


The Stage and The Podium

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People would often think that the world of dance and speech and debate is like apples and oranges when they are more of a case of swings and roundabouts. These two worlds don't often collide yet have more similarities than you think. Dance is a sport that creates art through sequences of body movement and dance can be categorised and described by its choreography. Dancers would say that dance is their escape and their constant. Each beat and step give life to the music because the dancers are the heart of each dance. Speech and debate is the use of critical thinking wherein the minds creatively build and create reasoning and stance on different topics like international relations, education, economics, and many more. Debaters see speech and debate as their battle ground where their souls are burning every minute of their preparation and every minute of their speech. Debaters give life and emphasis to different stances, arguments, and evidence on issues our world is and could face.

Dance and Speech and Debate involves more than just an individual but involves and represents a team. Both dance and speech and debate build good relationships between your team because of the need of teamwork. Similarly, you both deliver performances in front of large audiences wherein you bring justice to either your choreography or speech. Both of these are sports where all teams fight for the win and while doing this they exercise their self-confidence and build good foundation of different values like respect, creativity, adaptability, collaboration, and more. Speech and debate and dance is like art, this is the art of expressing what is true and relevant in this world,

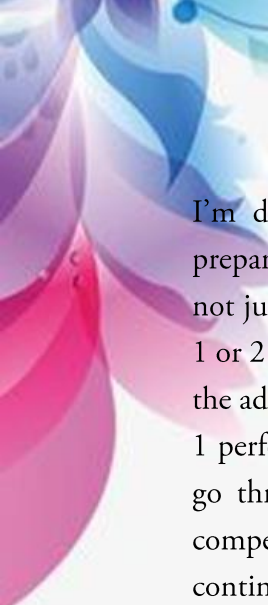


showing the need of urgency for issues, and finally to show who you truly are not just as a team but as an individual.

Being a dancer for the past 6 years of my life, I always thought shifting to the world of speech and debate is impossible because I will be completely shifting gears. In reality, yes I shifted gears but it wasn't as difficult as I thought. Dance has instilled and trained me how to be confident and how I will position myself while performing in front of a big audience, while in speech and debate this was better nurtured because of the constant pressure of performing my speech in front of a crowd. As a dancer and a debater, you would do anything to fulfil your role, keeping up with either the skills or matter needed to be relevant, to be right, and to be true. In both worlds, I fight for what I believe in, I fight for what is right, and I fight for my art.

While there are similarities in both dance and speech and debate there will always be differences present. Dance needs rhythm not just through beats of a song but also through your movement, whereas speech and debate need critical thinking to create different arguments to support evidence that are advantages on the side you are fighting for. Dance is a language beyond words, wherein the sequence of movement is a form of communication to express your beliefs and feelings. While speech and debate are verbal and vocal to fight for their side and fight for what is right. The stage feels and carries the dancer's movements, and the podium will always carry the burden of the debater fighting for their side.

As a dancer, I was physically challenged every single day, to keep up with my teammates and to dance my heart out. Even if there is this challenge, I always keep in mind that after months of preparation and 1 or 2 performances



I'm done I have overcome it. But as a debater, everything is at speed, preparation is not for months and months but just 15 mins, performances are not just 2 to 3 minutes but 7-minute speeches, and performances are not just 1 or 2 times a day but can be 4 or 5 per day. Mental reset per round is needed, the adrenaline rush leaves me speechless every time. Dancing is fulfilling, after 1 performance you would feel that right away. But as a debater, you need to go through a lot before you reach that, going through mentally draining competitions but most importantly competitions that show you why you continue to push yourself and fight for your art and why you continue to stand on that podium and speak your truth. Dance may express all your emotions through your movement, but debate is the game of delusion, you fight for your side and prove you are better, you are the best.

Dance and speech and debate build a good foundation for confidence, courage, and respect for your art. Speech and debate is not a completely different world from dance, but we can better see it as the meaning of the choreography of a dance is translated to words and fought for. Speech and debate are the verbal version of dance; this is the art of arguing what you know is right. There may be differences on how these two arts are shown and shared to the crowd. But at the end of the day, both the stage and the podium will hold what the dancers and debaters believe in and fight for.