**IB Twentieth Century History**

**Debate Topics**

Central to our study of politics and history is the notion that every idea is debatable. Think of our study of politics as if we were examining a network of phenomena through a prism. We argue about both theory and evidence. So let’s have some classroom debates about a number of topics that are relevant for the IB curriculum and exams. I will ask students to write persuasive essays on each topic and then a group of four (usually) will orally debate one topic with all students taking part in at least one oral debate.

The standard format for a debate is:

1. Affirmative Opening: One minute hook and introduction
2. Negative Opening: One minute hook and introduction
3. Affirmative Speech: Well-prepared, five to ten minute speech (3 x 5 cards recommended)
4. Negative Speech: Well-prepared, five to ten minute speech
5. Affirmative Rebuttal: two to three minute response to opposing side
6. Negative Rebuttal: two to three minute response to opposing side
7. Questions from audience: the audience will have read the articles and everyone will be held responsible for the arguments
8. Closing Speech from Affirmative Side: Summarize argument and have interesting closing remarks
9. Closing Speech from Negative Side: Summarize argument and have a strong interesting close.

1. **Socialism remains an important political philosophy.**

Meiyi, Jahninna, Averie, Valentina

Affirmative: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **The Russian Revolution, on balance, should be viewed as a success.**

Alysha, Kenia, Semma, Hanna

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **As best understood by studying Stalin, the inevitable result of communist revolution is tyranny.**

Shruthi, Sheehwa, Tianchi, Albert

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **The Cuban Revolution can be best understood as an independence movement.**

Mandy, Kiran, Dorsa, Dalia

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Deng Xiaoping was fond of saying, “It does not matter if the cat is white or the cat is black, the question is, does it catch mice?” His formula of authoritarian single-party communist government mixed with capitalist economics deserves praise.**

Nikil, Kevin, Simon, Kanwar

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **The responsibility for the origins of the Cold War lies with the capitalist nations led by the United States who sought to maintain imperialist control over most of the world.**

Charlotte, Kenny, Jason, Sartaj

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **The end of the Cold War is best explained as caused by people around the world rejecting totalitarianism and embracing human rights, democratic elections, and the rule of law.**

Colton, Kevin, Joey, Jayan

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_