

HMDC Forensics Team for Elementary Students (Fall 2024)

August 17, 2024 to November 23, 2024 (14 Sessions)

COURSE SYLLABUS (Fall 2024) - Saturdays, 7:30 PM

Course Description:

This course is designed to develop essential skills that are valuable both in competitive environments and in everyday life. By engaging in Public Forum Debate, students will enhance their English proficiency, strengthen their public speaking, and refine their ability to work collaboratively. This curriculum emphasizes critical thinking, structured argumentation, and effective teamwork. Students will learn to articulate their ideas with clarity, engage in constructive discussions, and navigate complex topics with confidence. These skills not only prepare students for success in academic competitions but also equip them with competencies that are crucial for personal and professional achievement.

Instructor Information:

Bill Eddy aka "Coach Bill"

Email: billeddy@gmail.com

WeChat: Wxid_powf8axrfb4e22 (Bill Eddy)

General Information (Pacific Time, ex. Los Angeles):

Starts: Saturday, August 17, 2024.

Ends: Saturday, November 23, 2024 [14 Meetings].

Day & Time: Saturdays, 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM.

Homework: <https://hmdcforensics.com/team-elementary-forensics-hmdc/>

Note: Please bookmark the homework page!

Online Meetings Using "Zoom"

Elementary Forensics Team Meeting (Fall 2024):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85848782450?pwd=RHDQ5RUds1CGt9IbwJWvkRwHiEF1r.1>

Note: The password is already included in the above link (so, no password is needed).

Class Expectations

- We must be respectful not just to the teachers but to each other.
- Cameras remain on with face being fully visible (mic off unless speaking).
- Please arrive prepared with enough energy to give a speech if called upon to do so.
- Homework will be limited so as not to interfere with your existing workload.
- *We are speaking and debating every session* - students are encouraged to bring fun topics to class.
IMPORTANT: If someone is speaking everyone is listening; it's about showing respect.

Textbook/Handbook:

Debate Textbook: None. This is primarily a 'doing' course - most of the learning comes from the activities designed to build thinking, speaking, and collaboration skills. There will be training videos and handouts.

Materials Needed:

Electronic device (using a PC/Laptop is highly preferred). <-- **Pls be sure to unblock the homework page!**

Writing Utensils, & Paper (Students may be asked to take some written notes).

Three-ring binder with tabs to insert handouts.

Key Concept of the Course

This course focuses on developing skills in critical thinking, confident speaking, and respectful collaboration. We believe in our ability to express ourselves clearly and confidently. We aim to be problem-solvers who advocate for our beliefs and show respect for others, even when they disagree. Understanding how government works and learning to negotiate and collaborate are essential for success and leadership. Respect for ourselves and others is fundamental in every discussion and decision we make.

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General Plan for the Course

This course is about learning by doing. Most learning will come from participating in Public Forum style debate activities and using research. Much of the research will be provided, but extra reading can help. Debates and crossfires can be intense, so it's important to show respect and kindness, especially to those nervous about public speaking. We will engage in crossfire activities in every session, starting with simple topics. Research topics will be announced well enough in advance to allow students to prepare and practice ahead of time.

IMPORTANT: Students must come prepared to speak and debate. There will be reading and writing assignments due at the start of each meeting, except for the first one. These assignments are needed to join in the activities. Only parents can excuse a student from homework (must inform teachers in advance!).

Technology and Communication

Let's help make the course enjoyable for everyone. Show up prepared and keep the camera on at all times (unless the teacher gives special permission). Check that the camera, microphone, and speakers are working properly before each class. Do not wait until the last moment to do homework assignments. Notify the teacher right away if there are trouble accessing learning materials or if emails are not received.

Sample Research Topics (Public Forum Debate)

September/October 2024

1. Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially expand its surveillance infrastructure along its southern border.

November/December 2024

We will have some topic choices made available after the class starts.

Class Schedule and Topic Focus

Week 1 (Aug. 17): Students will begin the course by reviewing the fundamentals of Public Forum debate, focusing on speech structure, argument development, and roles within the debate. They will practice crossfires using non-research-required topics provided in class, helping them get comfortable with quick questioning and responsive answering.

Week 2 (Aug. 24): The review continues with an emphasis on developing rebuttal skills, including effective use of rejoinders to counter opposing arguments. Students will also learn how to deliver a strong final focus, highlighting key voting issues that can influence the debate's outcome.

Holiday Break (Aug. 31): No class in observance of the Labor Day Holiday in the US.

Week 3 (Sept. 7): Focus shifts to debating a research-provided topic: increasing surveillance of the U.S.-Mexico border. Students will work in teams to research, gather evidence, and craft their cases. This includes writing speeches, constructing rebuttals, and preparing for crossfire sessions.

Week 4 (Sept. 14): Students will engage in practice debates on the U.S.-Mexico border surveillance topic. The debates will be structured to mimic competition conditions, with the youngest students serving as judges to better understand the judging process.

Week 5 (Sept. 21): Continuation of practice debates to prepare for an upcoming online competition. All students will participate, regardless of grade level, to enhance their debating skills. The goal is to improve fluency and confidence in presenting and defending arguments.

Week 6 (Sept. 28): This week will feature an in-class debate contest to simulate real competition conditions. The atmosphere will be structured and competitive, with strict adherence to debate rules and formats. Students will receive detailed feedback on their performance.

Week 7 (Oct. 5): Preparation for the upcoming debate event the day after Halloween. Students will review all aspects of the debate format, refine their speeches, and practice crossfire techniques, focusing on the research-provided topic.

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Class Schedule and Topic Focus (*Continued...*)

Week 8 (Oct. 12): Continued preparation for the debate event. Students will engage in full practice debates, focusing on refining their strategies and ensuring their arguments are well-supported by research.

Week 9 (Oct. 19): Final practice sessions before the debate event. Students will focus on fine-tuning their speeches, practicing crossfires, and rehearsing rebuttals. The goal is to solidify their readiness for the upcoming competition.

Week 10 (Oct. 26): Exclusive preparation for the upcoming debate tournament. Students will participate in full practice debates under competition-like conditions, sharpening their skills and finalizing their strategies.

Week 11 (Nov. 2): Post-event debriefing session where students will discuss their experiences from the debate tournament, share insights, and reflect on their learning. This session allows students to analyze their performance and identify areas for improvement.

Week 12 (Nov. 9): Introduction of a new debate topic for the next four weeks. Students will begin researching or working on non-research-required topics. They will start crafting arguments, preparing speeches, and engaging in practice crossfires.

Week 13 (Nov. 16): Continuation of preparation for the new debate topic. Students will refine their arguments, practice rebuttals, and engage in structured practice debates, with an emphasis on crossfire techniques.

Week 14 (Nov. 23): Final in-class debate contest covering a variety of topics. This contest will serve as a capstone experience, allowing students to demonstrate the skills they've developed over the course. Detailed feedback will be provided to help students continue improving.

Additional Comments

Thank you for signing up for our program. I appreciate your commitment to developing your skills through our courses and events and I am looking forward to working with you throughout the year. Together, we will focus on building the knowledge and skills that should serve you well in these competitions and beyond.

Thanks,
Coach Bill