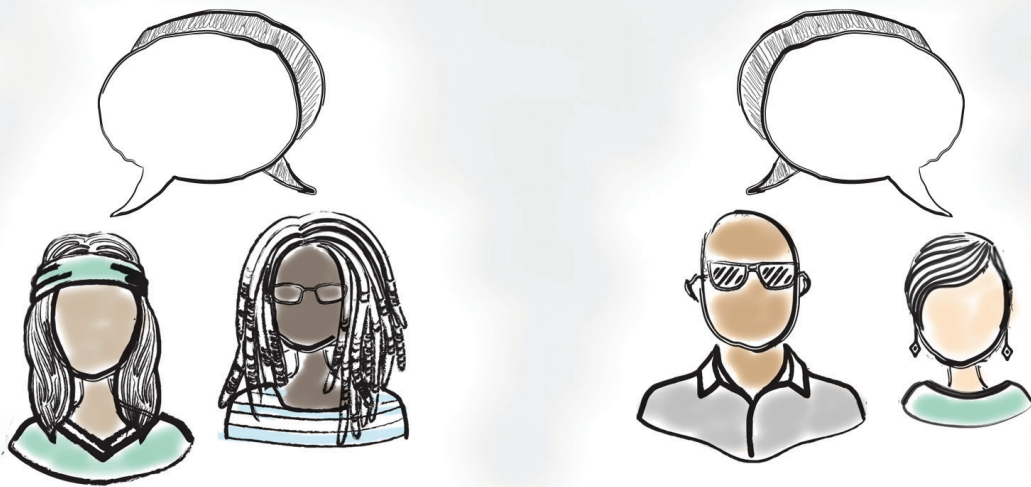


LEADERS THAT LISTEN
PUBLIC SPEAKING CURRICULUM

Debate Guide



Debate is an engaging and rigorous way to explore issues that directly impact society—it also trains your brain to listen carefully, which is important for leaders! When done well, debate can be used to develop empathy, perspective-taking, and productive conflict by teaching people how to navigate difference and interrogate ideas (as opposed to personal attacks).

This toolkit is an introduction to debate protocols and argumentation skills, as well as how to judge debate, how to run a debate practice, and even how to start a debate team. Whether you are involved in formal debate, these resources can help you improve your spontaneous speaking and ability to persuade an audience!



Why We Need Leaders That Listen:

A Note from the Author

As a teacher and public speaking coach, I have always been drawn to the quirkiest students.

I love unexpected perspectives that make me think about an issue in a different way and inspire me to care about experiences I never understood. Unfortunately, we are surrounded by images of leadership and models of public speaking dominated by examples that are loud, angry, and driven by ego. Every day, I encounter students from as young as 7 all the way to adulthood who have beautiful voices and incredible stories but do not believe they are important. They have been taught that they aren't leaders because they do not look, act, or sound like the people in power.

It is important to have mentors and a community to help you have the courage of your own convictions; just because you don't look or sound like everyone else doesn't mean you don't deserve to have a voice. Our society needs leaders who know how to facilitate diverse perspectives, learn from different experiences, care about human beings, and listen without an agenda. This curriculum is a starting point for educators, coaches, and emerging public speakers of all ages who want methods for communicating in a way that is authentic and real, empowering their inner leader and encouraging diverse voices through inclusive education. Explore the guides in any order and choose tools that best fit your needs and build your confidence. Gather inspiration and feel free to adapt as you develop your skills and the abilities of those you lead.



AnnMarie D. Baines, PhD, Executive Director

About the Author

As Founder and Executive Director of Bay Area non-profit, The Practice Space, AnnMarie Baines brings 20 years of experience coaching public speaking for youth and adults and currently teaches public speaking at UC Berkeley. As a Filipina leader, Dr. Baines is deeply committed to equity, and was awarded a Deeper Learning Equity Fellowship. In prior work, Dr. Baines was a program officer at the George Lucas Educational Foundation, where she applied her expertise in curriculum, project-based learning, and professional development. She began her career as a high school special education teacher and utilizes the Universal Design for Learning framework. Dr. Baines received her PhD in Learning Sciences from University of Washington, teaching credential from Boston Teacher Residency, and Master's in Education Policy from Harvard Graduate School of Education.

