**Counter Argument & Refutation**

* **What’s a Counter Argument?**

**It is when you recognize the other side of the debate in order to strengthen your own argument.** In other words, it’s the thesis making the OPPOSITE (aka: counter) point.

* **What’s a Refutation?**

***Refute*** means to prove wrong.

Refutations **saying why the counter argument is wrong** (or not as right as your thesis).

**Sample Counter Argument and Refutation**

**Argument:** Human Trafficking is a major problem in the world today. We can all help to end this problem by avoiding the purchase of products made by slaves. For example, I will challenge my audience to exclusively purchase fair-trade chocolate and boycott all chocolate producers that cannot guarantee their products are slave-free.

**Counter-argument:** One person is not enough to make a difference. Changing my personal purchasing habits will not be enough to affect the profits of major companies. Thus, there is no reason for me to pay more for my chocolate since it won’t make a difference.

**Refutation:** While it is true that one individual alone will only have a minor impact on the profits of major chocolate companies, we should never underestimate the power of an individual. Your purchases make only a small difference, but they still make a difference. Furthermore, we cannot forget the impact our actions have on others. Your dedication to becoming part of the solution *will* inspire others to do the same. Together we can make a difference. But before we can become a group, we must be dedicated individuals. As Margaret Mead once said: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

**Sentence Starters**

*Use the following phrases to help you get started writing counter arguments and refutations…*

**Standard Format**

Some people may say that (my thesis) is not true because… However, this is wrong because…

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| --- | --- |
| **Counter Argument Sentence Starters…** | **Refutation Sentence Starters…** |
| * *Some will say that (my thesis) is not true because…*
* *Some people might say that…*
* *Some will argue…*
* *Those on the other side of the issue may say that.*
* *It’s true that…*
* *While it is true that…*
* *Admittedly…*
 | * *That is not the case. As we see (bring up new evidence)…*
* *While that may be the case, (my thesis) is still true because…*
* *That point is true, but it is unimportant because…*
* *Nevertheless, my point still stands because…*
* *However, that point is not important because…*
* *Transition words: but, yet, however, nevertheless, still*
 |

**Now YOU try!**

**🡺**Fill in the blanks below to brainstorm a Counter-argument & Refutation for your speech.

* What will you convince your audience to do in your speech?

* What is one reason people may disagree with you or may not want to make this change?

* Now, use a sentence starter to make this into a counter-argument statement:

* Finally, use a sentence starter to write a refutation to the counter-argument: