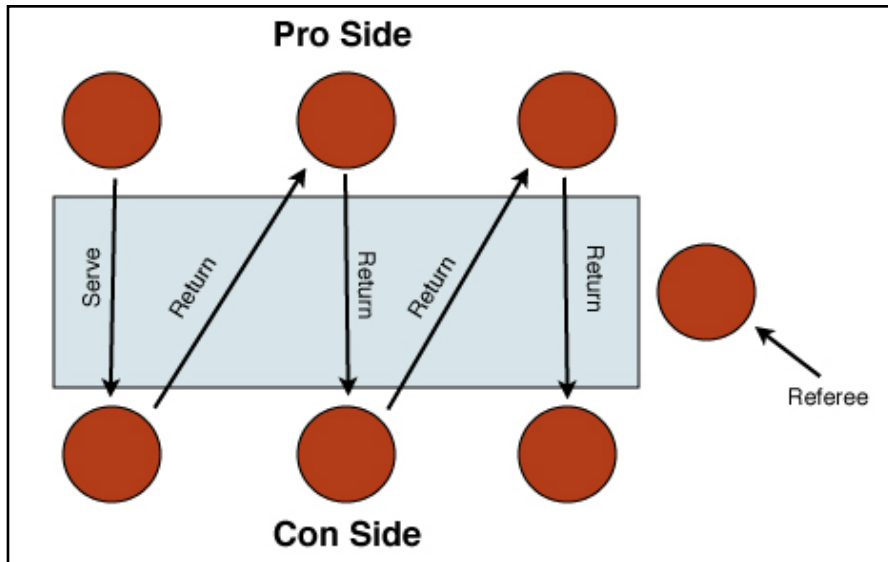


Tennis Debates

*An exercise for whole-class debating on
impromptu or researched topics*



Instructions for the Referee

Your job, as referee, is to keep track of the score for each side and issue a ruling when one side has “dropped the ball.” You are responsible for enforcing the rules and declaring a winner. You are expected to be fair and impartial in your decisions.



For Tennis Debates, you will be assigned to a team of three. Each team of three will debate another team of three. The teacher will announce the topic and give you a team number. Once you get the topic and receive your team number, go to your designated table. Take your notes with you, because you’ll be able to use them while preparing.

After the topic is announced, the referee will flip a coin to determine which team will be pro and which will be con. Then, all teams have 10 minutes to work together, preparing their arguments and ideas from their notes.

Once the preparation period is over, the first student from the

pro team “serves” by making an argument for their side. Then, the other side “returns” the serve by refuting the argument. The process continues until the ball reaches the last player or until one team drops the ball.

Normally, games are played to 5 points.

RULES FOR TENNIS DEBATES

1. A team can only score a point when they have “served” the ball and the other side drops the ball.
2. If the team that serves drops the ball, the serve goes to the other side.
3. The serve rotates between players. Once you’ve served, the next serve for your team goes to the player on your left.
4. A team is said to drop the ball when any of the following rules have been violated.
 - Players must respond within 15 seconds.
 - Players must not repeat a point that has already been made without adding anything new.
 - Players must use **A-R-E** to construct their arguments.
 - Players must use **4-Step Refutation** when answering arguments from the other side.