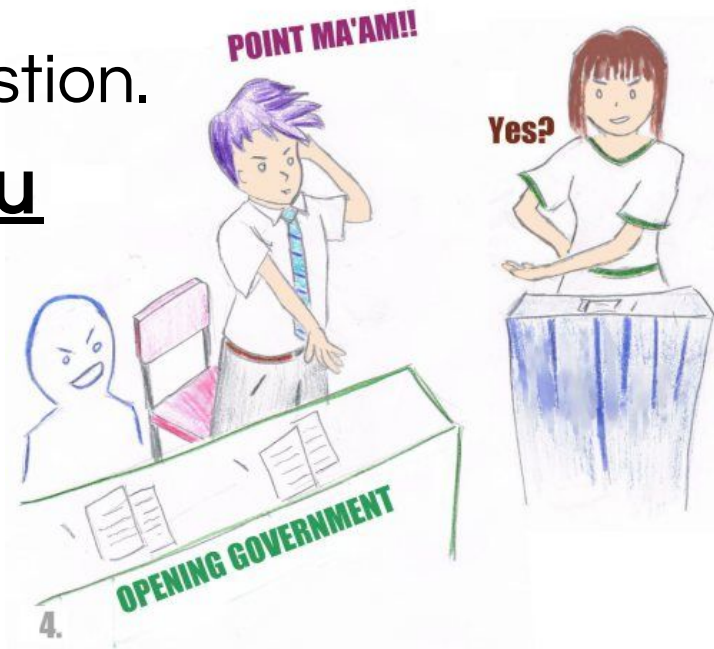
The Importance of POIs

- A good POI shows that a team opposing the speaker is **listening** to what is being said.

- It is up to the SPEAKER whether or not to take a POI.

- Taking a POI demonstrates the <u>confidence</u> of the speaker.

- Giving a POI can help to set up a <u>refutation</u> strategy.

- Giving POI's can help keep **opening teams** in the round.
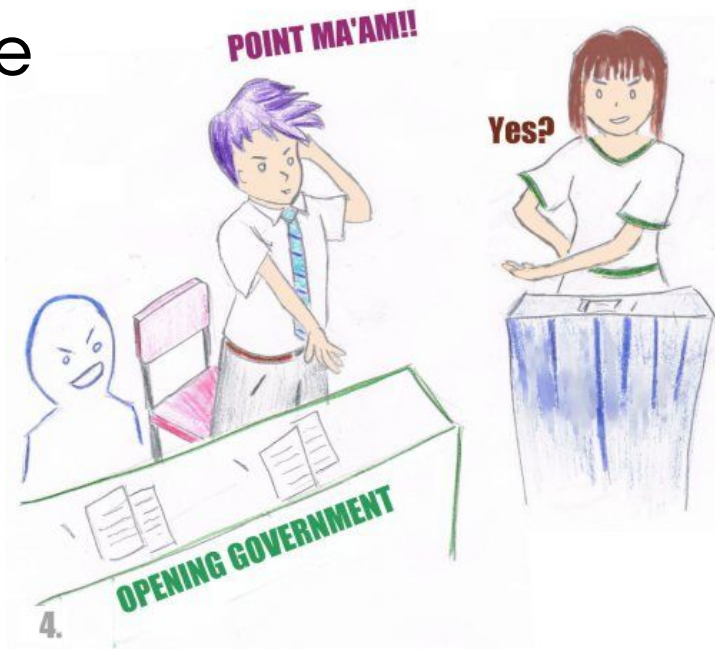
Bracketing Between Rounds

- After each round, brackets will be based on total points.
  - Also called "power pairing":
    - Teams are grouped according to point total.
- Pull ups will occur to ensure even multiples of 4 in each bracket.
- Teams will be grouped into rooms depending on previous team positions (OG, OO, CG, CO, etc.).
- You should expect to have each of the four team positions once over the four rounds.

Judging The Round 1

- Start with 1st and 4th positions for teams.
  - 1st should go to the team who made the **most** impact in the round.
  - At the end of the round which team's arguments still stand?
- 4th should go to the teams who made the least impact in the round.
  - Arguments were thoroughly refuted by the other side.
  - Refutation was ineffective.
  - Arguments of closing teams are derivative of opening team arguments.

Judging The Round 2

- Decision for 2nd and 3rd follow the same general reasoning.
  - Weigh impact of arguments
  - assess the quality of the refutation.
- Points are awarded based on the position.
  - 3 points for the 1st,
  - 2 points for the 2nd,
  - 1 point for the 3rd,
  - 0 points for the 4th.

Scoring The Teams 1

- Individual speaker (and team) scores are decided AFTER the team position is decided.

- Speaker scores should reflect the performance individual contributions of each team member.

- Team totals MUST agree with team position previously judged.

  - 1st team MUST have highest combined score.

  - 4th team must have the lowest combined score.

Scoring The Teams 2

- Aim for scores to reflect the scoring range:
  - **77 is the AVERAGE expected in this tournament** .
  - 75/76 - competent but not entirely successful.
  - 78/79 - good but not exceptional
    - These will be common scores
  - 71 - 74: Weak performance, little impact in the round
  - 80 - 82: very good, dominated the round
    - These should be less common in the tournament
  - 68 - 71 or 83 - 85: Impressively good/bad
    - Rarely given. Only a few in the tournament.