



POLICY DEBATE INTRODUCTION

National Federation of State
High School Associations



A very brief introduction to policy debate, using some examples from the the Water Resources Topic, by Rich Edwards, Baylor University



THE FORMAT FOR POLICY DEBATE

- Constructive Speeches
 - 1AC: 8 Minutes
 - Cross-Examined by 2NC: 3 Minutes
 - 1NC: 8 Minutes
 - Cross-Examined by 1AC: 3 Minutes
 - 2AC: 8 Minutes
 - Cross-Examined by 1NC: 3 Minutes
 - 2NC: 8 Minutes
 - Cross-Examined by 2AC: 3 Minutes
- Rebuttal Speeches
 - 1NR: 5 Minutes
 - 1AR: 5 Minutes
 - 2NR: 5 Minutes
 - 2AR: 5 Minutes





THE STOCK ISSUES

- **Topicality:** Is it germane?
- **Harm:** Is there a significant problem?
- **Inherency:** What is causing the problem?
- **Solvency:** Can the problem be solved?
- **Disadvantage:** Will the solution create more serious problems than the ones it resolves?





CONSTRUCTIVE SPEAKER RESPONSIBILITIES

- **1AC:** Present a “Prima Facie” Case
 - Harm, Inherency, Solvency, Plan
- **1NC:** Present the Negative Attack
 - Traditionally attacked the 1AC
 - More recently: The “front-line” of all negative positions (Topicality, Disadvantages, Counterplans, Kritiks) then answer the Case arguments
- **2AC:** Re-Defends Against 1NC
 - Follows 1NC point-by-point (Answer whatever the 1NC wanted to talk about)
- **2NC:** Answer selected parts of the 2AC positions, leaving the rest for 1NR
 - Divide positions with the 1NR (division of labor)





REBUTTAL SPEAKER RESPONSIBILITIES

- No new arguments in rebuttal (new evidence OK)
- 1NR: Answer remaining 2AC arguments
- 1AR: Answer all 2NC & 1NR arguments
- 2NR: Extend winning negative arguments
- 2AR: Answer all remaining negative arguments & claim all affirmative positions that are no longer contested





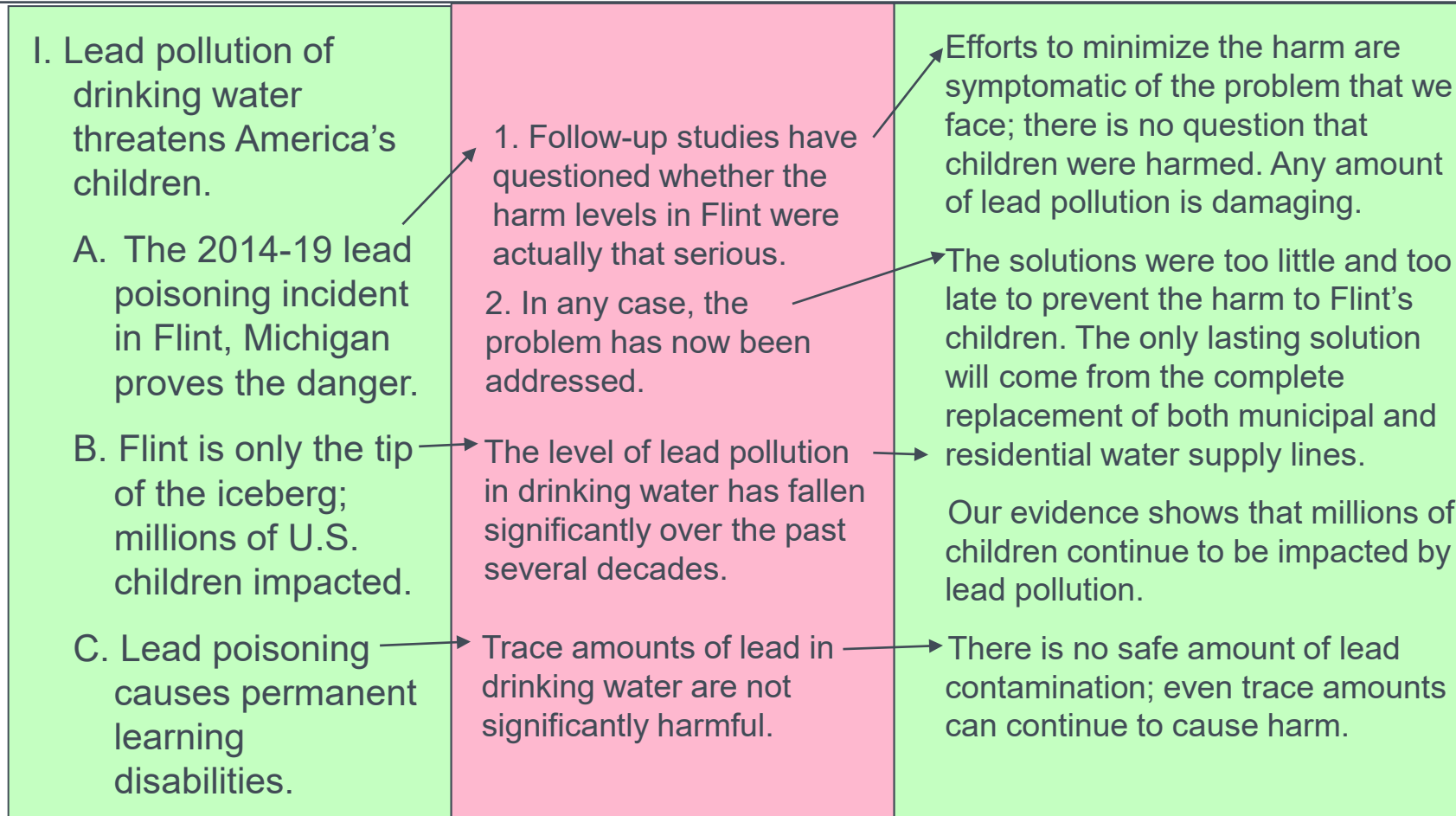
CROSS EXAMINATION

- The speaker completing the constructive speech remains at the podium for questions
- Both questioner and respondent face the judge
- The questioner controls the cross examination period
- What to ask?
 - Set up arguments for later speeches
 - Use all of your time (it's prep time for your partner)





KEEPING A FLOW SHEET





FLOW SHEET TIPS

- Use abbreviations appropriate to the topic (W=water; Pb=Lead pollution, CC=Climate Change, Wet=wetlands, etc.)
- Use symbols for common claims: (up arrow for increasing, down arrow for decreasing, right arrow for “causes” or “results in”, etc.)
- Establish priorities: 1. Contention labels first priority, 2. Subpoints second priority, 3. Evidence reference third priority (Davis ‘21), 4. Key words of evidence fourth priority.
- Ask for missed points (in CX or prep time).
- Use lots of paper (separate sheets for plan arguments and for case arguments; each big argument should have its own sheet).
- Line up flowsheet paper with debaters’ “road-maps”





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