

## Preparing for Impromptu Debates

This document is intended for students competing in the ACT Debating Competitions. This document provides a structure for how teams should spend their preparation time in the hour prior to an impromptu debate.

In impromptu rounds, teams have 1 hour to prepare a case. We recommend that teams spend their preparation time thusly:

### **1. Brainstorm (5 minutes)**

All members of the team should take the first 5 minutes to brainstorm ideas and write them down. When you are brainstorming, consider the following:

- Stakeholders *Who does this debate affect? What do they stand to gain or lose?*
- Actors *Who will be implementing the policy?*
- Harms and Benefits

### **2. Download (5 minutes)**

Go around in a circle and have each member of the team share the ideas they have come up with.

### **3. Discuss (20 minutes)**

Teams should use this time to construct their case. As a team, decide which arguments you want to run, and how to fit your ideas into overarching arguments. When you are constructing your case, think about the arguments the opposing team will run. Where possible, ensure that your points directly respond to arguments the opposition may raise.

### **4. Write the 1<sup>st</sup> Substantive Arguments (20 minutes)**

Writing the 1<sup>st</sup> speaker speech should always be a team effort. The first speaker speech should contain the model and the best material you discussed as a team.

### **5. Write the 2<sup>nd</sup> Speaker's Substantive Arguments (10 minutes)**

The second speaker's substantive point should be distinct from the material that is in the first speaker's speech. Moreover, it should be an important contribution to the debate.