

Writing a formal debate speech



lingoda

WRITING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_2071W_EN

LANGUAGE
English

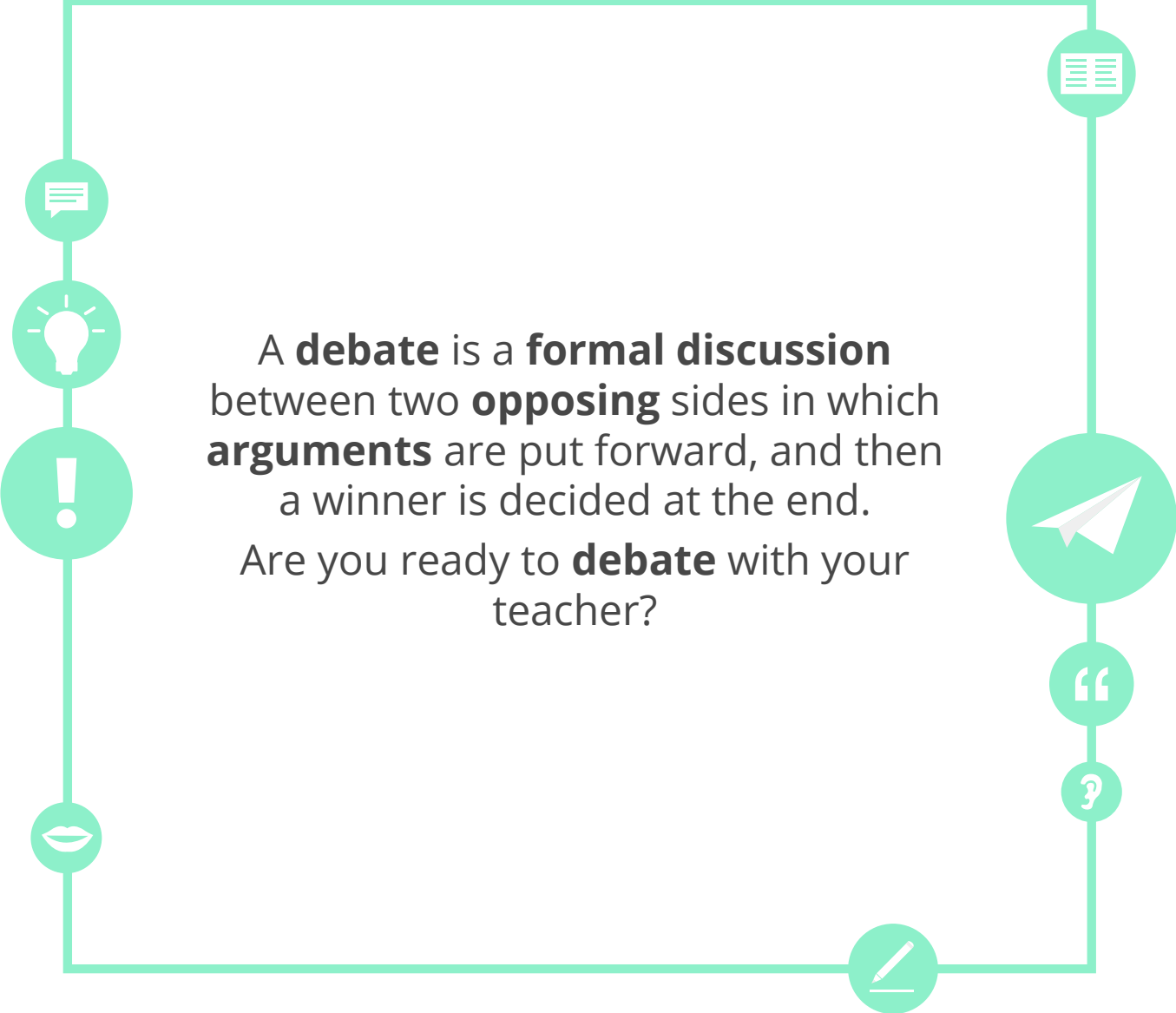




Goals

- Can list and explain how to prepare for a formal debate.
- Can understand and use specific advanced phrases in an appropriate context to strengthen my own position in a debate.





