* The definition provides the common ground on which you should construct the debate. It should therefore be neutral. It should not advantage one side or the other.
* It should explain what you mean by the topic so that you can argue the case. This is more important than it sounds, remember, if it’s not supported by the definition, then it can’t be part of your argument.
* There are only two grounds for disagreeing with the opposition’s definition: the definition is (1) illogical or (2) unreasonable.
* If you disagree with the definition then you MUST do an “even if” argument. This is where you pretend that you agree with the definition in order to show why their case is still weak.
* EVEN IF EXAMPLE:

TOPIC: That we should keep off the grass. If one team has defined the debate as environment and the other team thinks its about drugs, then each team must follow two steps.

1. Disagree with the definition and show why yours is better.
2. Pretend that the debate is about the other issue and tell the audience why their case is still bad. If you defined it as drugs, then you have to say, *“even if we accept that this debate is about environment, the opposition’s case is still weak because………”*after refuting, you return to your own case.

**Your team line must:**

* Answer to the questions posed by the topic
* Summarise the points you are going to make
* Prove the topic
* Be simple and easy to understand

**Your team line should not:**

* Be poetry/ a “catchy” saying that only catches the surface meaning.
* Be a question

**Don’t just tell your audience that the opposition’s case is ‘wrong’ - they want to know WHY.**

**Critique the argument – not the speaker or the examples.**

**Things to look for:**

* Facts
* Generalisations
* Factual inaccuracies
* Case shifts
* Poor logic
* Shopping lists
* Sliding definition
* Argument doesn’t prove the topic
* No connection between the argument and the team line
* Lack of factual proof