**RES**OLVE

1. **Resolve**  
   A normative statement which the affirmative team affirms and the negative team negates.
2. **Evidence**Contentions are proposed to prove the resolve, and those contentions are supported by evidence (history, authoritative statements, statistics, science, census data, etc.) and sound reasoning.
3. **Summary**

Restate the resolve and include the contentions.

This pattern, the pattern of RESOLVE, is indicative of everything you will do in debate, and, should be inherently obvious in every speech or paper that you deliver henceforth. There will be a point you wish to assert, (this is the resolve) followed by reason and evidence, and then concluded with a summary statement of everything you have just proven. The summary statement will have a concise statement of the resolve, an allusion to the evidence proffered, and a conclusion that proves the resolve.

# Writing and Speaking Persuasively

In order to speak persuasively, you must first learn to aggregate your thoughts persuasively. This is most easily done by writing persuasively. To write persuasively one’s thoughts must be organized in the following way:

1. Present an opinion statement (the point you hope to prove)
2. Give evidence for the opinion statement
3. Argue that the opinion statement has been proven

You can see that the method given above is the same as the method recommended in RESOLVE. In a single paragraph, this method will take the form of three kinds of sentences: an intro sentence, followed by several body sentences, followed by a conclusion sentence.

The intro sentence (also called a thesis or opinion statement) is the point you hope to prove. That first sentence is followed by body sentences. Those body sentences are contentions that prove your initial statement; they give evidence for the opinion statement. The body sentences are followed by a conclusion sentence (which restates the intro sentence and includes the points made in the body paragraphs as proof of the conclusion).

Speech/Paper

Conclusion Sentence

Restate My Point Include Contentions

Body Sentence 2

2nd Contention

Body Sentence 1

1st Contention

Intro Sentence

My Point

Sample:

“At back of every law, in these United States, is a moral precept; therefore, the statement, ‘You cannot legislate morality,’ is false— morality is legislated with every law. Indeed, this country was established on the belief that, the purpose of government is the protection of its citizen’s unalienable rights— all rights being derivative of moral obligations and prescriptions. Most laws, be they laws regarding the safe speeds on a highway, or laws regarding the proper use of plastic in manufacturing, have as their ultimate purpose the preservation of human life— given the moral position that human life is valuable. So, given that rights are an extrapolation of moral truths, and given that most laws have in mind a moral position— that being the value of human life— one is compelled by reason alone, to acknowledge that morality is legislated in America, every day.”

In a speech, there will be multiple paragraphs. These paragraphs will be ordered in a way that is directly analogous to the order of sentences in a *single* paragraph. Just as a single paragraph has an intro sentence, body sentences, and a conclusion sentence, so too, a speech or paper will have an intro paragraph, body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph. These paragraphs do for the speech, or paper, almost exactly what the individual sentences will do for a paragraph.

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| Intro Paragraph |
| Body Paragraph |
| Body Paragraph |
| Conclusion Paragraph |

You can see that there is an intro paragraph (also called a thesis paragraph). That first paragraph is the point you hope to prove. That first paragraph is then followed by body paragraphs. The first and last sentences of your body paragraphs will restate the body sentences (i.e. the contentions) you offered in your first paragraph. So, the purpose of body ***paragraph*** #1 is to expound on body ***sentence*** #1. The purpose of body ***paragraph*** #2 is to expound on body ***paragraph*** #2. Note in the graphic below, like the graphic above, the speech/paper is broken into paragraphs and color-coded. In the lower graphic there are colored lines (yellow, green, blue, and grey) in each of the colored paragraphs. These lines represent the sentences of that individual paragraph. Specifically, they represent an intro sentence, two body sentences, and a conclusion sentence. Now, note that the second paragraph, that is to say, the first ***body*** paragraph, is green. This points back to the first body sentence in the first paragraph, which is also green. So, the purpose of the first body paragraph (green paragraph) is to prove the first body sentence (green sentence) in the intro paragraph. The second body paragraph is blue and points back to the second body sentence in the first paragraph, which is also blue. The body sentences of these body paragraphs provide the evidence of the contentions made in the intro paragraph. This evidence all works to prove your initial (thesis) statement. The last paragraph, like all the other paragraphs, includes an intro sentence, body sentences and a conclusion sentence. This paragraph is the conclusion paragraph. The conclusion paragraph, like that of the first paragraph, is a summary of the entire paper. However, this paragraph will usually evince the contentions marshalled to prove the thesis or resolution. One other difference between the intro and concluding paragraph is, the intro paragraph will show what you ***intend*** to prove and how, whereas the last paragraph states what you ***have proven*** and how.

