

Speech Showdown Answer Key

Responses will vary. Teachers should check for:

- Clear stance (yes or no) stated in claim
- Evidence-based support (historical facts, significance, civic impact)
- Acknowledgment of opposing viewpoints and effective rebuttal
- Reflection shows critical thinking and debate engagement

Examples of strong supporting evidence may include:

- Influenced national unity during the Civil War
- Short but powerful message redefining American democracy
- Continued relevance in civic ideals (equality, freedom, sacrifice)
- Comparisons to other notable speeches (e.g., "I Have a Dream")

Teacher's Guide

- Provide mini-lesson: what makes a speech "important"?
- Divide evenly into YES/NO teams
- Allow prep time before oral debate
- Use a timer for structured alternating argument rounds

Differentiation

- Provide sentence starters and graphic organizers for additional support
- Allow quieter students to act as researchers or closing specialists
- Challenge advanced students to incorporate ethos, pathos, and logos

Engagement Ideas

- Assign one student judge to score valid evidence during debate
- Use rotating speakers to ensure every voice participates
- Post top quotes or rebuttals on a learning wall afterward

Extensions

- Students write a persuasive paragraph summarizing their stance
- Compare debate outcomes with historical public responses to the speech
- Create a podcast-style debate recording for classroom archive