Definitions in Resolution 2

Resolutional Definitions and their Analysis

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“Do they really matter? Like really, definitions are just something that you have to do with no real purpose or benefit.” This, unfortunately, was my opinion of definitions when I first began debating, and I cannot begin to tell you how wrong I was. It wasn’t until my third year in debate that I finally understood the power definitions had and how they could win or lose me the round.

Definitions are usually one of the first things presented in a debate round, because if we don’t agree on what we’re debating, how are we supposed to understand what’s being said? You can’t. It is impossible to have a clear debate round without properly defining your terms. The key thing to remember when choosing your definitions is that they narrow the parameters of the debate. They create the limits for what is considered applicable and valid within the resolution, and as the Affirmative, you get to choose! But know that defining unfairly (using a definition to eliminate conflict within the resolution or to put your opponent in a bad position, etc.) is not the same thing as defining to benefit your side.

Before we go over the specific definitions for this resolution, we need to talk about contextually defining. This is something that is absolutely okay to do, as long as you encompass what the terms actually mean and your definition is derived from credible source definitions. If you don’t know, contextually defining is combining the definitions of words like “developing” and “countries” to come up with a definition you believe is better than others, or combining multiple definitions to achieve a desired one. When doing this, you should be careful that you don’t include things that aren’t usually implied as part of a word. For instance, if I said stability is defined as “the consistent protection of a turtle’s rights,” I would not be presenting an appropriate definition. It may be the way I want to achieve stability, but that is not what stability is.

Now let’s get into the definitions!

Developing countries

“The lower-income countries of the world, most of which are in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Also called underdeveloped countries, less developed countries (LDC).”[[1]](#footnote-1) (Accounting, Business Studies and Economics Dictionary)

“A nonindustrialized poor country that is seeking to develop its resources by industrialization.”[[2]](#footnote-2) (Collins Dictionary)

“Countries in the process of change directed toward economic growth, that is, an increase in production, per capita consumption, and income. The process of economic growth involves better utilization of natural and human resources, which results in a change in the social, political, and economic structures.”[[3]](#footnote-3) (Medical Dictionary)

“A poor agricultural country that is seeking to become more advanced economically and socially.”**[[4]](#footnote-4)** (Oxford Dictionary)

There are a few ways that you can use these definitions to benefit your side. On the Affirmative, you need to think of the arguments you want to make because they should be supported by your definition. There are two basic ways to define and use this term. It is possible to define it as a *less developed* country or as a *developing* country, and both are valid options. There are some benefits to defining it as a poor, less developed country. For instance you can argue that there is no way to vote negative if a country is impoverished and therefore cannot prioritize environmental protection. However you must be able to prove that impoverished or less developed countries are the same as developing countries. And it is entirely possible do that. Likewise on Negative, you can limit the scope of the debate and exclude certain applications if you define it more narrowly, saying developing countries are only countries currently in the position or process of development.

Priority and Prioritize

“The right to take precedence or to proceed before others.”[[5]](#footnote-5) (Oxford Dictionary)

“A thing regarded as more important than another.” [[6]](#footnote-6) (Oxford Dictionary)

“Something that is very important and must be dealt with first.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

“Actions established in order of importance or urgency to the welfare or purposes of the organization, patient, or other person at a given time.”[[8]](#footnote-8)(Mosby’s Medical Dictionary)

“The state of being antecedent in time, or of preceding something else.”[[9]](#footnote-9) (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

“That something or someone is more urgent or important than other things.”[[10]](#footnote-10) (Webster’s New World Law Dictionary)

Affirmative, since you have the first opportunity to define the terms, you get to choose the arguments that you may hear in the round. Choose wisely. If you define priority as something being more important, you may be pushed to prove that the resolution is absolute. If you define merely as something going before another, you will have more wiggle room and even be able to say that the resolution is a general rule and only means most of the time. Make your choice based on your case and the arguments that you are going to make.

Negative, always feel free to present counter-definitions. When dealing with priority, the Affirmative will usually push the resolution toward meaning one going before the other, which means that they have the ability to argue the resolution being true the majority of the time. You may want to try to even out the playing field a bit and define it as more important. If something is more important, it is so all the time—not just 51% of the time.

