Based on our studies and research, should the United States pursue a trade war with China in order to further it’s strategic foreign policy goals?

In response to the debate prompt, students will be divided and assigned to one of the following two groups. In preparation for the debate, students should take note of their assigned group, read through the general background resources, as well as all group-specific resources.

- **Group 1: Affirmative Group**
  “Based on our studies and research, yes, the United States should pursue a trade war with China in order to achieve its foreign policy goals.”

- **Group 2: Opposed Group**
  “Based on our studies and research, no, the United States should not pursue a trade war with China in order to achieve its foreign policy goals.”

**Agenda**

**10:15 – 10:30 a.m. Prepare Opening Statement**

Students work together in an assigned sub-group to draft an opening statement defending their position. Students should take the last 5-10 minutes to synthesize their group’s opening remarks as a whole. Each sub-group elects 1-2 representatives to present the entire group’s opening statement.

*Opening Statement:* Introduce the topic in a way that supports your position. Provide supporting evidence. The last sentence of the introduction should be your “thesis” or main objective.

**10:30 – 10:45 a.m. Present Opening Statement (8 min. each)**

Each sub-group’s elected representatives present their entire group’s opening statement to the at-large plenary. Fellow group members take notes on opposing groups’ arguments for use during the rebuttal period.

*Presentation Order:*
1) Affirmative Group
2) Opposing Group
10:45 – 11:00 a.m.  **Prepare Rebuttal**
Students representing the “Affirmative Group” finalize a rebuttal representing the group as a whole. Moreover, students representing the “Opposing Group” finalize one rebuttal representing the group as a whole. Each group elects 1-2 new representatives to present their rebuttal.

*Rebuttal: Respond to and criticize the arguments presented by the opposing side. Prove that the other side’s logic and arguments do not make sense. Provide sound counter-arguments.*

11:00 – 11:10 a.m.  **Present Rebuttal (5 min. each)**
Each group’s newly elected representatives deliver a rebuttal to the at-large plenary. Once again, fellow group members take notes on opposing groups’ rebuttal for use during closing arguments.

**Presentation Order:**
1) Opposing Group
2) Affirmative Group

11:10 – 11:25 a.m.  **Prepare Closing Argument**
Students work in their respective groups (Opposing or Affirmative) to prepare a closing statement that reaffirms their position. Each group elects 1-2 new representatives to present their rebuttal.

*Closing Argument: Summarize your team’s main arguments. Emphasize the strongest points made throughout the debate. Make sure to include facts to support your position and address any counter arguments.*

11:25 a.m. – 11:35 a.m.  **Present Closing Argument (5 min. each)**
Each group’s newly elected representatives deliver a closing argument to the at-large plenary.

**Presentation Order:**
1) Affirmative Group
2) Opposing Group

11:35 – 11:45 a.m.  **Closing Remarks / Evaluations**
Judges deliberate, select and announce the winner of the debate as well as confer awards for excellence in debate performance.
Resource Guide

Questions to Consider:

- What are the United States foreign policy goals? Consider these goals in relation to China, the United States interest in maintaining its global position, or other related issues.
- What is a trade war? What would the U.S. gain from a trade war? Are there examples of successful or unsuccessful trade wars?
- What are some potential downfalls of a trade war? Could a trade war lead to heightened tensions between China and the United States?

General Background Resources:

(Timeline) Key events in US-China relations
https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-relations-china

(Article) The effects of the trade war

(Video) A scholar on China breaks down the trade war
https://youtu.be/30Ld3FF1ncQ

(Article) Another explanation of the trade war

(Timeline) The US-China Trade War key events
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-china-timeline/timeline-key-dates-in-the-u-s-china-trade-war-idUSKBN1ZE1AA

Group 1: Affirmative Group Resources – “Based on our studies and research, yes, the United States should pursue a trade war with China in order to achieve its foreign policy goals.”

(OpEd) The trade war will be worth it- CNN

(Article) Interview with Kevin Hasset, the former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, on why the trade war is worth the cost

(Article and Video) A Trade War is Scary, but the US has a Legitimate Beef with China
https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/05/a-trade-war-is-scary-but-the-us-has-a-legitimate-beef-with-china.html

Group 2: Opposing Group Resources – NO to the trade war.

(Article) Impacts of the trade war on the global community and American citizens

(Article and Video) How the trade war has hurt Americans
(Article) How the trade war has hurt American economic growth