

## Debate Terminology

**Brief** – A summary of all the evidence to be used in a debate. Similar to what lawyers use in American courts, debaters can use this as an organizer in preparation for the formal debate.

**Burden of Proof** – The affirmative or positive side is proposing a (new) position or resolution. Therefore it falls to this side to show evidence for that position. This requirement is called the burden of proof.

**Debate** – A discussion adhering to parliamentary rules of a proposition between two opposing sides.

**Opposition** - the side that will oppose the proposition.

**Proof** – evidence supporting the team's position or used to denigrate or defeat the opposing view.

**Proposition** – A suggestion that is offered for consideration or acceptance. An idea presented calling the hearer to accept a specific position or changes his actions. There are several kinds of propositions. Depending on the nature of the proposition, the evidence for the position will change. A.K.A. the resolution.

- *Value - Television is harmful to kids; animals have rights too. This is a debate of opinions.*
- *Fact – North American cars are more trouble prone than Japanese marks. This is a debate of fact. An argument based on whether something is true or false.*
- *Policy – The government should include prescription medication as part of funded public health care. This is a debate proposing a change of procedure or a call to action.*

**Proponent** - the side that will argue the proposition

**Presumption** – In a debate, the positive side is an advocate for change. Therefore the negative side is defending the status quo. The negative side enjoys the presumption that they are correct. Presumption is acceptance of the correctness of a position based on prior evidence or belief. Ex. Affirmative: The world is round vs. Negative: The world is flat.

**Rebuttal** – Statements claiming that some proposition is untrue or incorrect. A team uses the rebuttal time to refute statements made by the opposition.

**Resolution** – A formal statement of the proposition. Ex. “Be it resolved that the government should eliminate taxes on the purchase of reading material.”

**Status Quo** – The generally held opinion held prior to the start of the debate. The proposition argues to change it in some manner.