A **debate** is a **formal discussion** between two **opposing** sides in which **arguments** are put forward, and then a winner is decided at the end.

Are you ready to **debate** with your teacher?



Writing a formal debate speech

- In this lesson you will **review** the topics from unit C1.2 and you will learn how to write and perform a **formal debate speech**.



This house believes that there is going to be a debate today.



Debates

Have you ever taken part in a debate? Do you remember anything about it? In which kinds of areas of life might you find debates?





Debating

- The debate format we are looking at today is a simplified version of the one most commonly used in the English-speaking world. The **debate** always opens with one of the expressions below. Then, the two sides are randomly assigned and have a short time to **plan** their arguments.



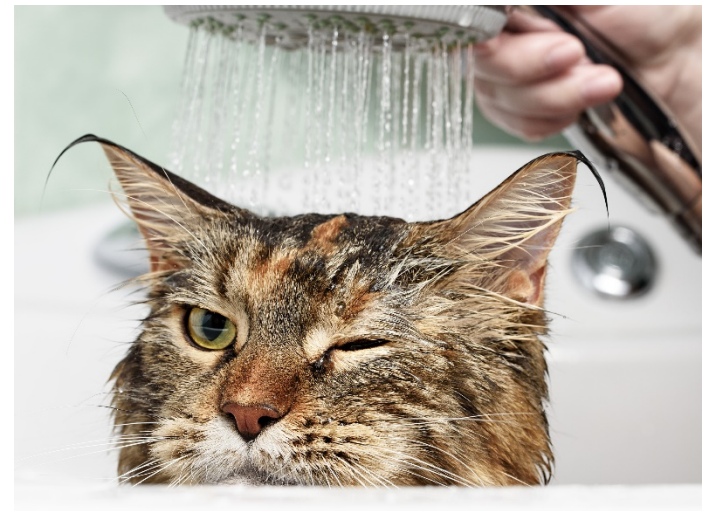
This house believes that gender treatment in this society is unequal.
This house would make voting a compulsory activity.



Brainstorming

- During the **preparation time**, you will need to **brainstorm ideas** according to whether you are for or against the motion.
- First, come up with ideas on your side. If you have time, you may want to think of ways the opposing team could **rebut** you.
- Imagine the motion below was **This house believes dogs are better than cats.**

| for | against |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| dogs are loyal | cats are smarter |
| dogs protect home | dogs need too much attention |
| dogs can be trained - cats wild | dogs smell - cats self clean |





Structuring a debate

- Once you have brainstormed your ideas, you need to **organise** them into a structure.
- The following is an easy way to **structure** the first part of your debate. You should be ready with examples and more details of your points from the brainstorm.

| Debate structure | Examples |
|---|--|
| Overview of the topic and your argument | We as today's proposition strongly believe that dogs are better than cats. |
| Your first point | Dogs are loyal (man's best friend) |
| Your second point | Dogs can be trained (guide dogs) |
| Your third point | Dogs protect the home (certain breeds) |
| Your conclusion | Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sure you agree now... |



Structures and rebuttals

- After you are done, the opposition will speak.
- Then, you will have the chance to make a **rebuttal** to their arguments. This means that you need to **listen carefully** to what they are saying and **make notes**. You will need to argue against what they said.
- After you deliver your rebuttal, the opposition will then deliver a rebuttal to you.

- The speaker told us that...; on the contrary,...
- The speaker claimed that...; but in fact...
- I will respond to what the speaker said about...





Which order?

Put these things into the order that they happen in a debate.

1. You brainstorm your arguments.
2. You make a rebuttal.
3. You summarise your points in a short conclusion.
4. You are given the topic.
5. You present your points, giving examples.
6. You put your brainstormed arguments into a structure.
7. You open with an introductory statement.





Phrases for debates

- As this is a **formal debate**, you need to be aware of formal ways to introduce your arguments.
- Here are some phrases for defining your opinion in a debate **introduction**, and for **introducing arguments** and **examples**.

| Introductory statements | Introducing a point | Giving examples |
|--|--|--|
| We as today's proposition/opposition strongly believe that... | Let me come to my first/second argument. | You can find many real life examples, such as... |
| When we say... we mean that... | The second reason we propose/oppose this motion... | There are similar cases, for instance... |
| There is no doubt in our mind that... | The final point I would like to raise... | As you can see from this example... |



Phrases for summarising and ending your debate

- Here are some formal phrases which you can use to **summarise** and **conclude** your debate.