DEBATE GUIDE

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DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 1

Debate: Listening Like a Leader

Debate to Develop Empathy



Debate and argumentation offers leaders a chance to explore both sides of a complex issue and engage with controversial topics in a structured, facilitated format. By practicing debate, leaders utilize a multitude of public speaking skills such as argument development, spontaneous critical thinking, questioning, and synthesizing central areas of clash. The ability to support arguments with research and analysis and evaluate other people's information on the spot is critical to effective civic and political participation in democracy. At the same time, the word "debate" or "argumentation" often deters people who would rather not engage in an activity that feels like fighting or confrontation. In the classroom, debate can feel too competitive or too challenging to facilitate in a large group. Avoiding clash, however, avoids an opportunity to learn how to appreciate the multiple sides of an issue and ultimately develop empathy for diverse viewpoints. (For more information, see "Using Debate to Navigate Difference" later on in this guide.) The resources in this guide can help make debate less scary to do and to facilitate!

Principles of Persuasion

There are many protocols and formats for debate, which differ based on the number of participants involved, the type of topic, and the goal of the discussion (e.g. exploring philosophical tensions, arguing about policy decisions, or generally discussing why something is better than something else). Regardless of format, however, debate is ultimately about persuasion, which comes down to appealing to your audience through different methods. Much has been written about the Greek philosopher Aristotle's modes of persuasion, which detail the techniques that

speakers can use to appeal to their audiences. As a brief overview, these modes include:

- **Ethos:** Appealing to your audience by making them trust you, establishing your personal credibility, sounding fair, and demonstrating your personal expertise.
- **Logos:** Appealing to your audience through logic, reasoning, facts and statistics, historical examples, strong hypothetical examples, or analogies.
- **Pathos:** Appealing to your audience by inciting their emotions and using powerful language that inspires strong feelings of excitement, pity, or anger.

An effective debater is able to use all three modes of persuasion, which develops connection with an audience and promotes effective leadership. What makes debate unique is that you also have to interact with others, which means that persuasion also depends on anticipating and reacting to how other people might use these modes. Anticipating or "preempting" arguments requires you to put yourself in the shoes of the other side and genuinely try to understand what they might say and how they might say it. As a learning tool, this can be a powerful way to develop the capacity to adapt and customize your ideas to communicate more effectively.

Promoting Listening Through Debate

Debate is exciting to people who enjoy the thrill of spontaneous speaking and thinking on their feet; less so for people who prefer to prepare everything. Rest assured that effective debate actually requires both the skill of careful preparation and research in addition to the ability to respond in the moment. Teaching debate involves an understanding and awareness of student strengths and targeted practice to address areas that might be more challenging. (For more information, see "Getting Debate Started: For Educators and Facilitators", or "Small Steps for Educators: Debate in the Classroom", or "How to Run a Debate Practice", later on in this guide.)

Regardless of your area of comfort, one of the most important skills in debate is the ability to listen carefully and strategically. In debate, listening involves:

- Making sure you actually understand the other person's argument
- Digesting the main point of the other person's argument
- Coming up with clarifying questions to solidify your understanding

- Selective note-taking on the distinct ideas mentioned by the other person
- Knowing when the other person is just repeating something said before
- Mentally drawing connections to your own arguments
- Making choices about where you might focus your upcoming responses

When done effectively, debate can help you listen like a leader, meaning that you are taking the time to deeply appreciate and understand what the other person is saying before coming up with what you are going to say next. The challenge is to be able to identify what is really important to the other person while also drawing connections to your own ideas. For those who like to be prepared, it helps to come into the debate with a general understanding of the core issues involved in the topic and where potential areas of clash might be. Preparation also involves a great deal of practice on how to listen, even under conditions that are stressful.

