



The Association of
International Schools of India



BILLABONG HIGH
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
BHOPAL

TAISI Billabong Debate

**21-23
AUGUST
2026**

**ELIGIBILITY
GRADES
9-12**

Hosted by
**Billabong High International
School, Bhopal**



For Participation & Enquiries

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TAISI

Billabong Debate

INTRODUCTION TO THE BILLABONG DEBATE

This inaugural competition, hosted by Billabong High International School, Bhopal, has been designed to reflect our commitment to high-quality debating standards.

We have chosen the modified WSDC format for its ability to combine structured preparation with an analytical approach to debating. The format puts a deep emphasis on collaboration. Its structure forces the participants to move beyond the confines of a dead rhetoric and gives them a wonderful opportunity to engage with each other by listening, planning, and rebutting.

Above all, this championship is aimed at promoting thoughtful disagreement and responsible advocacy. Participants are encouraged to compete not merely to win, but to persuade through logic, research, and respectful discourse.

By adopting this format, we aim to:

- Maintain a uniform standard of debate quality across teams.
- Encourage well-structured argumentation backed by logic and evidence.
- Promote meaningful arguments constructively.
- Equip participants with skills like critical thinking, responsible advocacy, and real-world decision-making.

This guide will help you understand how to prepare, perform, and evaluate your debate journey using the WSDC framework.

Event Details:

Grades: 9 to 12

Each team will have a maximum of four members.

Participation Fee:

TAISI Member: INR 21,000 + 18 % GST per student

TAISI Non-Member: INR 25,000 + 18% GST per student

(Includes accommodation, meals, Bhopal city tour, and debate registration; excludes travel and airport transfers)

Last Date to Register:

31st May 2026

Topics and a detailed preparation guide and marking scheme will be provided to participating schools post registration.

For complete rules and guidelines, please refer to the guidelines below..

GUIDELINES

A. DEBATE STRUCTURE

The competition will be conducted over two days.

Day 1 – League Rounds

1. Each team will participate in **TWO** debates during the league stage.
2. This ensures that every school debates at least twice, regardless of win or loss.
3. Performance across both debates will be evaluated based on adjudication scores.
4. Debates in league rounds are **PREPARED DEBATE** which means that the teams are expected to come prepared based on the given topics.
5. The prepared debates are not **SIDE-LOCKED**. This means that whether the team will argue from proposition or opposition side will be decided prior to the beginning of the preparation time.
6. After the allocation of a side (proposition or opposition), each team will get 40 minutes to prepare for the debate.
7. During this preparation time, **PARTICIPANTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO USE ANY GADGETS**. They may, however, use books, or any paper based material that they have collected during the course of their preparation.

Day 1 & 2 – Knockout Rounds

1. The top eight teams from the league stage will move into the Quarterfinals. (to be conducted on Day 1)
2. Winners of the Quarterfinals will then advance to the Semifinals.
3. Winners of the Semifinals will compete in the Final.
4. Both the Semifinals and the Final rounds will be conducted on Day 2.
5. All three knockout rounds will be conducted as impromptu debates. The motion will be announced one hour before the debate begins.
6. Teams will get **one hour to prepare** after the motion is declared and sides have been allocated.
7. No electronic devices or gadgets may be used during the preparation time. Teams must rely on their understanding of the debate format and their collective reasoning to build their case.
8. To ensure fairness, motions will be designed to focus on analytical skills rather than prior subject knowledge.

B. DEBATE FORMAT & STRUCTURE

1. This championship uses the *modified* World School Debate Championship (WSDC) format where two teams debate against each other.
2. Each team will have a **maximum of 4 team members** who prepare together during the preparation time.
3. Teams are divided into Proposition and Opposition. In each round, **only three members from each team will speak**, identified as the first, second, and third speakers.
4. The speaker order begins with the 1st Proposition, before moving onto the 1st Opposition, the 2nd Proposition, and so on.
5. At the conclusion of these speeches, the reply speaker of both the teams will provide a 3 minute summary of the debate, beginning with the opposition and then ending with the proposition reply. **Either the 1st or 2nd speaker from the respective team can give the reply speech but not the 3rd speaker.**
6. All speeches have a 15-second grace period when the last minute has passed; speakers must conclude their speech within that 15-seconds period.

