

## **JUNIOR B, ROUND ONE**

“That society is too obsessed with fashion.”

### **1. Type of Topic**

This is an empirical debate. Empirical topics ask teams to debate a question of fact, e.g. ‘that our education system is failing students’. For empirical debates the affirmative team should provide a test (i.e. a set of criteria) by which the teams’ cases can be measured. As with definitions, the test should be reasonable and applicable to both teams. Elements of the test for the above topic could include: literacy and numeracy standards and the proportion of students completing secondary school. It would then be for each team to show that the education system was or was not producing students which met accepted literacy standards etc. That means a test should be interpreted as requiring the affirmative team to satisfy their burden in that debate by proving that a world without our current education system is better than one with. The negative team may wish to adopt the affirmative’s test, suggest additional elements of the test or propose an entirely new test.

The affirmative team needs to argue that society is too obsessed with fashion if x, y and z (the tests), and the negative team needs to argue that these tests are not satisfied. This will require you to consider what it is that society too obsessed with fashion to debate about whether the statement can be true against this definition. Neither side has fiat, that is, the right to exactly define the policy being debated and the general assumption that whatever policy they propose is feasible, and any assertion made by a side should be a product of their analysis.

### **2. Background/context**

In today’s society, where fashion trends are constantly changing, and these changes are communicated very quickly by social media, many people are extremely hung up on these shifts in direction. It is important to note that there are several types of fashion, and it is up to both the teams to establish what types of fashion they are talking about, or whether it is all of it (for example, high fashion, couture, fast fashion, etc.). For high fashion, it may be the case of the Met Gala , and the following it generates, or perhaps fashion in our day to day life. The trends to do with streetwear are often influenced by pop culture icons, such as Tik Tok stars, the Kardashians, etc. and we see that fast fashion outlets like Supre and Cotton On are very quick to keep up with these changes in order to satisfy consumer demand. As you can imagine, this raises questions in terms of sustainability, capitalism, as well as commodification, all of which can have relevance in your debate.

### 3. Specific Questions for consideration

- What does it mean to be 'too obsessed' with fashion? (Hint, this is important to your test) What does 'too obsessed' look like?
- What are the consequences of being too obsessed with fashion?
- What role does fashion play in our society?
- Just how quickly are we (the general society) to follow fashion trends?
- Does this have anything to do with body image? If so, what?

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