**POI Lecture**

1. Why are POIs important?
   1. Establishes you are a good debater/intellectually dominant
   2. Direct engagement with the other team, often the most meaningful in the round
   3. Only 1 on 1 interaction with the other team
   4. Remaining relevant throughout the debate/show that you will have something good to say once your turn comes
2. Making a POI
   1. Short and sweet – reduces the time they have to think about it, shows adjudicator that you’re in control of the ideas
   2. Does not have to be about what they’re talking about at that moment (bad vs good teams), issues are always live
   3. Do not flag a POI (don’t be distracting when you stand up, don’t say anything), be respectful/calm
   4. Doesn’t have to be a question, can be a statement
   5. Don’t ask for an explanation
   6. Don’t be a pest, respectful intervals (2-3 times each speech is enough)
   7. If they ask you to repeat, do it really slowly (be respectful/cooperative)
3. Planning POIs
   1. Plan a few questions before the debate starts – what would be a difficult question?
   2. Rehearse your points – know exactly what you’re going to say *before* you stand up (aura of command)
4. Think about how they will answer your POI
   1. Don’t ask a question with an easy/harmful answer
   2. No yes or no questions
   3. Craft difficult to answer POIs
      1. Should be challenging
      2. Something they haven’t considered
      3. Doesn’t fit in with their already existing logic (if they have a premise that offers an easy answer to your question – it’s a bad question)
5. Timing
   1. Best time to ask a POI is when they’ll take it
   2. Usually take between major arguments or at a stopping point
   3. Don’t rise when they’re answering another POI
   4. Don’t try to confuse/distract them – won’t work on good teams and leads to lower quality POIs
6. Watch the judges (can’t persuade other team)
   1. Gives you an understanding of what they think of your point
   2. If they like it, keep going
7. Follow up later
   1. Use their answers to frame your argument in your speech
   2. Sometimes they can make admissions
8. Taking POIs
   1. If you didn’t understand or hear them, that’s their fault – don’t ever let them repeat it, just say it’s confusing or give a random answer
   2. Look at the judge
   3. Wave them down if they take too long (be fairly generous)
   4. Two part questions, answer more convenient part or wave them down during the second part
9. Responding to POIs
   1. Short answers – longer answers detract from your speech and make you appear uncertain
   2. Look as confident as possible, be in control
   3. Offensive answers (turning their questions)
      1. “Isn’t this going to cost a lot of money” 🡪 “No, it will save money” vs “It will only cost a little bit” (reflexive response)
      2. Still have to think of a response, think really hard!
10. Dismissing points
    1. No thank you, not at this time
    2. Non-verbal – doesn’t interrupt your speech (non-debaters think it’s rude, might not be best at JDC)
    3. Be polite, no sense in confrontational responses
11. When to take
    1. When you’re ready
    2. Literally put a star on your paper for when you’re ready
       1. Between refutation and argumentation
       2. Between first and second major argument
       3. Don’t take too late
    3. If nobody is standing when you’re ready, you’re probably doing well
    4. Do not beg for questions
12. How many to take
    1. Take two
    2. Sometimes each team takes three (possible punishments)
    3. After you’re done, just wave the rest down – don’t say you aren’t taking any more
    4. Don’t be vengeful – judges just want to see a good debate
13. Who to take from
    1. Courage vs cowardice
    2. If you’re really worried, take it from the weak link
    3. If you want to win, take from the strongest member
    4. Take one from top team and one from the bottom (unless there is a major strength difference)
14. When you have no idea how to answer
    1. Don’t look uncertain, say I’m glad you asked me that question or something like that – think of an answer in the meantime
    2. Debate is a show
    3. Worst case, say you’ll answer it in your next point – do not forget, looks incredibly weak otherwise, be explicit that you’re answering it
15. Follow up on it
    1. If they ask a bad question, use it
    2. It’s a resource, use what you can and take advantage of their answers