7. A motion is debated in each round. The motion is the topic that is being debated. Motions are typically phrased using '*This House*', which represents the debating body taking the proposed stance. ("The House" refers to a metaphorical parliament, where the proposition is proposing the motion and the opposition is opposing it.)
8. The proposition has an obligation to explain the motion and provide supporting arguments in favour of passing the motion, while the opposition must conversely provide reasons why the motion should fall.
9. An important component of the WSDC is **Points of Information (POI)**. **After the first minute** of each of the main speeches, and **before the last minute** of those speeches, members of the opposing team can ask POIs. POIs are short questions or statements that may last no longer than 15 seconds, and are designed to force the speaker to respond to the idea presented in the POI. When a POI is offered, the speaker may choose to reject or accept the POI. The expectation is for speakers to accept 1-2 POIs per speech. Members of the opposing team should take care not to 'badger' the speaker, which occurs when members of the opposing team ask POIs too frequently, which often intentionally or unintentionally distracts the speaker.

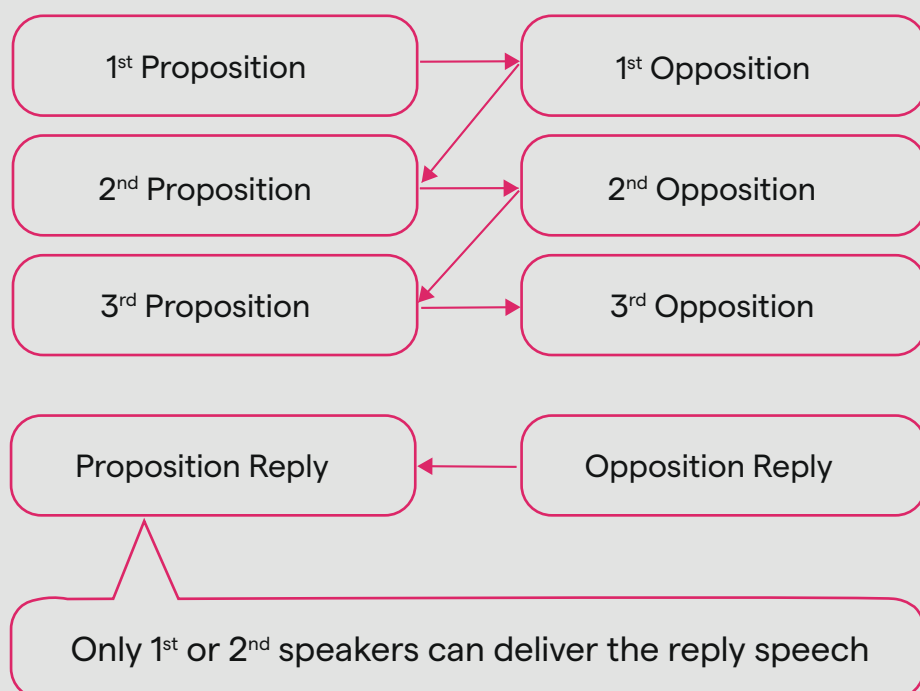
ROLE OF THE NON-SPEAKING MEMBER

The role of the fourth team member, or the 'non-speaking member', ends in the preparation time. They become an observer during the debate.

The non-speaking member cannot contribute during the rebuttal, pose questions, or provide ideas/points to the speaking team anytime during the debate.

Teams may rotate their non-speaking member in a team at various rounds as per their discretion.