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| Intro Paragraph |
| Body Paragraph |
| Body Paragraph |
| Conclusion Paragraph |

Speech/Paper

Now, let’s assume the (above) sample paragraph about the relationship of law and morality in the US is the intro paragraph (thesis paragraph) of a speech or paper that you must turn in. The first ***body*** ***sentence*** in that intro paragraph is about the government’s obligation to protect the inalienable rights of its citizens. And, it asserts that all rights are derivative of moral obligations and prescriptions. So, in your speech/paper, the second paragraph, that is to say the ***first*** ***body paragraph***, would need to prove the contention of the ***first*** ***body*** ***sentence*** in the ***intro*** paragraph (that it is the government’s obligation to protect the rights of its citizens and the claim that rights are derivative of moral obligations). Again, this is illustrated in color in the above color graphic. The first body paragraph in the speech/paper is green and points back to the green line (the first body sentence) in the intro paragraph. The second body paragraph in the speech/paper is blue, and it points back to the blue line (the second body sentence) in the intro paragraph.

The conclusion paragraph, as previously stated, is essentially a clever restatement of the topic paragraph. The conclusion paragraph is illustrated here as grey, and as such, it points back to the grey line (concluding sentence) in the intro paragraph. (Because the concluding sentence in the intro paragraph is a summary of the entire intro paragraph, [the main point and the contentions] it is a summary of the whole paper.) This last paragraph should confidently take the form of a proven conclusion.

Consider the two sample paragraphs below. The first is the sample paragraph (regarding rights in America) offered above. Now, if this first paragraph were the intro paragraph for your speech, the sample paragraph below it, might be a good conclusion paragraph to your paper. Take a moment to compare the two. You will note that the last line in the first paragraph is a summary of the whole paper, and the second paragraph simply restates everything already said in the first.

Original Sample Intro Paragraph:

“At back of every law, in these United States, is a moral precept; therefore, the statement, ‘You cannot legislate morality,’ is false— morality is legislated with every law. Indeed, this country was established on the belief that, the purpose of government is the protection of its citizen’s unalienable rights— all rights being derivative of moral obligations and prescriptions. Most laws, be they laws regarding the safe speeds on a highway or laws regarding the proper use of plastic in manufacturing, have as their ultimate purpose the preservation of human life, given the moral position that human life is valuable. So, given that rights are an extrapolation of moral truths, and given that most laws have in mind a moral position— that being the value of human life— one is compelled by reason alone, to acknowledge that morality is legislated in America, every day.”

Sample Conclusion Paragraph:

We have shown (Or, “It has been shown…”) that the statement, ‘You cannot legislate morality’ is demonstrably false— morality is in fact legislated with every law passed in these United States. We have seen (Or, “It has been shown…”) that this country was established largely on the ideal that, the seminal purpose of government is to protect the rights of its citizens, which are to be understood as inalienable; and that, most laws are intended as a protection of its citizen’s lives, because, human life is considered to be valuable, which is an inherently moral statement. So, in conclusion, and with obvious precedent, you may count yourselves imminently fortunate that, in the United States, morality is legislated daily.

# In A Debate You Will Be Judged According To:

1. The evidence of your arguments
2. Consistency of argument
3. Ability to respond to questions
4. Persuasiveness of the speaker and or team (to the judge)

# Debate Format

Affirmative side begins, followed by the negation. Both sides, all speakers, regardless of the format open in the following way.

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| Resolve: “Evolution should be taught in schools.” |
| Relate to the Audience |
| Anticipate the opposition |
| Frame the debate |
| Contention I: |
| Facts: |
| Contention II: |
| Facts: |
| Contention III: |
| Facts: |
| Anticipate the opposition |
| Frame the debate |