Summarising phrases

For all of these reasons, the motion must stand/fall.

To summarise what we heard today...

The most important point to remember is that...

Ladies and gentlemen, there surely cannot be any disagreement.





Choose some phrases

Choose two phrases you will use in your debate for each of the categories below.



Firstly,



For instance...



opening
statement

introducing points

examples

rebuttals



Listen and make notes

Listen to your teacher talk about why cats are better than dogs. Make notes, and then **rebut the arguments**.



The speaker claimed that...; however..



Choose a topic

- Take a look at the topics presented on the next few slides. With your teacher or classmates, decide which topic you want to have a debate about.



There are four topics to choose from. Try to pick the one you think you can debate the most about!

Beauty standards and feminism

This house believes taking care of your appearance is an expression of anti-feminism.



Things to think about: changing **standards of beauty**, **beauty ideals** around the world, whether taking care of yourself is **feminist** or **anti-feminist**.

Capital punishment

This house believes capital punishment is state-sponsored murder.



Things to think about: whether capital punishment **deters** serious crime, whether capital punishment **breaches** human rights.

Protesting

This house believes protests are a complete and utter waste of time.



Things to think about: how **effective** protests are, why people protest.

Consumerism

This house believes consumerism has had an overall positive effect on society.



Things to think about: definitions of consumerism, positive and negative effects of consumerism on **society**.



Choose a topic

Once you have chosen your topic, make some brief notes on both sides of the argument.

for

against





The opening statement

Write a short opening statement to your debate. Use the example below to help you.

// We as today's proposition strongly believe that dogs are better than cats. When we say that dogs are better, we mean that their strengths as family pets far outweigh those of cats. //



Arguments and examples

Now write your arguments and examples. Use the example on the next page to help you.

Don't forget to use the phrases that you picked out earlier in the lesson!

A sheet of white lined paper with a spiral binding on the left side. The paper has 15 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.



A example debate

Use the example below to help you formulate your own arguments and examples.

The first reason we support this motion is because dogs are far more loyal than cats. Dogs have long been considered 'man's best friend', and we can find countless examples of their loyalty in everyday life. For instance, there is the famous case of the dog Hachiko in Japan, who met his owner from work every day, and even continued to try to meet him for nine years after the owner had died. This is only one of many examples. It is extremely difficult to find any examples of cats' loyalty to their owners.

Let me move on to my second point, which is that dogs can be trained far more easily than cats. One of the most outstanding examples is of dogs being trained as helpers for people with illnesses or disabilities. Labradors are famous for their work as guide dogs, their intelligence and good temperament making training easy, and allowing them to be a wonderful companion. Cats are not at all suited to this work as they are impossible to train, hence the phrase, 'like herding cats'.

The final point I would like to raise is that certain breeds of dog are useful to protect homes and places of businesses. Dogs do not have to be violent at all for this purpose, their loud bark drawing attention to intruders is usually enough to deter them. Furthermore, with training the dog can discriminate between those it knows, and those it doesn't.



The closing statement

Write a short closing statement, using the example below to help you.

To summarise what we heard today, dogs are more loyal, easier to train, and more useful than cats. It is for all of these reasons that the motion must pass, that dogs are better than cats.





Perform your debate



Are you ready?

Stage your debate!