C. SPEAKING ORDER



Points of Information (POIs) can be offered by the other team during the first three speeches (constructive round).

POIs are offered between the first minute and the last minute.

There are no POIs in the reply round.

D. DEBATE SEQUENCE AND SPEAKER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. First Proposition Speaker (5 minutes)

Sets up the debate and presents the first part of the Proposition's case. (A case is a collection of arguments in support or opposition of a motion.) In doing so, the first speaker must:

- Provide definitions that **clarify the meaning of words and phrases in the motion**. The speaker must make clear what the issues within the debate are.
- Outline the Proposition's case and explains how the arguments will be divided between the speakers.
- Present one or more arguments for their side.

2. First Opposition Speaker (5 minutes)

- Challenges the definition given by the Proposition, if necessary and
- Presents an alternative definition of the motion (if necessary)
- Responds to the Proposition's outline of the arguments
- Outlines the Opposition's major arguments against the motion and team division.
- Makes one or more arguments for their side.

3. Second Speakers- Opposition and Proposition (5 minutes)

- Comprehensively rebut the arguments made by the opposing side, as well as provide defensive rebuttals in response to critiques made by the opposing side
- Strengthen their team's case by giving arguments as outlined by the first speakers.
- Add further analysis or new supporting arguments, contributing depth to their team's position.

4. Third Speakers (5 minutes)

- The primary role of a third speaker is **to respond comprehensively to the opposing team's case** by addressing their core arguments, as well as by addressing their core challenge to the case of the speaker's team.
- The third speaker of either team may have a small part of the team's case to present, **but the third speaker's primary role is to respond to what has gone before in the debate.**
- If the third speaker is to present a part of the team's case, **this must be announced in the case division by the first speaker.**
- The more the debate progresses, the more each speaker must spend time dealing with what has been said by the previous speakers.
- Hence, the more the debate progresses, the less time will be spent by each speaker in presenting a new part of the team's case and the more time will be spent responding to the other team's arguments.

5. Reply Speeches (3 minutes)

- The reply speaker may be either the first or the second speaker of the team, but not the third.
- The speaking time for the reply speeches is 3 minutes.
- The reply speakers are in reverse order, with the Opposition Reply first and the Proposition Reply last.
- **The role of the reply speeches is to sum up the debate from the team's viewpoint, including a response to the other team's overall case and a summary of the speaker's own team's case.**
- **Neither reply speaker may introduce a new part of the team case.**
- A reply speaker may respond to an existing argument by raising a new example that illustrates that argument, but may not otherwise introduce a new argument.
- Overall, **a reply speech is retrospective, and therefore, looks at the debate that has already happened.** Reply speakers should not be adding new material that expands the case, but should add new material that expands the judge's understanding of the debate and their ability to evaluate it.
- Although reply speeches cannot introduce new arguments and new responses, they should nonetheless contribute new material to the debate. **They can, and are encouraged to make new observations, use new examples, and bring new ways to evaluate the main clashes** (Clashes in debates are the direct points of disagreement between the two teams. Clashes help judges see what the debate is really about and which team defends their stand more convincingly.)

E. TIMING RULES

- Each main speech (1st, 2nd or 3rd speaker speeches) lasts 5 minutes.
- The first minute of every main speech is protected, during which the speaker cannot be interrupted by POIs.
- The period between the 1st minute and 4th minute of the speech is unprotected time, during which the speaker may accept POIs from the opposing team.
- The last minute (4 to 5 minutes) is protected again, and no POIs may be offered.

