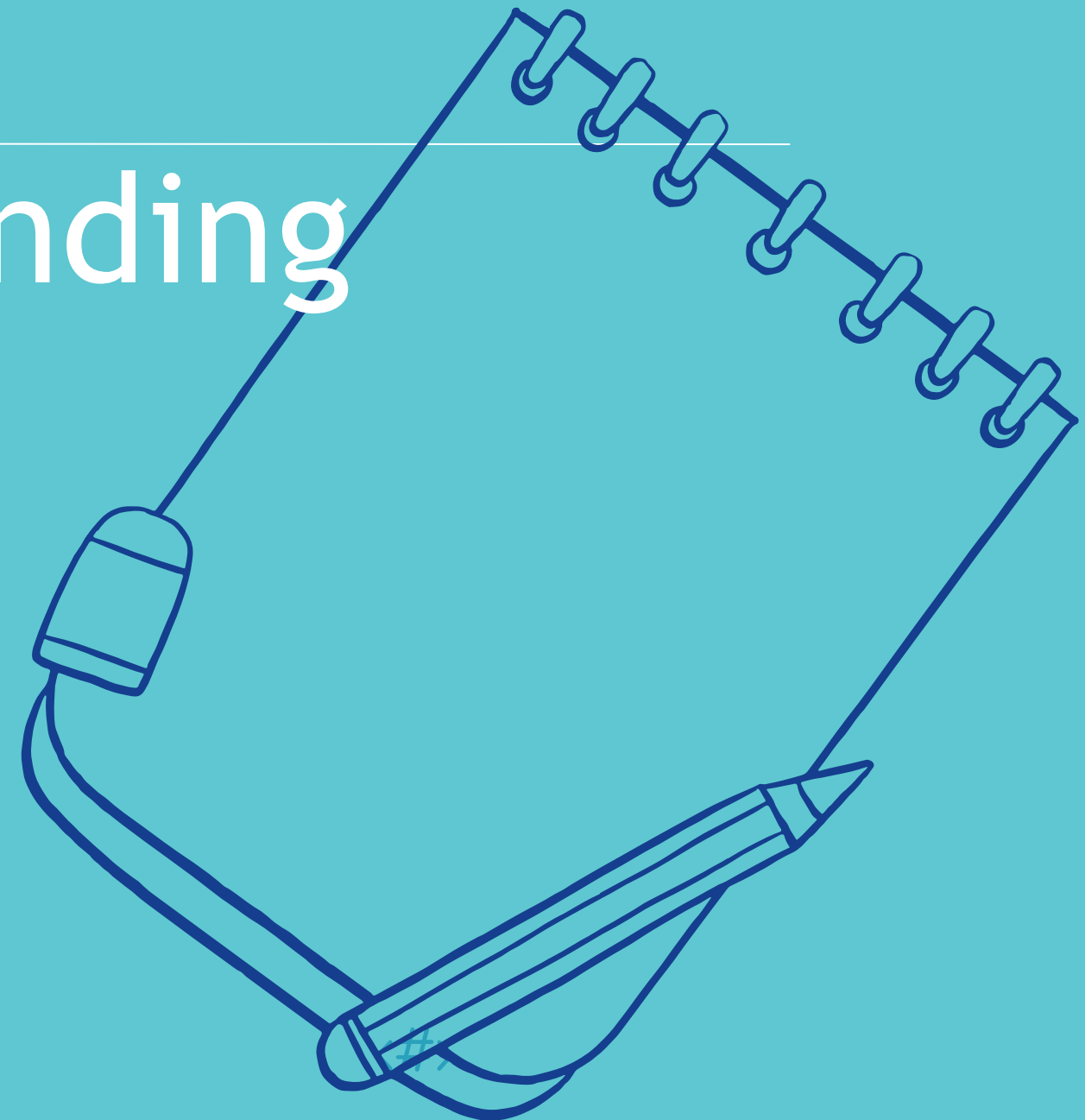




Session 4

Listening and Responding



Warm up

Challenge the statement as quickly as you can.

Use:

- I completely disagree because...
- I don't think that's quite right because...
- But what about...?

Weekends should be banned.

Warm up

Challenge the statement as quickly as you can.

Use:

- I completely disagree because...
- I don't think that's quite right because...
- But what about...?

Every classroom
should have a
trampoline.

Warm up

Challenge the statement as quickly as you can.

Use:

- I completely disagree because...
- I don't think that's quite right because...
- But what about...?

Chocolate should be
illegal.

Warm up

Challenge the statement as quickly as you can.

Use:

- I completely disagree because...
- I don't think that's quite right because...
- But what about...?

Teachers should sing every assembly.

Warm up

Challenge the statement as quickly as you can.

Use:

- I completely disagree because...
- I don't think that's quite right because...
- But what about...?

Everyone should have
a pet pigeon.

What is a rebuttal?

Rebuttal means responding directly to the other side's argument.

You are showing that their point is:

- Not true
- Not important
- Not enough to win the debate

A rebuttal is not just disagreement — it explains why the other side is wrong or weaker.

