

Rhode Island High School Ethics Bowl

<https://sites.brown.edu/ethicsbowlri/>



Tips for Utilizing Prep Time During an Ethics Bowl Round

- Be prepared: On the day of the tournament, your initial 2-minutes will begin right after the Moderator announces the name of the case and reads the case question – the full case description will *not* be read out loud. For this reason, it is important to already be familiar with all 10 cases that have been selected for the tournament. Even though you can't bring any notes into the round with you, you should already have some ideas about the important ethical dimensions of each case from practicing with your team.
- Pay attention to the case question: While the cases will all be the same as the ones you prepped, the specific case question will be new. Make sure that you adjust your general answers about the case to address the specific question you've been given.
- Have a game-plan: Develop a general plan for using your limited prep time, and practice that plan. For example, a former finalist from the National tournament reports that his team always used the first minute to quickly list out the main ethical considerations of the case. They would then use the second minute to organize which team-member would present each point, and in what order.
- Consider assigning roles: Some teams find it helpful to have one student in charge of running the prep time. Similarly, you may decide in advance that one student will anchor the presentation by providing an introduction at the beginning and/or summation at the end. These roles could be filled by the same student each time, or you could take turns playing different roles - perhaps depending on who is more familiar with a specific case.
- Be sure to anticipate conflicting arguments: Remember that you will be scored not only on how well you've explained the reasons behind your team's position, but also on showing "thoughtful consideration of different viewpoints," especially the viewpoint of those who disagree with your position. One thing to do in the prep time, then, is to decide who will voice an opposing view and who (maybe the same person) will give a response to it.
- Move around: You don't have to sit still during your prep time. Feel free to move around the table if that makes it easier for your team to speak to one another.
- Take notes: Remember, when your team is providing (or responding to) the commentary, you'll only have 1 minute to confer before speaking. While you can't speak during the other team's prep time, you should use that time to jot down your ideas about the case. You can then update your notes during the other team's presentation, so that you're ready to quickly share and organize your plans for the commentary.