



Building a World Schools Case: Definition, Model and Split.

A step-by-step template for Proposition and Opposition teams: how to define the motion, decide whether you need a model, divide arguments among three speakers, and build one argument well.

Step 1: Define the motion fairly

The first Proposition speaker defines the motion. A good definition picks the **obvious meaning** of the motion and keeps its level of abstraction: a broad principle must be defended as a broad principle, not narrowed to one tiny example. Unless the motion says otherwise, debate in the **here and now**.

- ◆ Reasonable limits are fine, such as excluding obvious extreme cases.
- ◆ Avoid truisms (impossible to disagree with), tautologies, and time or place restrictions that make the debate unfair.
- ◆ The Opposition may accept the definition (even silently), challenge it with clear reasons and a better definition, or accept it while saying "even if" arguments.

Burdens in plain language

Under the NSDA judge guidance, the Proposition must show its case is true in the majority of cases. If a motion uses an absolute word like always or never, the Proposition must show it holds in a significant majority of cases, and the Opposition must show a significant minority of exceptions, not a single example.

Step 2: Decide on a model (if the motion needs one)

Some motions ask for an action ("This House would ban..."). Then the Proposition usually explains a **model**: who does what, when, and how it is enforced. Keep it short and workable. Other motions are about beliefs or values and need no model, only a clear stance.

QUESTION TO ANSWER	EXAMPLE ANSWER STYLE
Who acts?	A national government, schools, a company
What exactly changes?	One or two sentences, no long lists
Who is affected?	Name the main groups
How is it carried out?	Brief, realistic mechanism

Step 3: Split arguments across speakers

The first speaker announces the **split**, a preview of which speaker covers which arguments. A common pattern is: speaker one gives definition, model and two arguments; speaker two gives a third argument and rebuilds; speaker three spends most of the speech responding to the other side. Third speakers can add positive material only if the split announced it, and it usually costs time better used on rebuttal.

SPEAKER	SAMPLE LOAD (PROPOSITION)
1st	Definition, model, Argument A and B
2nd	Rebuild A and B after Opposition attacks, new Argument C, rebut Opposition's best point
3rd	Compare the two sides, answer new attacks, show why your arguments matter more

Step 4: Build one argument (the A-R-E-I method)

- 1 **Assertion.** State your point in one sentence.
- 2 **Reason.** Explain the logic. Why does the assertion follow?
- 3 **Example.** Give a real, verifiable illustration from history, science or everyday life. Do not invent facts.
- 4 **Impact.** Say why it matters and who is affected.

Mini example (neutral motion: This House would require school students to learn a second language). Assertion: language learning improves thinking skills. Reason: switching between systems practises attention and memory. Example: your own class experience or a well-known study you can cite accurately. Impact: students gain skills useful across subjects.

Checklist before you stand up

- ☐ Definition is fair and fits the motion.
- ☐ Model, if any, fits on half a page.
- ☐ Split is written and every speaker has a copy.
- ☐ Each argument has assertion, reason, example, impact.
- ☐ Opposition teams: I know whether I accept or challenge the definition.
- ☐ I know the one comparison I want the judge to remember.

MY TEAM'S SPLIT

Built from public guidance: NSDA USWSDI Manual (2023) · NSDA World Schools Norms (2023) · NSDA World Schools Adjudicator Guide. Rules change by league and tournament, so always confirm against your tournament invitation and current league rules.

NOTES

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