You can say:

- That is not true because...
- That is not important because...
- Even if that is true...
- The bigger issue is...

A useful method is:
Not true
or
Not important

A rebuttal should
explain clearly why
the other side's
point does not win
the debate.

Not True

You are challenging the evidence, aiming to discuss the evidence being used in the argument and how it doesn't support the claim sufficiently.

Not Important

You are challenging the impact, aiming to discuss that, despite the validity of the claim, it is not important enough to justify the motion.

Example rebuttal

Motion: This House would ban single-sex schools

A useful method is:
Not true
or
Not important

A rebuttal should
explain clearly why
the other side's
point does not win
the debate.

Proposition: "Some people do not want to attend single-sex schools because of their religion."

Not True

"The Proposition has not provided enough evidence to show that single-sex schools are a problem."

Not Important

"Even if some students prefer mixed-sex schools, they can already choose them. This is not a strong reason to ban single-sex schools."

Preparing to Debate

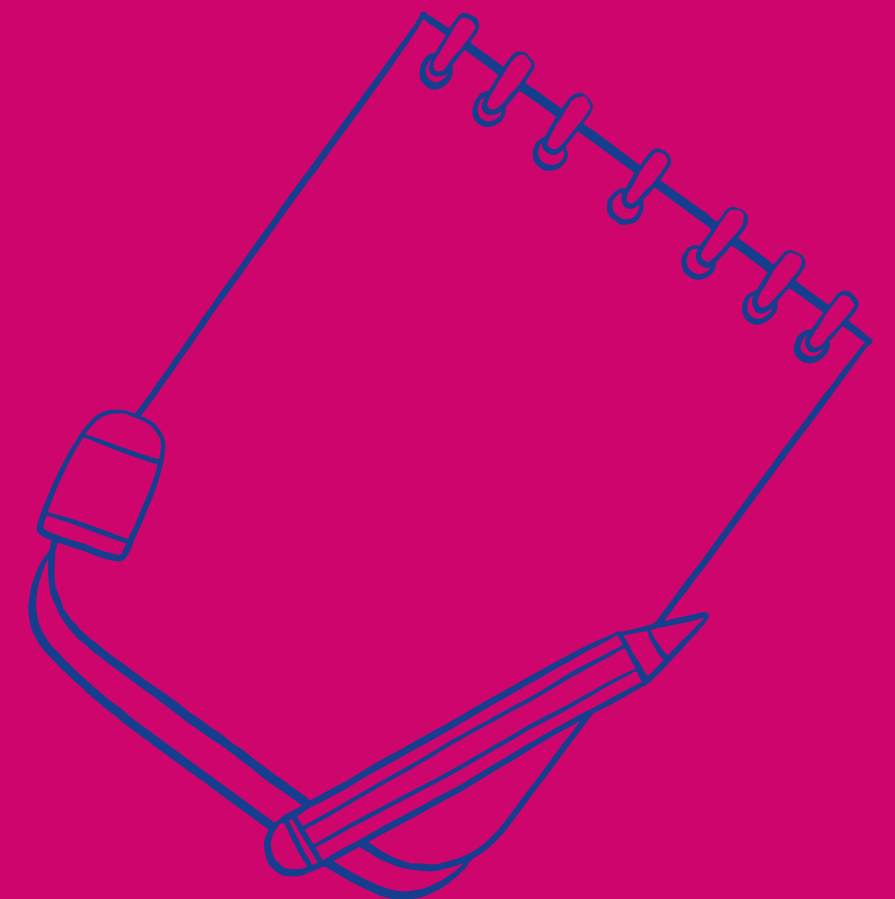
Choose one claim and respond using:
not true
or not important

Motion: This House would ban zoos.

Opposition: Zoos should stay open because they are fun for families.

Motion: This house would allow students to use phones during the school day.

Proposition: Phones should be allowed in school because students enjoy using them.



What is a Point of Information?

Practice

A POI is a short challenge or question offered during a speech. It should be:

Short

Relevant

Polite

Challenging

You offer one by saying:
“Point of Information” (POI) or
“Point”

Motion: This House would ban single-sex schools

Proposition Argument: "Some people do not want to attend single-sex schools because of their religion."

Challenge the Evidence

 "What evidence do you have that this is a widespread problem?"

Challenge the Impact

 "Why is this issue important enough to justify banning all single-sex schools?"

Challenge the Solution

 "Why ban single-sex schools instead of offering more school choice?"

In Mace debates, the first minute and the last minute of a main speech are protected time.

That means:

- No POIs during the first minute
- No POIs during the last minute
- POIs can usually be offered in the middle

Protected time helps speakers begin and end clearly.

Why should speakers accept POIs?

Practice

Accepting some POIs shows that you can:

- Think on your feet
- Listen carefully
- Defend your argument
- Stay calm under pressure

You do not need to accept every POI — but you should usually accept some.

