**Lincoln-Douglas Debate Format**

**1. Affirmative Constructive Speech - 6 min.**

In this section, the Affirmative side tries to convince the room of why their opinion is right, much like any other debate. The speaking time is six minutes, although the speaker does not need to use the entire allotted time. Important points to hit are:

* Thesis statement
* Define terms
* Observations
* Core Value and criterion (how to measure that value)
* Number each of your arguments/reasons
* 2-3 primary reasons for the judgment- being critical to society in maintaining the core value
* Substantiation
* Conclusion

**2. Negative Cross-Examination - 3 min.**

Immediately after the Affirmative case, the Negative speaker has three minutes to ask the affirmative speaker any questions regarding their opening speech. The primary purpose of the cross-examination is to exploit any holes in the Affirmative case. As an added bonus, the side asking the questions can cut off the person responding at any time. However, this is not a time to argue or give a speech for your own side.

**3. Negative Constructive Speech - 7 min.**

Now it is time for Negative speaker to form their own argument. The speaker should have prepared several points beforehand, although it is acceptable to take some of the seven-minute time period to respond to what the Affirmative speaker has said thus far. However, there is time for that later. The important thing in this section is to build up the Negative argument rather than tear down the Affirmative. The speaker should try to hit the same points as listed in the Affirmative constructive speech.

**4. Affirmative Cross-Examination - 3 min.**

As before, the constructive speech is followed by a cross-examination, but this time it is the Affirmative speaker asking questions of the negative. Just as before, this is an opportunity to clarify what the Negative speaker has said, or to exploit weaknesses in the Negative argument. The Affirmative speaker has three minutes to ask questions, and may cut off the Negative speaker at any time.

**5. Affirmative Rebuttal - 4 min.**

At this time, the Affirmative speaker takes four minutes to either reinforce what they have side before or respond to what the Negative speaker has said thus far. If you have been asked any particularly damaging questions during the cross-examination, this is a good time to recover from that. Alternately, you may simply continue to attack your opponent's position.

**6. Negative Rebuttal - 6 min.**

Just as with the Affirmative rebuttal, this is an opportunity for the Negative speaker to make any last comments to either support their argument or tear down their opponent. This is the last opportunity for the Negative speaker to present their case, so time should be used wisely. The Negative has six minutes for the rebuttal.

**7. Affirmative Final Comments - 3 min**

In the last section, the Affirmative speaker has three minutes to make any final comments. As with the rebuttal they may either build up the Affirmative case or tear down the Negative. This is the last speaking section of the debate.

**OUTLINE for an AFFIRMATIVE Lincoln-Douglas Debate Case**

Pithy Quotation / Shocking Statistic / Apt Analogy / etc.

With these words in mind, I stand firmly resolved that: (state resolution)

For the sake of clarification in this debate, I would like to define the following terms from

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dictionary:

I would also like to make the following observations about the resolution…

My value for this debate is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

My value criterion is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because it is the best tool with which to measure if my value is being upheld in this debate.

I have three contentions (arguments), each of which upholds my value.

Contention 1: (repeat title of your contention)

EXPLANATION of your contention using logic and reasoning:

EVIDENCE and EXPERT opinion supporting this contention

This contention upholds my value because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(Do the same for Contentions 2 & 3)

In conclusion, having supported my value of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I urge an affirmation of the resolution that (restate resolution) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**OUTLINE for NEGATIVE CASE**

Pithy Quotation / Shocking Statistic / Apt Analogy / etc.

With these words in mind, I stand firmly AGAINST the resolution which states that: (state resolution)

For the sake of clarification in this debate, I would like to define the following terms from

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dictionary:

I would also like to make the following observations about the resolution… (only if you have additional observations about the resolution or ones that are different from the affirmative’s side)

My value for this debate is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

My value criterion is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because it is the best tool with which to measure if my value is being upheld in this debate.

I have three contentions (arguments), each of which upholds my value.

Contention 1: (repeat title of your contention)

EXPLANATION of your contention using logic and reasoning:

EVIDENCE and/or EXPERT opinion supporting this contention

This contention upholds my value because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(Do the same for Contentions 2 and 3)

I would now like to address my opponent’s case by pointing out several flaws/inadequacies/weakness in his/her argument.

