**Crossfire & Grand Crossfire Periods**

***Crossfire / Defined*: Crossfire is the questioning period that occurs after a set of speeches. Crossfires involve the 2 speakers who just spoke. (Grand Crossfire involves all 4 speakers.)**

**What you try to accomplish in Crossfire/Grand Crossfire: (CUE) (Sample questions are listed to demonstrate each)**

**1. Clarify Arguments: You can ask questions to get arguments you missed on your flow or ask about arguments/evidence you don't understand so you can argue it effectively.**

**\* I wasn't able to flow this point. Could you repeat it for me?**

**\* Could you explain what that evidence means in your own words?**

**2. Establish the Credibility of Your Arguments: Ask questions that show your arguments are still good or that your opponents couldn't beat them.**

**\* You didn't argue this argument, did you? or What argument did you have on....?**

**\* Have your opponent directly match 1 argument vs. another, such as:**

**How does your argument/evidence actually prove my argument is wrong?**

**\* What was the date of your evidence? Wasn't my evidence more recent?**

**\* Set traps to get your opponent to admit your arguments are true/valid.**

**3. Undermine the Credibility of Their Arguments: Ask questions that get your opponent to admit their arguments are weak or unacceptable.**

**\* Test the speaker: What does that argument/evidence mean in your own words? (Check to see if the speaker understands the arguments they are running.)**

**\* Ask about flaws in their evidence: I.E.- The author is not qualified; the evidence tag does not match quote; the source is bias; the evidence has a poor quote with no real support; the evidence used is too old; etc.**

**\* Set traps to force them to admit their arguments are weak/untrue.**

**Rules for Crossfire/Grand Crossfire Periods:**

**1. During Crossfire, both speakers involved must stand. During Grand Crossfire, all 4 speakers remain seated.**

**2. The first question in a Crossfire/Grand Cross fire is asked TO the team that just spoke. After that, anyone may ask and answer questions in Crossfire/Grand Crossfire.**

**3. Be polite. (Don’t be too forceful or try to dominate all of the time in the Crossfire/Grand Crossfire period. Judges may penalize you for rude behavior.)**

**4. Allow time for your question to be answered. (Don’t be too quick to cut off an answer. It looks rude and may be interpreted like you have something to hide.)**

**5. Have questioning strategies written out and ready before the debate starts. You should develop some ideas on what to question about and what questions to ask to force them to admit weaknesses or problems.**

**6. Prepare your answers to key questions you anticipate they may ask about your case/arguments. (These can be written out or you may simply have a ‘mental plan’ for how to answer tricky questions. But you should be thinking about what they may ask before the debate starts.)**

**7. Try to set traps to force them to admit weaknesses or problems. (See ‘trap’ notes below.)**

**Setting Questioning Traps in Crossfire/Grand Crossfire**

When lawyers cross examine someone they know that going straight to the heart of the matter too quickly allows the questionee to:

\* see what you want them to say and avoid it.  
\* change the subject of their answer to other arguments they may be stronger on.

Learning to set traps can avoid this by putting the questionee on the public record early, and guiding them towards the answer you want them to say.

**CROSSFIRE TRAP PRINCIPLES:**

1. Every Crossfire trap needs a goal. (What do you want them to say?)

2. Crossfire traps want to put the questionee 'on the record' before going for the goal.

3. Crossfire traps ask questions in a certain order to guide the questionee towards the answer you want.

**HOW TO SET A CX TRAP:**

(Setting the trap) STEP 1- Ask closed questions that put them on the record. This step asks set-up questions & brings up obvious facts they can easily agree with.

(Tripping the trap) STEP 2- Start asking open questions that guide the questionee to your goal. This step tries to trap them into admitting their argument is wrong or look bad trying to defend a contradiction.

(Ending the trap) STEP 3- Continue pushing until your feel your point has been made & quit. Then, you should move on to a new line of questioning.

**Open & Closed Questions:**

**Open Question**: A question that allows the questionee to answer with anything they wish. (An open question is phrased so a wide range of answers are possible/acceptable.)

Answer--------------------------🡪 **Blah**  Answer---------------------------🡪 **Blah** Answer--------------------------🡪 **Blah** Question 🡪 Answer--------------------------🡪 **Blah** Answer--------------------------🡪 **Blah** Answer--------------------------🡪 **Blah**

Examples of open questions:  
 \* What does your first argument mean?  
 \* Why is your author qualified to say that?  
 \* How does evidence from over 10 years ago still apply today?

**Closed Question**: A question that has a limited range of possible/acceptable answers. (A closed question is phrased so only a few answers are possible/acceptable.)   
  
 Answer------------------🡪 \ Answer----------------------🡪\Answer------------------------------------🡪 **Yes** Question 🡪 Answer------------------------------------🡪 **No** Answer--------------------🡪 /Answer---------------🡪 /

Examples of closed questions:  
 \* Is this what you said: yes or no?  
 \* What was the date of your evidence? That evidence is 25 years old; correct?  
 \* Did you attack our first argument?  
 \* Isn’t it true that gambling can be addictive to some people?