Activity: POI practice in trios

You will work in groups of 3:

- Speaker
- Challenger
- Observer

You will all take a turn in each role.

Speaker

Gives a 45-second to 1-minute speech
Should accept a POI
Answers it briefly
Continues their speech

Challenger

Listens carefully
Offers one POI
Asks a short, clear challenge

Observer

Listens to both
Gives 30 seconds of feedback

This House believes celebrities should receive harsher punishments than ordinary people

This House would punish parents for crimes committed by their children

Pick one to prepare for. Focus on listening carefully and challenging clearly.

Now swap roles and repeat.
Try to fit 3 short rounds so
that everyone is:

- Speaker
- Challenger
- Observer

What makes a good POI?

Now swap roles and repeat.
Try to fit 3 short rounds so
that everyone is:

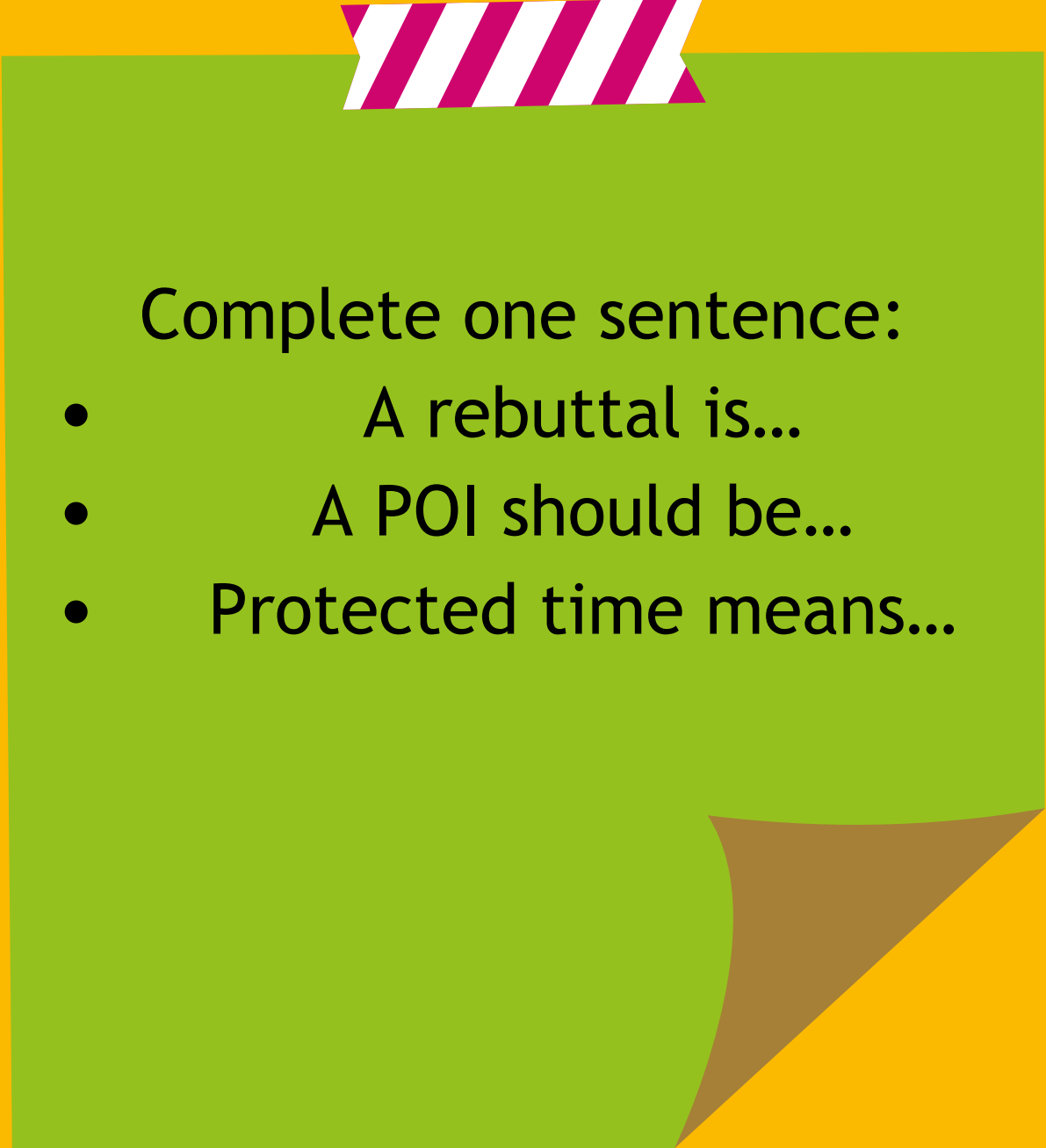
- Speaker
- Challenger
- Observer

A strong POI is:

- Short
- Relevant
- Well-timed
- Based on what the speaker actually said

A strong response:

1. Answers directly
2. Stays calm
3. Returns to the speech clearly



Complete one sentence:

- A rebuttal is...
- A POI should be...
- Protected time means...