In conclusion, having supported my value of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I urge a NEGATION of the resolution that (restate resolution) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Common Values & Criteria**

**Values**

1. **Societal Good or Collective Good**: refers to the good of the entire community; commonly defined like utilitarianism--the greatest good for the greatest number
2. **Individualism**: the furtherance and growth of the individual usually created by the exercise of individual rights. Read the introduction and chapter 3 of J.S. Mill's On Liberty for further explanation of the importance of individualism.
3. **Natural Rights**: Life, liberty, and property. Read John Locke's Second Treatise of Government for an explanation of the government's obligation to preserve natural rights
4. **Individual Rights**: Natural rights plus the civil rights granted to an individual by his particular society.
5. **Liberty**: freedom from oppression
6. **Sanctity of Life**: refers to the inherent value of life; life is good no matter what its condition
7. **Quality of Life**: refers to the standard of living; life is valuable based upon what conditions under which one is living
8. **Dignity**: Respect for the inherent worth of man
9. **Privacy**: Freedom from the knowledge or interference of others
10. **Marketplace of Ideas**: An environment in which all views/opinions are heard and considered and the best one chosen as a course of action for society or as a personal belief. Refer to chapter 2 of J.S. Mill's On Liberty for explanation of why this is important.
11. **Equality**: comes in two forms: equality of opportunity (everyone has the same chance to achieve something) and equality of outcome (everyone gets the same amount of a commodity, such as money). Make sure you explain which type of equality you are valuing in your case.
12. **Justice**: Justice has many definitions. Refer to my recommended reading page for a list.
13. **Safety/Security**: just look it up in the dictionary
14. **Order**: just look it up in the dictionary

**Criteria**

1. **Social Contract**: the agreement the individual makes with the government which states that the individual will allow his rights to be limited in exchange for the government's protection. It is important to know that we enter the social contract by tacit consent, meaning that the social contract is not a piece of paper that we sign; instead we agree to it by accepting benefits from the government. There are 3 major perspectives on the social contract from 3 different philosophers, which are briefly explained on my recommended reading page.
2. **Reciprocity**: the idea that because we take benefits from society/government such as the protection of our rights, we have an obligation to contribute to that society, for instance, by paying taxes, serving jury duty, and serving in the military.
3. **Deontology**: moral philosophy which says actions are moral or immoral based upon their intention rather than their consequences
4. **Categorical Imperative**: deontological moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant which consists of 3 prongs: (1) Act so that you can at the same time will that your maxim should become a universal law of nature. (2) Act so that you treat humanity, both yourself and others, never merely as a means, but always as an ends. (3) All maxims proceeding from our own making of law ought o harmonize with a possible kingdom of ends as a kingdom of nature. For a rudimentary explanation of what this means, go to my recommended reading page . For a more detailed explanation, go to Mike West's Kant essay. If you choose to run this, you need to explain how each of the 3 prongs supports your stance on the resolution. An easy way to do this is make each prong a contention. The CI is commonly used with a value of dignity.
5. **Teleology**: moral theory which judges actions by their consequences rather than their intentions. Put simply, it says that the ends justify the means.
6. **Utilitarianism**: the greatest good for the greatest number (J.S. Mill) or the greatest good for the greatest number for the longest period of time (Jeremy Bentham)
7. **Cost-Benefit Analysis**: a real-world standard which evaluates an action by weighing its potential costs versus its potential benefits.

**Recommended Reading to help with Determining Values**

**Social Contracts**  
1. *Second Treatise of Government*by John Locke   
Highly recommended for anyone who hasn't read much philosophy. It's applicable to many resolutions, and although the language is difficult to understand at times, the concepts should be familiar to anyone with an understanding of American government. Locke believes that man formed society and government for the protection of his natural rights to life, liberty, and property. In return for this protection, man agreed to give up his absolute liberty to violate others' rights. Locke believes that if the government fails in its obligation to protect us, we have both a right and a duty to overthrow it.

2. *The Social Contract*by Jean Jacques Rousseau  
Rousseau believes that society is governed by the general will. Contrary to popular conception, the general will does not mean majority rule. Instead, it is what is objectively good for the entire society. I suggest you read this if you run Rousseau. Many debaters and judges have misconceptions about his philosophy and reading the actual text will help you explain his work. A word of caution: Rousseau's philosophy is very idyllic and sometimes contradictory. As a result, a good debater can tear it apart in an LD round (I found out the hard way) although most don't listen well enough to find the weaknesses.

3. *The Leviathan*by Thomas Hobbes   
Hobbes believes that man has two natural rights: life and the right to preserve his life. Hobbes social contract is based on the idea that man is inherently evil and therefore needs to be controlled by a strong government headed by a benevolent dictator (sovreign) who always knows the best interest of the people.