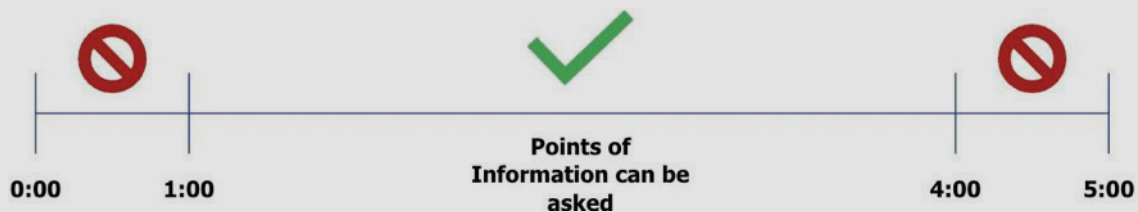


Image courtesy: Indian Schools Debating Society (ISDS)

F. INTRODUCTION TO POINTS OF INFORMATION (POIS)

1. A Point of Information (POI) is a brief interjection made by a member of the opposing team during a speaker's main speech. It is used *to challenge, question, or clarify a point being made by the speaker* and helps introduce strategic pressure.
2. The *purpose of a POI is to engage with the opponent's argument actively and to demonstrate responsiveness and critical thinking*. It also allows the opposing team to disrupt the flow of the argument or expose logical gaps.
3. POIs are *only allowed during the unprotected time of main speeches*, which is between the 1st and the 4th minute of every 5-minute speech. They are strictly not allowed during the protected periods (the first and the last minute of any main speech).
4. *Reply speeches do not allow POIs at any time*, as they are purely for summary and evaluation, not for direct engagement.
5. A POI should be brief, typically lasting no more than 10–15 seconds. It must consist of a short question or statement, not an extended argument.
6. To offer a POI, a debater should stand and clearly say "Point of Information" or simply "POI." The debater should wait for the speaker to acknowledge them before speaking. They must sit down if the speaker denies or does not immediately accept the POI.
7. The speaker has the right to either accept or deny a POI. To accept, the speaker typically says "Yes, go ahead" or gestures politely for the opponent to proceed. To deny, the speaker may say "No, thank you".
8. While accepting POIs is not mandatory, speakers are expected to accept at least one or two during their unprotected time. Accepting none can be seen as avoiding challenge, which may affect adjudication.
9. A team may offer several POIs during the unprotected period of a speech, but only one POI should be attempted at a time, and in a respectful manner. Overly aggressive or repeated attempts to interrupt a speaker are discouraged and may be noted negatively.
10. Debaters should avoid offering POIs too close to the protected time or speaking without the speaker's permission. Timing awareness and discipline are crucial.

11. When the speaker accepts a POI, they must respond to it immediately and clearly before continuing their speech. How effectively a debater responds to POIs is considered during adjudication under matter and method.
12. The purpose of asking a POI is not merely to interrupt but to strategically challenge the argument being made. A well-timed and well-framed POI can shift momentum in the debate.
13. POIs should be asked politely and without hostility. Debaters must not raise their voice, speak over the speaker, or attempt to argue beyond their allowed POI time.
14. Debaters should avoid asking POIs unrelated to the current argument, as they may appear weak or unfocused.
15. During adjudication, both the quality of POIs offered and the effectiveness of responses to them are considered. Successful handling of POIs can strengthen a speaker's score.

G. JUDGING CRITERIA

At the end of each debate, judges will evaluate teams based on:

Content (40%)

- Deals with WHAT is being presented.
- Quality of arguments, examples, rebuttal, POIs and responses to POIs.
- If an argument or rebuttal is underexplained, this indicates a content issue

Style (40%)

- Deals with HOW the content is presented.
- Accents, quality of voice, looks of speakers are *not* part of style
- Body language, pace of speech, tonal variations, choice of language, ability to describe situations through powerful illustration, humor, etc. are part of style

Strategy (20%)

- Deals with WHY content is said
- Relevance of the motion, time allocation, prioritising material in the speech, consistency between arguments and speeches, are all part of strategy
- A speech with a lot of time allocated to explaining thoroughly less important arguments is unstrategic

Image courtesy: Indian Schools Debating Society

Sources:

1. World schools Debating Championship website
2. Indian Schools Debating Society (ISDS)