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





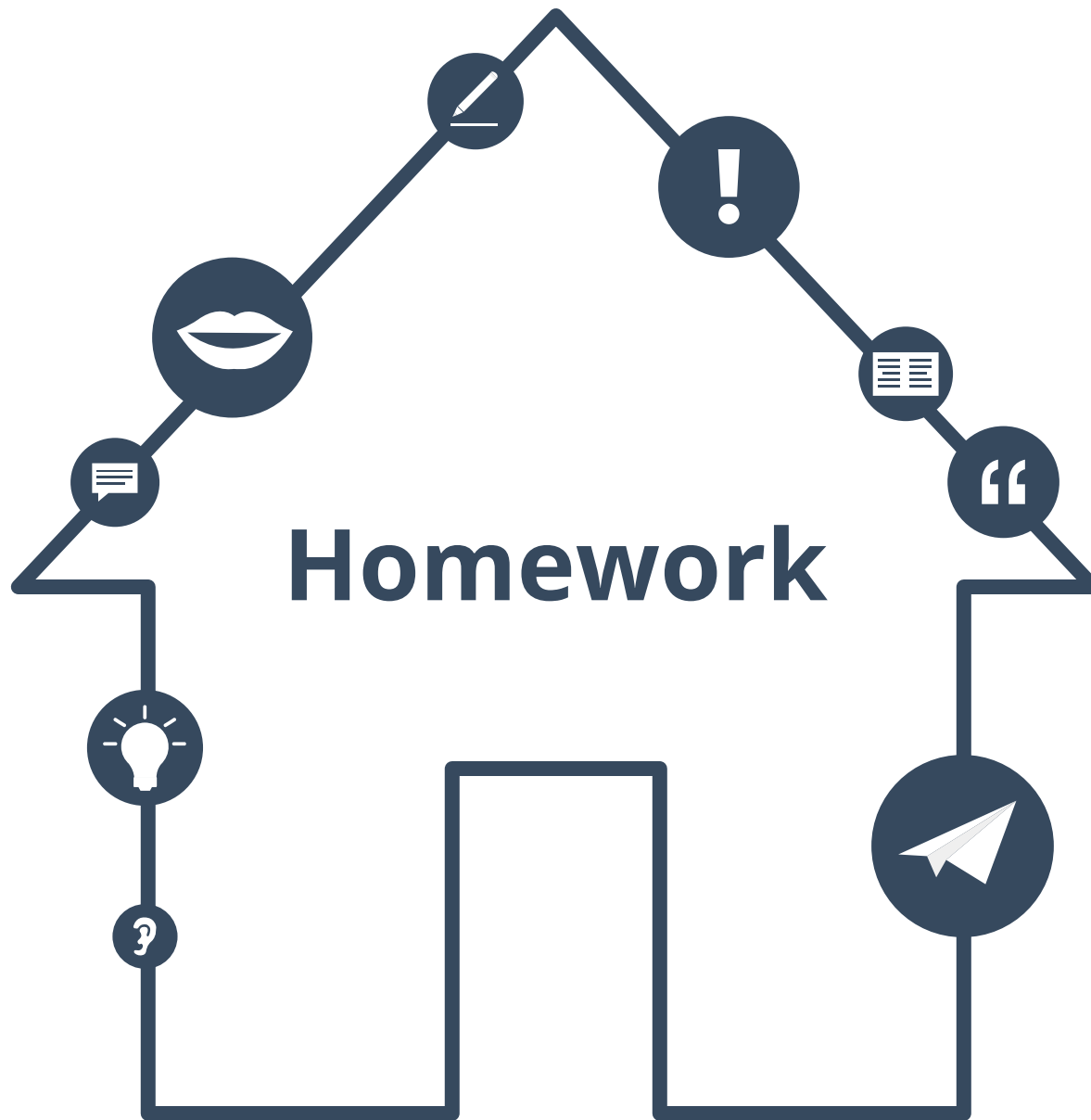
Transcription

Cats are far better than dogs, firstly because they are smarter. They are consistently cited as being much cleverer than dogs, who roll in the mud and are not at all discerning in who they choose to love. Secondly, cats are cleaner than dogs. They clean themselves, something which dogs are unable to do, and they shed less fur. Finally, cats need less attention than dogs, making them much easier pets to care for.



Answer key

Exercise p. 10
4, 1, 6, 7, 5, 3, 2





Writing a formal debate

Choose another topic and write another debate, following the structure and using the phrases given in this lesson.



The image shows a large rectangular area with horizontal lines for writing. On the left side, there are several small circles, likely representing bullet points or a list. Overlaid on the left side of this area is a white, torn-edge paper with a hole-punch on the left edge. The paper has the text "This house believes..." written on it. A grey arrow points from the paper towards the right side of the writing area.



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