

## Junior A, Round Two

### TOPIC: That music is the most important form of art

#### 1. Type of Topic: Empirical

This is an **Empirical Debate**. This means that the topic is asking you to support the provided statement, and explain why it is true (*if you are the affirmative*).

In an empirical, or “is” debate, the winning team must demonstrate that their side of the topic is more likely to be true than false. These debates do not involve policy proposals or models – teams are not suggesting actions, but rather making judgments about how things are. They must defend or critique the subject of the debate as it currently exists.

In an empirical debate, each team should aim to establish a clear framework to build a convincing case. This framework should be a set of three or four key criteria or statements that the team needs to prove in order to win the debate. All arguments presented during the debate should link back to this framework. These criteria will also form the foundation of the third speakers’ summaries on both sides, allowing them to assess and compare the debate based on the defined standards.

#### 2. Background / Context

This topic asks teams to consider whether music is more important than other forms of art, such as painting, sculpture, literature, film, theatre, and dance. To prepare for this debate, it’s helpful to understand what music is and how it is used, as well as how it compares to other types of art. Music is a form of art that involves sound (such as melody, rhythm, and lyrics) to communicate ideas and emotions. It is found in many parts of daily life: at school, on television, at concerts, and during special events. Music can be used for entertainment, celebration, protest, religious practice, or even to help people relax and concentrate. It is also commonly used in movies, advertisements, and public spaces, even just as “background music”.

One of music’s key strengths is that it can be shared and understood across different cultures and languages. People do not always need to understand the lyrics to enjoy or respond to music. Additionally, music plays a central role in many cultural traditions around the world, including in Australia – for example, in Aboriginal songlines, which have been used to pass on knowledge for generations. However, other forms of art also have significant value. Literature can explore complex ideas and tell detailed stories. Visual art can record history, challenge opinions, or represent culture. Film and theatre combine several art forms to evoke stronger reactions in their audiences.

In this debate, teams should think about how to measure “importance” – such as by reach, cultural impact, educational value, or emotional influence – and compare music to other arts using those standards.

### **3. Questions for Consideration**

- 1. What does “most important” mean in the context of this debate?**  
(e.g. emotional impact, cultural influence, accessibility, historical value, educational power)
- 2. What are the purposes of art, and how well does music fulfil them compared to other forms?**  
(e.g. communication, expression, storytelling, social change)
- 3. How widely is music used and experienced by the world compared to other art forms?**  
(Consider everyday use, global reach, and audience size.)
- 4. Can music achieve things that other art forms cannot? If so, what?**  
(e.g. crossing language barriers, immediate emotional impact)
- 5. Does music play a more important role in education or personal development than other forms of art?**  
(e.g. music therapy, school music programs, brain development)
- 6. Which art form has had the greatest historical impact on culture and society?**  
(e.g. literature shaping political ideas, paintings capturing major events, music driving social movements)
- 7. Is the popularity or accessibility of an art form a valid reason to call it the most important?**  
(e.g. streaming music versus reading literature or attending galleries)
- 8. Can music express ideas or tell stories as effectively as literature or film?**
- 9. How do different cultures view and prioritise art forms? Is music always central?**
- 10. How would removing music from society affect people compared to removing other forms of art?**

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