Ought

“Used to indicate duty or correctness.”[[11]](#footnote-11) (Oxford Dictionary)

“To indicate duty or obligation.”[[12]](#footnote-12) (Collins Dictionary)

“Advisability” [[13]](#footnote-13) (Merriam Webster’s Dictionary)

The reason you would define this on Affirmative is to set up an argument about the resolution: use this definition to prove that the resolution is a general rule and not a principle. You most likely would not present this in your 1AC, but probably would keep it with you for when the argument for an absolute resolution comes

Economic Growth

“An increase in the nation's capacity to produce goods and services. Usually refers to real GDP growth.”[[14]](#footnote-14) (Financial Glossary 2011)

“An increase in the amount of goods and services produced per head of the population over a period of time.”[[15]](#footnote-15) (Oxford Dictionary)

“The increase over time in the capacity of an economy to produce goods and services and (ideally) to improve the well-being of its citizens.” [[16]](#footnote-16) (Deardorffs' Glossary of International Economics)

“The increase in an economy's real level of output over time.”[[17]](#footnote-17) (Accounting, Business Studies and Economics Dictionary)

It is very important that you understand what economic growth looks like in order to debate the resolution correctly, so let’s break it down. Most definitions you will come across will talk about producing goods and services; this is often times referred to as Gross Domestic Product or GDP. It is very easy to find out what the GDP of a country is just by simple research, but what does that look like? Let’s look at economic growth as a tomato plant. A developing country is a tomato plant growing in an old, overgrown garden. The plant will grow and will produce fruit but won’t prosper. Now you play the role of the people and you pull weeds, which are the barriers of the society that hinder growth, you water it, you nurture and care for it. Over time it will produce more fruit and the plant will prosper. It works similarly with a country. The innovation and creativity of a nation’s people bring about economic growth. For example, the government is composed of the people and they assist in providing the needed education through schools, then the people use that education to turn their own innovative ideas into something that will produce goods and services.

Benefits

Prioritizing economic growth can bring about many benefits, so let’s go over some.

Economic growth creates jobs. This is something that will happen in some way or another as an economy grows. Logically, if businesses expand or are started more people will need to be employed. An example of this is the Industrial Revolution, where in order to expand or for production rates to increase, businesses had to hire more people.

Higher national security can be aided by economic growth. This is clear looking at the world as it is now. The richer countries of the world have bigger armies, protected borders, more resources to work with, and better equipment. These are all factors that contribute to national security. Countries with high GDPs have increased capability to protect themselves where developing countries do not.

The general welfare can also be improved due to economic growth. As mentioned above economic growth comes through production of goods and services. The growth of the economy links directly to the government. One of the jobs of the government is to look out for the welfare of the people, so if the government is acting as they should, the societal welfare should improve. If the government has more money that means the people are richer as a whole and the welfare of the people is improved.

Harms

Economic growth can definitely have some adverse effects. Although there are many ways in which the economy can grow, many of them can harm the environment in some way. If you think back to your seventh grade American history class, you may remember the lesson on the Industrial Revolution. Although in the long run good things did come from this, the factories were harmful to the environment. “The use of factories and mass production has led to a depletion of certain natural resources, leaving the environment permanently damaged. One example of this depletion is deforestation, which is the clearing of forest trees for use in production. When the trees are cleared, the wildlife in the forest also becomes uprooted.”[[18]](#footnote-18) That is just a small example compared to others such as the effect of the chemicals the factories emitted. The fact of the matter is that economic growth can be detrimental to the environment.

Some countries sacrifice working conditions in the name of growth and production. In the Industrial Revolution, the work hours were long, and the working conditions were horrible. Workers often suffered from grave injuries or illness. The same thing happened in China and other countries. That is one of the reasons we have child labor laws today in America. But for many countries bad things were allowed to happen in the name of economic growth.

Environmental Protection

“Policies and procedures aimed at conserving the natural resources, preserving the current state of natural environment and, where possible, reversing its degradation.”[[19]](#footnote-19) (BuisnessDictionary.com)

“The protection of humans and equipment against stresses of climate and other elements of the environment.”[[20]](#footnote-20) (McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific & Technical Terms)

“Environmental protection includes prevention (avoidance) strategies to protect the environment from future damage or degradation; and control measures to restore and maintain environmental quality.”[[21]](#footnote-21) (National Agricultural Library)

“Environmental [guardianship](http://thelawdictionary.org/guardianship/) based on [policies and procedures](http://thelawdictionary.org/policies-and-procedures/). Objectives are (1) the conserving of [natural resources](http://thelawdictionary.org/natural-resources/), (2) the preserving of the existing [natural environment](http://thelawdictionary.org/natural-environment/) and, (3) where possible, repairing damage and reversing trends.” [[22]](#footnote-22)(The Law Dictionary)