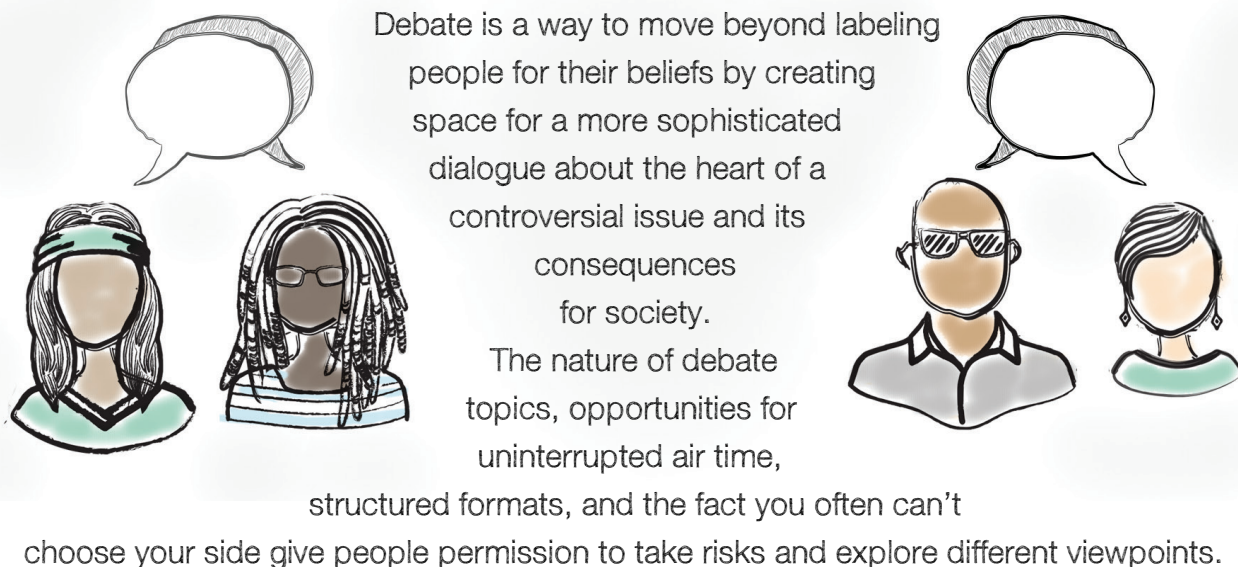
The Final Takeaway

Debate is one of the most technical forms of public speaking because it involves direct interactions with others, a mix of prepared and spontaneous speaking, and persuasive argumentation skills. Even if you are not part of a formal debate team, it is still valuable to practice thinking on your feet. While not all leaders have to engage in formal debates, the activity itself can build the capacity to understand diverse perspectives, listen deeply, and develop a sense of empathy that will help you communicate more effectively.



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 2

Using Debate to Navigate Difference



Debate can make it easier to feel prepared to respond when issues become more personal and harder to manage. Unfortunately, opportunities to participate in competitive debate tend to be made more available in well-resourced schools and communities, due to the expense of the activity, need for expert coaches, and heavy weekend and volunteer commitments. Outside of competitive debate after school, quality debate instruction is difficult to find. Classrooms often prioritize discussion over debate, focusing on consensus-building over clash. To prepare students for controversies they will face in the world, however, every student needs access to rigorous, academic debates that help them learn from (rather than fear) difference.

The Debate About Debate

For students, the very qualities that make debate exciting for some make it feel impossible for others, which is why debate is difficult to make inclusive without careful design. For instance, poorly designed debate can exacerbate inequities in prior background knowledge, including gaps in academic language, reading and research skills, literacy, and experience with conversations about current events. The competitive nature of debate can be intimidating for more introverted students, especially if the debate culture relies on speed and aggression as the accepted norms for speaking. Debate can also tap into fundamental fears of being judged and evaluated in front of others, where students are scared of being wrong or not feeling prepared enough to speak spontaneously. This fear is even worse when students are assigned to a side that they do not want to defend, and the lack of

choice can feel overwhelming.

