

## *International Competition for Young Debaters (ICYD)*

Last Saturday my schoolmates and I attended ICYD, a forensics competition at Ekpedeftiki Anagennisi. We observed many students from the ages 12-15 debating against each other. Firstly, we went to the theatre of the school and the first motion was announced to the contestants. Then, everyone left to get ready for the first Round.

The motion was 'THW ban meat' and we all went to a classroom to observe the debate. It wasn't really hard but all the students had to think the best arguments they could find to make their speech perfect. So, the debaters started out with confidence. We noticed that some younger contestants were doing better than some of the older ones and that was, at first, strange to us because we expected the older ones to use a higher level of vocabulary than the younger ones. Naturally, the young ones gained our attention way more than the older ones did. As everyone can obviously realize, the Opposition arguments weren't so many or that convincing, yet, the debaters found a way to make them sound trustworthy. Meanwhile, the Government stayed to the obvious arguments instead of expanding them in order to make their case more credible and powerful.

After finishing the first Round, we returned to the theatre so that the contestants could get the motion for Round two which was: 'THW legalize all drugs'. It was really hard for the young debaters to find strong arguments that could support their team but all of them worked it out and found very impressive ones. We also observed how contestants paid attention to what the other team said so the next speaker could oppose what was argued. Except for the next speaker, every debater was listening carefully what everyone else said, so they could ask a point of information in order to get the contender to answer something out of the blue. In addition to that, I have to mention how extremely well thought of were the questions that the debaters asked each other because, as we all know, legalizing drugs could be one of the most interesting subjects to discuss, especially among young teenagers aged 13-15. We hear so much about it on the news.

Conclusively, we had a really enjoyable time observing the competition and definitely learned a lot from it because it was the first time we watched a live debate in English and the debaters were at our age. We are really looking forward to trying it ourselves next year!

Sandy Theodoropoulou