

Student Version

Framing your Message

Directions: Read each question and its example answer. Then, (1) decide your own answer, (2) write a frame and (3) write a message. It may be helpful to work backwards - try writing your message, then describing your frame in 2-3 words. Example answers for each question are given below to help guide you. Lastly, check the box(es) of the goal(s) that each of your messages achieves.

1. Should well water testing for private homes be mandatory? Example -

Answer: Yes

Frame: Equity and Safety

Message: Mandatory testing ensures that all private wells meet minimum safety standards, protecting vulnerable populations like children and immunocompromised individuals who may not have the knowledge to test their water regularly.

Does your message achieve any of the following goals? Check all that apply.

- Encourage water filtration
- Increase water testing
- Raise awareness about environmental health
- Start a legislative action

2. Who should bear the responsibility of paying to test private well water—the homeowner or the government? Example -

Answer: The government should pay.

Frame: Public Health Priority

Message: Ensuring clean water is a public health priority, and government funding should guarantee consistent and thorough testing to protect entire communities

Does your message achieve any of the following goals? Check all that apply.

- Encourage water filtration
- Increase water testing
- Raise awareness about environmental health
- Start a legislative action

3. Should water resources be publicly or privately controlled? Example -

Answer: Privately

Frame: Efficiency & Innovation

Message: Due to profit motives, private companies may have more incentive to innovate and implement efficient technologies and practices that will ultimately save them money, but will simultaneously benefit the environment and consumer.

Does your message achieve any of the following goals? Check all that apply.

- Encourage water filtration
- Increase water testing
- Raise awareness about environmental health
- Start a legislative action

4. Maine's primary drinking water standard for arsenic is 10 micrograms per liter (ug/L), while New Hampshire's is 5 ug/L. Should Maine change its standard to 5 ug/L? Example -

Answer: Yes

Frame: Health Benefits

Message: Lowering the arsenic standard decreases exposure to a known carcinogen, potentially reducing the incidence of cancers and other health problems linked to arsenic.

Does your message achieve any of the following goals? Check all that apply.

- Encourage water filtration
- Increase water testing
- Raise awareness about environmental health
- Start a legislative action

5. Should there be stricter regulations on agricultural runoff to protect drinking water sources? Example -

Answer: No

Frame: Economic

Message: Stricter regulations can increase costs for farmers, potentially reducing their competitiveness and profitability.

Does your message achieve any of the following goals? Check all that apply.

- Encourage water filtration
- Increase water testing
- Raise awareness about environmental health
- Start a legislative action

6. Is water a human right or a commodity? Example -

Answer: A human right

Frame: Moral Responsibility

Message: Society has a moral obligation to provide essential resources like water to all people, regardless of their ability to pay.

Does your message achieve any of the following goals? Check all that apply.

- Encourage water filtration
- Increase water testing
- Raise awareness about environmental health
- Start a legislative action



Debate!!!

Group Research & Preparation: For your side of the issue, as a group decide on a frame (such as public health, economic, environmental, etc.). Then work together to gather data, statistics, expert opinions, and real-world examples to build a strong argument around your frame. Write all relevant information that you plan to use during the debate in the box below.

Now that you've done your research, you will create the following—

Opening statement: Each team will make an opening statement. Opening statements will not exceed 1 minute. The opening statement can be given by one member of the group or divided among multiple members. Write your opening statement below, and include who will deliver it and the order (if there are multiple people). Include the following:

- **Introduction:** A brief overview of the topic and your team's stance.
- **Thesis Statement:** Clearly state your core position.
- **Main Arguments:** Briefly present the key points that your team will elaborate on throughout the debate.

Aim to be clear, concise, and engaging to grab the audience's attention. You also want to be logical and well-organized to provide a roadmap for the rest of the debate.

Further Argument: After the opening statement from both teams, you will have 3 minutes to present your main arguments (you will have given an overview of these in your introduction). Responsibility to present can be given to one speaker or divided among group members, but only one speaker may talk at a time. Based on the research you did, write your argument in the box below. Be sure to include who will deliver what part of the argument and in what order.

Closing Statement: Create a closing statement that supports your case. Your team will have 2 minutes to present it. Write your statement in the box below and include the following:

- Summary: Recap the main arguments presented by your team.
- Refutation: Highlight and counter the most significant points made by the opposing team.
- Conclusion: Restate your thesis in light of the arguments and refutations, underscoring why your team's position is superior.
- Final Appeal: Make a persuasive and memorable closing appeal to the audience.

Aim to be persuasive and impactful to ensure the arguments resonate with your audience. Be confident and assertive, reinforcing your team's stance and undermining the opposing team's case.

Complete the following during the debate at the appropriate time—

Rebuttal Preparation: Now that you've listened to the opposing team's arguments, it's time to prepare your rebuttals. A rebuttal is an attempt to challenge and dismantle the arguments of the opposing team. You will have two opportunities to present rebuttals: the first will last 4 minutes and the second will last 3 minutes. Write the following in the box below:

- List the key arguments made by the opposing team
- For each of the opposing team's arguments, write a clear and concise rebuttal that directly counters their points without introducing new information.