So why is debate still worth it? While it is true debate can be intimidating and scary at first, facing this in a classroom is a lot better than having to face it for the first time when you are advocating for yourself or presenting on the job. Competition, speed, and aggression are tactics that many rely on to silence others, and debate can familiarize students and teach them they are capable of responding in these situations. When debate is taught and practiced in a culture that supports risk-taking and strengthens teamwork, students learn it is not possible to be “right” all the time and that it is possible to improve. When repeated often over time (rather than a single assignment), taking another side promotes understanding and perspective-taking by asking students to seek the nuance in every argument and examine different philosophies and world views. With practice, students can find enjoyment in debate, which also provides the incentive and exposure necessary to improve academic language and literacy.

Making Debate Accessible and Inclusive

To reap the benefits of debate, it is important to help students handle the initial intimidation and feeling that only some people can ever be “good”. The culture of the classroom is especially important and feeling a sense of belonging to a team can act as a buffer from any overwhelming fears. Teaching debate should take a developmental approach, where students are gradually introduced to new skills and opportunities to practice them.

Every challenge should be accompanied by something fun: if the skill is hard, then the topic should be silly and light and if the topic is hard, then the skill should be familiar. The key is to balance areas of comfort and discomfort for everyone and each student should have the chance to feel both successful and like they need to grow to overcome hurdles. Some starting points:

- Teach each step in a debate format using easy, accessible topics that the students generate themselves (e.g. Skittles are better than M&Ms, Cows are better than Horses). As they learn something new, give them tools such as templates or sentence starters to use as a guide and help them participate right away.
- After they have learned the format, choose topics that are personally relevant and controversial, such as philosophical debates involving morality (e.g. It is more important to help yourself than to help society). Gradually ease them into more unfamiliar topic territory, where they may not initially understand the ideas.
- Support background knowledge and topic exploration outside of competition. Before they have to take a side, help them research both sides and identify the heart of an issue.
- Lower the stakes by first having students debate and prepare in larger groups, followed by working in pairs and then working alone. Mix up the groupings and help students find partners who help them feel better prepared.
- When it comes to style, emphasize persuasion and audience connection over imitation. It can be tempting to want to sound as loud and aggressive as everyone else, but regularly remind students that they need to find their own style and approach to persuading their listeners. Shouting matches rarely help understanding.

The Final Takeaway

Students do not get access to the benefits of debate when they are not exposed to the activity and when they do not have the time to develop the skills necessary to enjoy it. Like any form of public speaking, it is hard to participate when faced with fear and discomfort. The point of debate goes beyond winning; it prepares students to understand diverse viewpoints and navigate difference without getting intimidated by disagreement. Without the chance to engage deeply with issues and clash directly with ideas, it is hard to formulate informed opinions. Classrooms are an ideal practice setting for helping students experiment with their ideas and avoid being silenced when it matters. When properly designed, debate is always worth it.

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DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 3

Debate Team Stories: Memories from the Author



It is safe to say that Elohiym Muddavanha was always looking for ways to make things better. Even as early as eight years old, Elohiym built a small business recycling cans and water bottles in his neighborhood in Richmond, CA. As a middle schooler, he watched in awe as his cousin Nezhiah prepared to speak for the local Lion's Club and said, "I want to be like that. I want to speak up and change the world."

I first met Elohiym when he was 13 years old, when he joined one of my public speaking camps and started taking private public speaking lessons. After one summer of camp, Elohiym participated in his first few parliamentary debate tournaments, ready and eager to use the skills he had learned. What struck him the most were not the debates; instead, he asked,

“Mrs. Baines, why am I the only Black debater here? Where are the other schools?”

Elohiym is not the first student to ask me this question, since historically, the world of competitive debate has been largely dominated by racially homogenous private schools, with a few exceptions. I answered him with this history, to which he responded, “Well, then I am going to diversify the debate world. Can you teach a program at my school?”

