

Practicing 'Devil's Advocate' (Student Version)

Directions: Now that you are aware of how to play 'devil's advocate,' you are going to practice this skill by reading Juliet Lapidus' article entitled "The Accidental Spectator's Guide to Improving Sports" and use the strategies that you learned in the "How to Play 'Devil's Advocate'" handout to raise questions and objections to the proposals outlined in the article.

Baseball	Basketball	Football	Soccer
Problem	Problem	Problem	Problem
Proposal	Proposal	Proposal	Proposal
Benefits	Benefits	Benefits	Benefits
Questions, Objections, or Cons	Questions, Objections, or Cons	Questions, Objections, or Cons	Questions, Objections, or Cons

Practicing ‘Devil’s Advocate’ (Teacher Version)

Directions: Now that you are aware of how to play ‘devil’s advocate,’ you are going to practice this skill by reading Juliet Lapidos’ article entitled “The Accidental Spectator’s Guide to Improving Sports” and use the strategies that you learned in the “How to Play ‘Devil’s Advocate’” handout to raise questions and objections to the proposals outlined in the article.

Baseball	Basketball	Football	Soccer
<p>Problem The baseball season is too long</p> <p>Proposal Reduce the number of games by 25 – 30 percent</p>	<p>Problem Games are too often won in the last few minutes</p> <p>Proposal Teams are ranked by points won by quarters, not by games</p>	<p>Problem Games are too long</p> <p>Proposal Reduce time between plays from 40 seconds to 20 seconds; eliminate official reviews of catches</p>	<p>Problem Games are too low-scoring</p> <p>Proposal Lengthen the size of the goal by six inches on each side</p>
<p>Benefits Games are more special</p>	<p>Benefits Teams still receive points even if they lose</p>	<p>Benefits Shorter games and faster plays</p>	<p>Benefits Games are more fun for fans who would cheer more</p>
<p>Questions, Objections, or Cons</p> <p>Baseball stadiums would lose money because fewer games means fewer opportunities for people to buy tickets. (Strategy #2: Consider proposals from other people’s perspectives)</p> <p>Instead of reducing the number of games, could we rather reduce the number of days in between some games (assuming each team has enough pitchers through which to rotate), thereby still shortening the season? (Strategy #5: Pose alternative explanations or solutions to the problem)</p> <p>Hourly employees, such as concession stand workers and maintenance staff, associated with baseball stadiums would lose money. (Strategy #2: Consider proposals from other people’s perspectives)</p> <p>Fewer people would be able to attend games at stadiums because there would be a surplus of demand for tickets</p>	<p>Questions, Objections, or Cons</p> <p>There is actual strategy to the end of the game such as fouling, time of possession, and specific types of plays that the writer is not taking into account. (Strategy #10: Provide evidence that is ignored but contradicts the proposal)</p> <p>What happens if there is a tie at the end of the quarter? (Strategy #1: Ask incisive questions)</p>	<p>Questions, Objections, or Cons</p> <p>The decrease in time between plays does nothing to increase the number of minutes the ball is actually in play. The proposal does nothing to address one of Lapidos’ contentions against football. (Strategy #7: Point out a flaw in the proposal)</p> <p>The 40 seconds to 20 seconds between plays would probably result in poorer quality plays because of a lack of communication between players in their haste to make the play and a lack of recovery time for their tiredness. (Strategy #11: Show the downside of a proposal)</p> <p>Would the substitutions that occur between plays still be able to occur within the new time frame? (Strategy #1: Ask incisive questions)</p> <p>There are already a number of ‘delay of game’ penalties in any particular game, and</p>	<p>Questions, Objections, or Cons</p> <p>Hockey has small goals and low-scoring games; should their goals be widened as well? It’s difficult to put a basketball in the goal; should the basketball goal be increased to make it easier to make shots? (Strategy #3: Think of comparable scenarios that refute the original claim)</p> <p>Lapidos is falsely assuming that fans are unhappy. Fans are obviously not “[frustrated]” by the lack of goals. Most European games are in front of sellout crowds with fans cheering and chanting the entire game. (Strategy #9: Identify hidden assumptions)</p> <p>The plan negatively affects goalies by making their job harder. (Strategy #2: Consider proposals from other people’s perspectives)</p>

<p>but a lack of supply of games. (Strategy #2: Consider proposals from other people’s perspectives)</p>		<p>the number of those penalties would only increase with the reduced time between plays – thereby actually lengthening the amount of “dead time.” (Strategy #10: Provide evidence that is ignored but contradicts the proposal)</p> <p>This would negatively affect the wide receivers who have to get back to the line of scrimmage in a faster manner, making them more tired and less effective. (Strategy #2: Consider proposals from other people’s perspectives)</p> <p>Suppose a quarterback needs to call an audible to a play. Would he have time to arrange the audible within the 20 seconds? (Strategy #4: Pose hypothetical situations to clarify issues)</p> <p>The eradication of official reviews would result in less accurate calls. (Strategy #11: Show the downside of a proposal)</p>	
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