Lesson 2 Build a Strong Argument

What makes an argument strong

In debate, a strong argument is more than just an opinion. It should clearly explain:

1. **what you believe**
2. **why it is true**
3. **why it matters**

A simple way to build arguments is:

Claim → Reasoning → Example → Impact

1. Claim

Your **claim** is your main point.

Example:
School uniforms improve focus in school.

This is the basic idea you want the judge to remember.

2. Reasoning

Your **reasoning** explains *why* your claim is true.

Example:
When students spend less time comparing outfits or worrying about appearance, they can pay more attention to schoolwork.

This is often called the **warrant** — the logic connecting your idea to your conclusion.

3. Example

Your **example** helps make your reasoning more concrete. It can be:

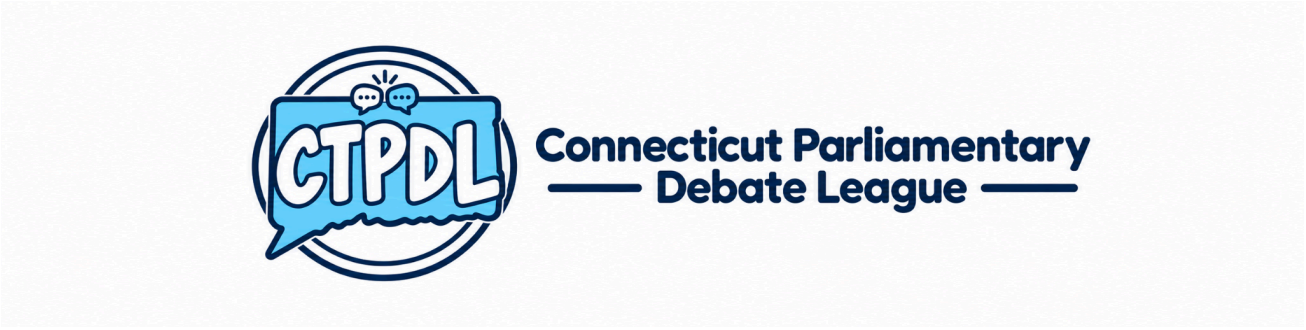
- a real-world example
- a hypothetical example
- a common-sense illustration

Example:
In schools with strict dress expectations, students may face less pressure to follow fashion trends or compete socially through clothing.

4. Impact

Your **impact** explains why the judge should care.

Example:
If students are more focused, they may learn more effectively and schools may create a better academic environment.



This is where you answer the question: **So what?**

Full sample argument

Motion: **This House would require school uniforms.**

Claim: School uniforms improve focus.
Reasoning: They reduce distractions related to clothing and appearance.
Example: Students may feel less pressure to wear certain brands or styles.
Impact: This can create a more equal and academic environment, which benefits learning.

That is a complete argument.

A weak argument vs. a stronger argument

Weak:
Uniforms are good because they help students.

Stronger:
Uniforms can improve the school environment because they reduce visible differences in clothing and status. When students feel less social pressure about what they wear, they may be more focused on learning and less distracted by appearance-based competition.

Common beginner mistakes

Here are a few things new debaters often do:

Mistake 1: Stopping too early

Example: “Social media is bad because it hurts mental health.”

That is only a starting point. You still need to explain:

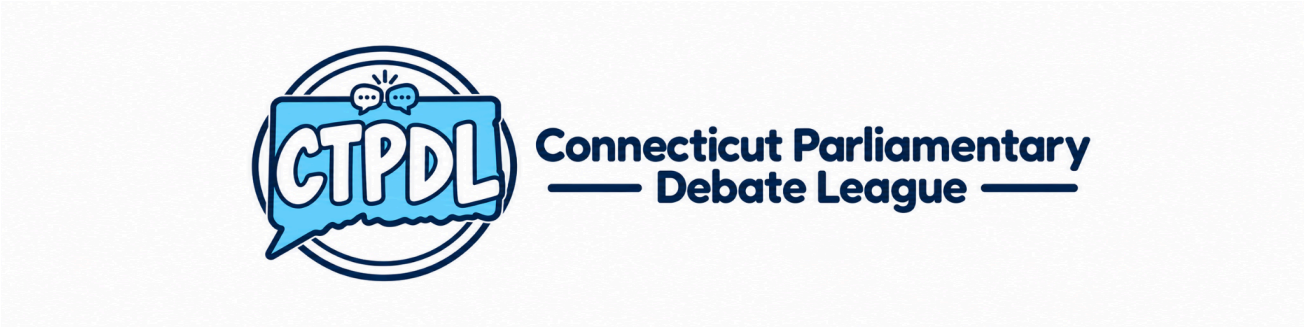
- how?
- for whom?
- why is it important?

Mistake 2: Listing points without developing them

Three shallow points are usually weaker than two well-developed points.

Mistake 3: Assuming the judge will “fill in the gaps”

Always explain your logic. Say the important part out loud.



Try it yourself

Use the structure **Claim → Reasoning → Example → Impact** for this motion:

This House would ban homework on weekends.

Write one complete argument for the Government side.

You can start like this:

- **Claim:** Weekend homework increases stress for students.
- Then explain **why**
- Give an **example**
- End with **why it matters**

Mini challenge

Now try to make **one argument for the other side** too.

Good debaters can think both ways.

Key takeaway

A good argument is not just a point — it is a clearly explained idea with logic and impact.

Coming next

In Lesson 3, you'll learn how to prepare a case from a motion.