What followed was several weeks of Elohiym personally reaching out to recruit students to join the newly formed “Golden Debaters” team. I trained Elohiym on how to plan and run a public speaking practice and visited every other week to model new activities,

while he independently led practices when I wasn't there. His mom learned how to complete administration for tournaments and we collaborated on checklists to make sure they knew the steps to register and how to judge at tournaments. As one of the only clubs at his school, his efforts gained the attention of more students than he expected, and 10 students soon ballooned to 20 students. As a result of this collaboration, the team attended 2-3 tournaments each year and held their own practice debate scrimmages against local schools.

Unfortunately, the students continued to face several barriers along the way related to equity. As middle schoolers, they had no choice but to attend high school tournaments (since there were no other options for middle school competitions in their area), so they rarely won any rounds. As a public school in one of the poorest counties in the Bay Area, they struggled with getting access to the technology, research, and topic literacy background they needed to compete. Vocabulary and writing were a challenge and they of course continued to observe what Elohiym already had: none of the competitors or judges they encountered looked like them.

But the team never dwelled on these barriers and their enthusiasm for the activity never waned. With every competition, they picked up new skills and awareness of debate norms and made observable improvements. They became closer as a team and congratulated their teammates when they saw how far they came. At the same time, one of Elohiym's teammates said to me, “I know how debaters are supposed to speak, but I don't know if I want to speak that way. Are there other ways to speak and still do well?”

Like Elohiym, this comment made me wonder how to help students see more diverse models of what it means to be a strong public speaker. How can we show students examples that look like them and showcase the variety of ways to express themselves? How can we give them more choices about how to speak and still be heard? As usual, Elohiym was one step ahead of me. For him, the issue was not that they weren't doing well, but instead it was that they didn't have enough opportunities for real-world practice. Even now as a freshman in high school, he is in the midst of creating informal, weekend events in local parks in Vallejo, where beginning debaters can come and engage in debate rounds about different issues. His mission to diversify the debate world continues, and he has plenty of people ready to join in the cause.



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 4

Getting Debate Started: For Educators and Facilitators

In debate practice, strong facilitation should focus on helping people gradually build up their skills and focus on improvement goals that they identify, not you.

Instead of talking at people, it is important to help them learn debate by doing it, and you can help by chunking the experience to focus on specific things and avoid overwhelming people. Choose the right topics and teach the structure effectively so that everyone can participate.

Note: The suggestions in this guide are intended as personal checkpoints rather than used as a formula. Feel free to add steps or skip suggestions that do not work for you or the situation you are in—make it your own!

Support Literacy

- 1) Develop and regularly review a vocabulary list of major issues, concepts, people, philosophies, and policies. Use language cheat sheets to get people started.
- 2) Start with easier topics. Debating familiar topics while learning new vocabulary and doing research on new issues lowers literacy barriers.

Select Topics Wisely

- 1) Select relevant topics that provide even ground on both sides.
- 2) Word topics to avoid double negatives or having the pro side defend a ban.
- 3) Consider topics about “facts” (whether something is true), “values” (what we ought to do), or “policies” (what action to take).

Structure the Round

- 1) Figure out groupings (i.e. one-on-one, pair, or group debate).
- 2) Make sure there are opening speeches, questions, responses, and closings.
- 3) Decide the timing for each speech, informed by the purpose of each speech and what you know about the debaters’ capabilities.

Do a Practice Run

- 1) When teaching a structure, it is better to learn by doing. Practice the structure on an easy topic first.
- 2) As you do the practice run, stop and start to clarify the purpose of each speech and provide feedback and guidance.
- 3) Make sure people feel capable and secure before moving on.

Facilitate Preparation

- 1) If preparing in groups, make sure everyone has a role and that one person doesn’t dominate.
- 2) Make sure people are writing their arguments as they go to not forget.
- 3) Help people manage their time by giving them checkpoints for when to finish topic analysis, outlining speeches, and practicing delivery.

Redo with Better Delivery

- 1) Make sure to spend time redoing speeches to improve delivery skills like tone, gestures, and emphasis.
- 2) Help people identify specific goals for their redos, including improved summaries and explanations.
- 3) Create redo routines, so people make it a habit to immediately practice redos themselves.



