

### Lincoln-Douglas Debate Summary

In Lincoln-Douglas (LD) debate, there are two teams—an Affirmative team and a Negative team. A debate starts with a resolution (in this case— *Resolved: that God should significantly increase the amount of discipline He gives to His children.*), and the Affirmative team argues for the resolution while the Negative team argues against it. The basic outline of an LD debate is as follows (times can vary in different formats):

1. 1st Affirmative, constructive (6 minutes)
2. Cross examination (3 minutes)
3. 1st Negative rebuttal (7 minutes)
4. Cross examination (3 minutes)
5. 1st Affirmative rebuttal (6 minutes)
6. 2nd Negative rebuttal (6 minutes)
7. 2nd Affirmative rebuttal (3 minutes)

**1. 1st Affirmative, constructive**—the Affirmative team chooses a speaker who presents the team’s *case*—an argument for the resolution. The case should include a *value premise*—a value the resolution brings about, or the goal of the resolution—and must be back up with evidence (in this case, Scripture).

**2. Cross examination**—the Negative team has a short time to ask questions of the Affirmative team, either to clarify or to challenge the conclusions of the team’s arguments.

**3. 1st Negative rebuttal**—the Negative team’s speaker presents the team’s case as in #1 above, then responds to the Affirmative’s case arguments.

**4. Cross Examination**—the Affirmative team questions the Negative team.

**5. 1st Affirmative rebuttal**—the Affirmative speaker answers the arguments presented by the Negative case, then addresses the responses to the Affirmative case made by the Negative team in its first rebuttal.

**6. 2nd Negative rebuttal**—the Negative speaker follows the same rebuttal format, but may not introduce any new arguments. This is the Negative’s last chance to summarize the strength of its arguments.

**7. 2nd Affirmative rebuttal**—the Affirmative speaker addresses final responses from the negative and clarifies the main arguments.

In an LD debate, a judge usually decides the winner of the debate. For the purposes of this activity, you may choose to withhold judgment or discuss the debate with your kids and see how they thought things went. You can find much more debate information at the National Forensic League ([nflonline.org](http://nflonline.org)).