

How to Prepare for the YPF

Research- Research issues that are important to you, may come up in discussion, or are prominent in the election. Do not leave out an issue because you feel it is too controversial. Try any of the mainstay political issues. Look for something that you find intriguing and relevant to youth. Then research it. Find background on the issue, history of the problem, past, present, and pending initiatives, key players and organizations, and its relevance to youth.

Read, Read, Read- Chances are there is a wealth of information out there about your issue. The key is finding it. Read newspapers and magazines. Find web pages. Talk to others and record their thoughts. You might even consider a trip to that antiquated old library- it has vast sources of periodicals and indiscriminate, non-fiction resources on issues. All this reading will allow you to identify all the elements of the issue, the intricacies and details associated with it, and its relation and dependence on other issues.

Organize- Now that you know your issue inside out, have incredible sources, and great details and statistics, organize them. These preparation guidelines would mean nothing if the sentences were randomly scrambled. Your position takes on much greater significance when it flows logically and you show how all its elements are related. Use a computer, use pen and paper, but take all the information you have and organize *it*. You may some areas need some additional supplements, but that in others you really do know a lot. You do not need to write a speech, but just have your information organized and be familiar with it. When you get to the Capitol, you want to be such a good advocate of your issue that it is the one that gets presented to officials, and you hear their reaction to it.

Write- This year, students are asked to submit papers concerning topics they have researched. These issues should be related to events in Virginia and will help the students to be more prepared when they come to the forum. The papers should be no longer than two pages in length and should cover two topics that the students feel are pertinent to youth. These papers will be reviewed by the YPF coordinators, allowing the students to receive feedback on their work. At the Forum, students will be able to share their papers with other students, which will help in creating debate among the groups.

Logistics- Due to financial concerns, Virginia Student Parent Mock Election cannot, at present, provide transportation to and from Richmond. We will be glad to help you resolve any transportation conflicts you may have and/or setup car pools. However, we may find a way to provide transportation, in which case we will contact you. We apologize for not being able to do so at the present time. If transportation conflicts prevent you from nominating students for the YFF, please contact us and we can assist you in finding transportation. We want this event to be open to everyone. We will gladly provide lunch.