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 5

Getting Debate Started: For Speakers

Debate is about being able to articulate the big picture of an issue, while at the same time, analyzing and unpacking the nuances of each argument.

It is a lot to do off the top of your head, so make sure you are prepared by staying current about issues, practicing your outlining and note-taking skills, and improving your ability to explain, synthesize, prioritize, and extend the most important arguments. Use this guide to remind yourself to stay level-headed and analytical in your next debate. Note: These suggestions can take place in any order that works for you and should be used as a set of reminders, not a formula. Feel free to skip suggestions that do not work for you or the situation you are in—make it your own!

Be Aware and Stay Current

- 1) Take the time to inform your opinions by staying up-to-date with what is happening in the world. Be familiar with key terms, figures, places, and names.
- 2) Be aware of how people are conversing about a topic. What makes people emotional? What seem to be the sticking points?

Analyze Both Sides of a Topic

- 1) Before you put together your arguments, discuss both sides of the issue. Set aside your own bias and think objectively about why someone would take each side.
- 2) When you come up with an argument on one side, rigorously write down counter-arguments. What examples contradict you?

Quickly Outline Arguments

- 1) Practice writing down your thoughts with rough notes only, just getting down enough information to guide your thoughts.
- 2) Create your own code. Use abbreviations and symbols and never write full sentences. It's more important to get the gist and teach your brain to fill in the rest.

Listen Carefully and Take Notes

- 1) Selective note-taking is the key to success during debate. If you are familiar with the issue, what they are saying shouldn't be entirely new. Take notes on examples and what clash they emphasize.
- 2) Work on listening skills to think about your own arguments at the same time as thinking about theirs.

Prioritize Areas of Clash

- 1) Debate starts off being about details, but it is powerful if you can boil it down and explain the big picture of the issues at hand.
- 2) As you listen, think about the theme of their arguments. How does it differ from your theme? In your notes, circle and number the most important arguments.

Synthesize, Explain, and Extend

- 1) In practice, redo closing speeches and improve how you summarize main issues and explain complex ideas. Strive to make things clear.
- 2) Work on extending, where you state the implications of the argument, the results, the ripple effects, and weigh which issues are more important and why.



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 6

Getting Debate Started: For Listeners

In debates, listeners are often in the position where they have to judge, evaluate, or provide feedback to help the debaters improve.

Take your job seriously, but do not use it as a chance to make it all about you. Set aside your own biases and evaluate the arguments in front of you, while showing that you care about hearing the arguments that they worked so hard to put together. Use this guide to get started on becoming a better listener. Note: These suggestions are intended as reminders and personal checkpoints rather than used as a formula. Feel free to skip suggestions that do not work for you or the situation you are in—make it your own!

Clear Away Bias

- 1) When you hear a topic, recognize your immediate reactions and biases – call them out to yourself.
- 2) Recognize your biases towards the presenters and put them aside.
- 3) Put your mind in the mental state to learn something new. Remind yourself to think about the quality of the arguments.

Look Encouraging

- 1) In a learning setting, it is important to remember to create the conditions that help people learn. Trying to look intimidating makes it about you, as opposed to learning.
- 2) Occasionally look up in an encouraging way. You don't have to show you like every argument, just look open to hearing them.

Take Notes

- 1) Take organized notes that clearly follow the path of the debate and which arguments match up with one another. Use abbreviations.
- 2) Give non-verbal feedback that show your response to their points. If you like something, look like you like it, without being distracting. Don't look down the whole time.

Rely on Arguments Presented

- 1) Focus on evaluating the arguments as they are presented. Don't think about what you would have done, but base your evaluations on what they said.
- 2) Consider which points were carried throughout and whether they were explained with support. Who proved their arguments matter?

Review Content and Delivery

- 1) Separate your evaluation of the arguments from your response to their delivery. Which arguments were strong, even if the speaking style was weak or distracting?
- 2) When looking at delivery, think about which debaters were able to inspire the emotion that would compel you to act in their favor.