Environmental protection comes in many forms, whether by individuals recycling or by certain government policies. There are obvious reasons why we protect the environment such as healthy living, preserving the earth for the coming generations, or the fact that this is our home. And I’m sure there are very few people out there who think we should cut down all the trees and destroy the eco system. Our question is about developing countries though; here in America it’s easy to discuss ways in which we can protect the environment, but what about developing countries? Something you’ll want to think about is how developing countries might not take care of the environment. For one, many don’t utilize their environmental resources—but that’s not exactly the same as harming the environment. One way the environment is harmed in some of the poorest countries is how they handle human waste—or rather, how they don’t handle it. These places either don’t have proper bathrooms or the people don’t use them, and that is very harmful to the environment. Remember: many of their environmental problems are usually linked directly to their poverty.

Benefits

I’m sure you can think of a million benefits to protecting the environment, but let’s go over just a few.

One big one is preserving the earth for future generations. It’s clear how environmental protection does this and why it’s important. It is very hard to repair the earth once it is damaged, and it is everyone’s responsibility to do what we can to preserve it, because if we don’t take care of it, who knows what it will be like for your great, great grandchildren.

Another benefit is prevention of the bad things that would happen if we didn’t take care of the environment. An example of this is forests and what they do for us. “Forests are critically important storage of carbon – storing around 34 billion tons of carbon, equal to 125 billion tons of CO2. Deforestation and the degradation of forests risks releasing emissions as well as losing a range of forest ecosystem services such as water purification and supply, flood control and provision of forest products.”[[23]](#footnote-23) You can see the importance of protecting the environment more clearly when we don’t protect it and therefore lose the benefits.

Harms

There aren’t many direct harms that come from protecting the environment, but rather indirect harms result when it is prioritized in areas where it shouldn’t be.

Jobs can be lost because of environmental protection. Corporations aren’t permitted to start building or production in some areas because they would need to clear trees. This means they didn’t hire people to clear the trees, or to construct the building, or workers for the business because they can’t expand to the area they want. I know I just talked of the evils of killing trees, but we’re debaters, and this is what we do.

Additionally, in order to protect endangered species, you have to protect their habitat (part of the environment), and that can harm people’s income. In the West we have a good amount of farmers, and the grey wolf is one of the endangered species that lives here. These wolves have killed a massive amount of livestock but farmers aren’t allowed to take certain preventive measures because we are required to keep this species alive. This also happens with minnows: because they are a protected species, farmers cannot draw water from the lake for their fields because it would change the fish’s environment. We may be protecting the earth but we’re making things harder for humans.

Remember the power that definitions have and that they have a big impact your round. So think about it, match up your arguments, have fun, and good luck!

1. (Accounting, Business Studies and Economics Dictionary)http://www.itseducation.asia/dictionary/d.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. (Collins Dictionary) http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/developing-countries [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. (Medical Dictionary) http://www.medicaldictionaryweb.com/Developing+Countries-definition/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. (Oxford Dictionary) http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\_english/developing-country [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. (Oxford Dictionary) http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\_english/priority [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. (Oxford Dictionary) http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\_english/priority [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. (Cambridge Dictionary) http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/american-english/priority [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. (Mosby's Medical Dictionary 8th edition. 2009) Elsevier 29 Jun. 2015 http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/priority [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. (Webster’s New World Law Dictionary) http://www.yourdictionary.com/priority [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. (Oxford Dictionary) http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\_english/ought#ought-2 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. (Collins Dictionary) http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/ought [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. (Merriam Webster’s Dictionary) http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ought [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. ( Financial Glossary 2011) Campbell R. Harvey 17 Jun. 2015 http://financial-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/economic+growth [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. (Oxford Dictionary) http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\_english/economic-growth [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. (Deardorffs' Glossary of International Economics) http://wwwpersonal.umich.edu/~alandear/glossary/e.html#EconomicGrowth [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. (Accounting, Business Studies and Economics Dictionary) http://www.itseducation.asia/dictionary/e.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. “The Industrial Revolution and its Impact on our Environment” http://eco-issues.com/TheIndustrialRevolutionandItsImpactonOurEnvironment.html [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. ( BuisnessDictionary.com) http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/environmental-protection.html [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. "environmental protection." McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific & Technical Terms, 6E. 2003. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. 13 Jul. 2015 <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/environmental+protection> [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. http://agclass.nal.usda.gov/mtwdk.exe?s=1&n=1&y=0&l=60&k=glossary&t=2&w=environmental+protection [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. (The Law Dictionary) http://thelawdictionary.org/environmental-protection/ [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. (Eco Logic) http://www.ecologic.de/3651 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)