



Historical Association
The voice for history

VOTE100

The Great Debate 2017/2018

Rules and guidance



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Great Debate 2017/18

Based on the idea of a Balloon Debate, this is a competition aimed at students aged 16-19 years old nationwide. The rules are as follows:

The Rules:

1. The competition is open to students who will be in the sixth form (Years 12 and 13) in the academic year September 2017 to July 2018. However if you have a Year 11 student who is keen and capable we are happy to accept their entry.
2. The entrants will have to create a 5-minute speech on the set question: Was the 1918 extension of the franchise the most significant moment in British democratic history?
3. Entrants may be penalised if their speech exceeds the 5 minute limit.
4. Entrants' speeches should first aim to examine the significance of the 1918 extension of the franchise within their understanding of democracy. This may be in the context of British democratic history as a whole, or if they choose can be in relation to a particular community or group, e.g. women or the LGBT+ community.



If they so choose, the entrant may then proceed to argue the case for an event or experience from the past that they deem to be of greater significance. This 'moment' can be local, national, international or even personal in its scale.



They should explain why it might be deemed to have wider historical significance, and argue why they have selected it as the *most* significant (and therefore more significant than the 1918 extension).

In reflecting on the wider historical significance of any chosen phenomenon, care should be taken to keep a focus on the question. For example, the entrant who chooses to talk about the significance of Magna Carta should avoid digressing into the significance of the charter in general, but stick to the ways in which *relevant aspects of this particular social change* might be significant to British democratic history.

5. Judges may ask one or two post-presentation questions.
6. The judges will assess the speeches on the following criteria:
 - a) The quality of the entrant's argument – its structure, clarity and power to persuade.
 - b) The entrant's use of historical argument and detail.
 - c) The links between their chosen topic and its wider historical context.
 - d) The way in which the speech is presented.
7. The judges' decision will be final.