Justify Decisions

- 1) Make sure you can always explain your reason for deciding in favor of one debater over another.
- 2) When explaining your reasons, prioritize which reasons were especially central to your decision. Don't cover everything in the round and don't use it as a chance to prove your skill. Be constructive.



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 7

Designing Debates

Designing an engaging and informative debate involves choices about the focus of the topics, desired groupings, sequence and protocol, and timing.

While there are many long-standing formats of debate that carry extensive histories of tradition, you should also feel free to design an experience that best fits your group or the focus of your practice. Even if you are already on an established debate team, it can be helpful to temporarily try out a different format so that you can approach specific skills in a different way.

Focus of Debate:

Depending on the purpose of debate, you can choose topics that focus on the following:

- **Silly topics:** good for working on new skills or learning a new format
- **Value topics:** good for exploring philosophy, world views, and hypothetical examples
- **Policy topics:** good for outlining concrete plans of action and using evidence
- **Fact topics:** good for practicing argument construction and using concrete examples

Common Protocol Elements:

Regardless of the topic, most debate protocols are structured by these common elements:

- **Preparation Time:** Debates can either be fully prepared over several days or months or they can be largely spontaneous with 10-20 minutes of preparation. Preparation time can also be woven in throughout the debate before different speeches.
- **Opening Cases:** Debates always begin with a presentation of initial arguments by each side, although these can vary in total length.

- **Cross-Examination or Questioning:** Not every debate includes a time for questioning, although this can help facilitate better understanding and improve the quality of debate. Most “cross-ex” periods are split up so that one side has dedicated time for questioning followed by the other side having dedicated questioning time. This can also be woven in throughout the debate in a more spontaneous fashion.
- **Rebuttals:** The middle of the debate is made up of speeches where debaters pick apart the other side, known as the “line-by-line”. Rebuttals include time for debaters to defensively argue against the other side and then offensively support their arguments. Rebuttals are usually completely spontaneous, although they may involve a few minutes of preparation time.
- **Closing Remarks:** The end of the debate includes speeches that summarize the central issues of the round, usually without being able to mention any new arguments. These remarks are sometimes combined with the rebuttals or can also be separate speeches with “voting issues” for what they thought they won in the debate.
- **Possible Groupings:** Debates can be one vs one, two vs. two, three vs. three, a group vs. another group, or an entire class. Decisions about groupings can also include thinking about how people group up to prepare their side.



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 8

Structuring Arguments on the Spot

It can be hard to come up with arguments when you first receive a debate topic, especially when you have the pressure of limited time to prepare.

The goal is to spend enough time analyzing the topic itself and making sure you are clear about how key terms are defined and what is the intended ground for argumentation on both sides. As you brainstorm, make sure your arguments are unique and not repetitive, balancing offensive arguments that show what you achieve and defensive arguments that protect you against something someone might say. Most importantly, make sure every argument includes a claim, a warrant, and an impact. In other words, start off with a clear statement of your opinion, how it is supported by adequate evidence and reasoning, and why it is important. Avoid the need to make each argument perfect and concentrate more on covering a complete picture of the topic.

| Skill and Technique | Guidance |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Topic Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When you hear a topic, analyze the language carefully.• Look for the major concept and be clear about how it is defined and what it means.• Look for the verbs -- what are the key actions?• Look for the actor -- who is taking the action?• Look for the result -- what is the desired outcome?• Make sure you spend time thinking about the available ground for the debate. What are the main areas of clash? What is the available ground on both sides? |
| 2. Argument Outline | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every argument is made up of three elements: Claims, Warrants, and Impacts.• Start with the claim: What is the main thesis of your opinion? State this in as few sentences as possible.• Follow up with the warrants: what facts, real or hypothetical examples, evidence, or logical reasoning support your claim?• End with the impact: Why does your argument matter? What does it lead to, or what is the implication? What are the short and long-term results? |

| Skill and Technique | Guidance |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 3. Argument Diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your arguments are unique and cover different angles on the topic. This avoids repetition and gives your side more ground. • Some choices include: 1) whether something is morally right or wrong; 2) whether something works or doesn't work; or 3) whether something leads to something good or something bad. |
| 4. Offense and Defense | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you make arguments that propose something new and beneficial as well as arguments that avoid something bad. • Offensive arguments: Tell us what we get by supporting your side. What unique benefit do you bring? • Defensive arguments: Tell us how you avoid something bad that happens if we don't take action. Anticipate what you think the other side will say and make an argument that says why this won't happen. |



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 9

Tips for Anticipating and Responding to Arguments

Being able to respond to arguments in a skillful and organized manner is core to any debate.

