

SAMPLE First Negative Constructive Speech

Resolution: “Be it resolved that students shall be allowed to wear appropriate hats in classrooms.”

This speech is normally 5 minutes in length.

Teams may divide up a speech in any logical way. This sample one is divided up for a team of 3.

“Mr./Madam Chairperson, honourable judges, worth opponents, ladies and gentlemen:

“We the Negative accept the definition of the resolution offered by the First Affirmative.

“Apart from the definitions, the Negative team is unable to accept the contentions put forward by the first Affirmative. Students should not be allowed to wear hats in classrooms. I will refute the contentions of the Affirmative now.

“The Affirmative had 3 needs for change. The Affirmative alleges that times have changed and that hats are now socially acceptable indoors. They claim that the learning environment is not damaged by wearing hats. Finally, they would have us believe that students will actually do better in school if only they could wear their hats.

My partner will now continue. [partner continues]

“First of all, we see no clear evidence provided by the Affirmative that the social rules governing hats have indeed changed. A quick review of published rules of etiquette will reveal that the custom still stands in America that a gentleman removes his hat indoors. The Negative can provide references to the judges and

our honorable opponents upon request.¹ Consistently, recognized and respected authorities on social etiquette support the rule that young men remove their hats indoors. Anyone recognizes that some men do not follow this rule; that men can be seen out in restaurants eating while wearing their baseball caps. These, however, are examples of people unwilling to follow or ignorant of good manners. They do not serve as an example of social change. On the contrary, they represent poor manners and nothing we want to support in school.

“The second argument put forth by our honorable opponents is that the learning environment would not be harmed by wearing hats. Nothing could be further from the truth. Besides the obvious problems posed by hats bearing gang-related colors and symbols, the student who comes to class feeling as relaxed as he or she is at home is not liable to behave in the more formal manner demanded by the successful classroom. Our classrooms are not our living rooms and they are not our recreation rooms. They are work places where our behavior must be more formal in order to permit a large group to benefit from instruction. We have all observed that hats are common play-things: they are theater props for students who like to act out and get attention, they are places to hide cheat sheets and notes, they are objects that can be used to entertain.

“The third argument put forth by our worthy opponents is probably the most frivolous: that students will do better in school because they are wearing hats and it makes them feel good. We have already established that hats are disruptive. How could a class full of disruptions improve student performance?

My partner will now continue. [partner continues]

The Negative case has three contentions. Namely, we maintain that schools should be places where the best in manners is supported by school policy. Males wearing hats indoors? That’s bad manners. Secondly, we contend that wearing

¹ http://www.askmen.com/money/successful/41b_success.html

hats in class promotes opportunities for misbehavior and discord among students. Thirdly, while affirming the importance of student morale, it is clear that the negative effects of wearing hats in classrooms outweighs any potential minor morale boost that only a small number of students might experience for a short time.

“In conclusion, I have begun the negative case by clashing with the Affirmative case. I am sure that the judges will agree that their case must fall.”

Note: One weakness of this speech is that it does nothing more than clash with the affirmative. A stronger speech would also construct additional points for the negative.

In Discussion Style, the next constructive speech starts.

In Cross-examination style: “I now stand for cross-examination.”