



RDI Fall Club Teams 2025

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Who is allowed to join these programs? Is my 5th grader able to join this program?

We do not recommend 5th graders join our club teams as they will be competitive and may overwhelm them and stifle their confidence. We recommend students in 6th graders (~11 y.o.) and older join our league to compete with students their age. Students from any school background (e.g., homeschool, private school, or public school) are welcome to join us!

What happens if I cannot attend the planned tournament?

Attending the tournament is optional. Students can still enrich their public speaking and critical thinking skills during our 10 week online program.

I cannot join the online Sunday lessons (2PM to 3PM). Is there any other time we can join?

Unfortunately, we do not offer any other class sessions for the Fall. If you are interested in private coaching, please reach out to RDI Director, Phyl Demetriou (rvadebate@gmail.com).

What does a speech and debate tournament look like?

Large speech and debate tournaments are hosted during the school year at various high schools in greater Richmond, VA. Certain tournaments such as the one at Manchester High School on November 23rd 2025 will attract hundreds of students from across the region. RDI staff will be present at Manchester High School during the tournament (8AM to 5PM). Students will be supervised and navigated through the tournament by RDI staff at all times.

What will the topics be?

The debate topics for our Fall program will be released in late September as they are still pending a national vote. The topics will be announced as soon as it is published by the National Speech & Debate Association. Students will be diving into Congressional Debate format, which allows them to discuss multiple topics.

Can you tell me more about the instructors and the programs?

Absolutely! Our programs will first introduce the debate topics and have students work in groups to write arguments. Students will learn to use evidence and articulate arguments participating in drills to prepare for the tournament. Students will be diving into Congressional Debate format, which allows them to discuss multiple topics.

How can parents get involved or support the club?

We welcome parent chaperones during the tournament, and invite families to serve as volunteer judges!