4. *On Liberty*by John Stuart Mill  
John Stuart Mill, unlike the other philosophers listed here, does not have a social contract, but since *On Liberty*deals with the relationship of society to the individual. Mill, like Locke, believes in the importance of rights. Most important to him is the right to liberty. According to Mill, liberty is what makes us develop and grow as individuals and therefore enables us to benefit society. *On Liberty*deals with the necessity of liberty and the situations in which it can be justifiably limited.   
  
**Moral Theory**  
1. *Immanuel Kant's Moral Theory* by Roger J. Sullivan   
Ordinarily, I would recommend that you read philosophy straight from the source, however, Kant's philosophy is very confusing and reading it directly will make your head want to explode. Roger Sullivan's book provides simple analysis of Kant's philosophy which I have found is extremely accurate. According to Kant, moral duties are absolute and inviolable, man's worth is inherent (man is worthy in and of himself), and consequences play no part in determining morality. The cornerstone of his philosophy is the categorical imperative, a 3-part test to determine if actions are moral. If an action fails any part of this test, it is immoral (hence, if you run the categorical imperative in a case, you should explain how you fulfill each prong). According to the first prong, actions are right only if you could will them universally. For instance, because we would not wish that everyone would tell a lie every time they are confronted with a revealing a difficult truth, lying is never justified, even "white" lies. (that's an oversimplification but you get the idea). The basic idea of the second prong of the categorical imperative is simple: don't use people. The third prong of the categorical imperative is rather ambiguous; however, it seeks to create "a kingdom of ends" in which everyone's worth is respected and moral law is always obeyed. If you fulfill the first 2 prongs of the categorical imperative, you automatically fulfill the third.

2. *Utilitarianism*by John Stuart Mill   
Utilitarianism is a philosophy that believes actions are moral when they produce the greatest good for the greatest number. That's pretty self-explanatory, however, you should note this doesn't mean a simple majority. Actions which help 85% of society are better than those which help only 51%. And because Mill believes that the suffering of any portion of society is harmful to the whole, actions which would cause great harm to a few for the good of the many are typically not justified through utilitarianism.   
  
**Justice**  
1. *Lucilius A. Emory*  
According to Emory, justice is "the equilibrium between the full freedoms of individuals and the restrictions thereon necessary for the safety of society." Simply put, Emory believes that justice consists of a balance between individual rights and society good. It is important to note that equilibrium does not imply that these two things can be equal; instead, it refers to creating stability. This definition didn't come from any particular book I know of. Emory is a rather obscure legal philosopher and his definition of Justice is all that anyone ever uses.

2. *Leslie Lipson*  
According to Lipson, "justice consists of a method and a certain positive result. The method is one of fair-dealing, the result to recognize equally the basic interest of all and promote harmony between them." This seems fairly self-explanatory. The definition came from her book entitled *The Great Issues of Politics*. It's devoted to a number of issues in political philosophy and has some good quotes. It's worth checking out.

3. *A Theory of Justice*by John Rawls  
Rawls believes that justice (fairness) is achieved through the veil of ignorance. While we create the social contract and when we resolve any dispute in society, we must place ourselves behind this veil of ignorance. When we are behind it, we do not know our own needs or position in our society, therefore, it is in our best interest to come to a mutually advantageous and fair ruling. My understanding is that the veil of ignorance is an elaborate way of saying that to be just, we must be objective.   
  
**Miscellaneous**  
1. *Anarchy, State, Utopia*by Robert Nozick   
Nozick, the major opponent of John Rawls social philosophy and today's most prominent libertarian philosopher, argues for the "minimalist state," one which enforces absolutely no paternalistic laws and never uses other citizens (or their tax dollars) for the good of other members of society.

2. *Morality & Moral Controversy*  
I can't remember the name of the editor, but this is a collection of essays on various moral philosophies as well as present-day social issues such as affirmative action, nuclear war, and civil disobedience. Contains exerpts from ancient Greek philosophers, Enlightment-era social contract thinkers, and present-day philosophers. I found Ronald Dworkin's essay, "Rights," to be particularly useful.   
  
3. *Interpreting the Constitution*edited by John Rakove   
Another book I haven't had the chance to read in its entirety, however, it considers several present-day Constitutional controversies. Probably useful since one Constitutional topic seems to come up every year.