When you have to respond on the spot, keep your cool and do not panic. It helps to go into a debate round familiar with likely areas of clash and then logically spell out your reasoning as you argue each of their points one by one. Even if you don't know exactly what to say next, starting off by summarizing what the other side said can give you a jumping-off point while also helping you be clear and well-organized.

| Skill and Technique | Guidance |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Anticipate Potential Clash | <p>When you prepare, anticipate what central issues or interpretations will be most important in the debate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a list of potential clash areas (____ vs ____), such as long-term benefits vs short-term harms, or individual needs vs. community welfare).• Write key questions that will likely drive the debate. For instance: Which side proves that they solve global warming? Which side shows the biggest benefit to the most number of people? |
| 2. Organize Line-By-Line | <p>Organization is key to help your listeners follow your train of thought. Taking complete notes is essential to organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When you respond to arguments, always “signpost”, meaning that you tell us what issue you are arguing and preview what you are going to say. It helps to say something like, “They say _____, we say _____.” |
| 3. Vary Your Responses | <p>A few options for responses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Say why their point isn't true• Point out how they didn't prove their point• Say why their point doesn't matter to the debate |
| 4. Use Link Chains | <p>Link chains are a way of leading us along the stepping stones of your argument and avoiding “logic leaps” that lack reasoning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For instance, practice making arguments that state, “When this happens, it leads to____, which leads means that _____, which results in _____, which is good/bad because....” |
| 5. Highlight Actual Clash | <p>Do not get overly bogged down in technical details. Highlight the big picture issues and what major arguments or philosophies directly clash with one another.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• State why your side wins each area of clash.• Cover your bases by stating how you still win, even if the judge doesn't believe your initial argument. |



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 10

The Art of Synthesis and Summary

Debates can be overwhelming to the listener, since they can contain a lot of back-and-forth around complex material.

Debaters who can clearly tell the story of the debate and prioritize issues for the listener are likely to be the most persuasive, especially if they can also communicate the heart of a controversial issue in a passionate, compelling way. The best way to practice the art of synthesis is to make a habit of “redo”-ing your closing speeches whenever you finish a debate round, focusing on making it even clearer and more compelling than it was in the original debate.

| Skill and Technique | Guidance |
|--|---|
| 1. Find the Heart of the Debate | <p>As you listen to your opponent’s speeches, take a step back and look at the issues being debated. Hopefully, you’ve taken good notes, so circle any crucial points and number them in terms of which ones are highest priority. Ask yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the best arguments on each side? • Which arguments have the most ripple effects? • Which arguments directly contradict what I have been saying throughout the debate? • Where do the two sides differ philosophically? |
| 2. Tell the Story of the Round | <p>Good stories have a beginning, middle, and an end. In your closing speech, take your listener on a journey looking back on what has happened in the debate. Review with the listener:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was important at the start of the debate? • What arguments have dropped away and what is left? • How have you proved the points that are left? |
| 3. Explain Complex Ideas | <p>Confusion isn’t persuasive. Even if you already have, take time to remind listeners about key definitions and explain anything that is still confusing. A good way to practice this outside of a round is to give yourself complicated subjects (i.e. how health care works or impeachment or cycles of poverty) and practice explaining what they are without making any arguments.</p> |
| 4. Weigh the Issues | <p>Weighing is a technique where you directly compare issues on your side of the debate versus the other side and say why the issues you prove are more important or impactful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put yourself in the listener’s shoes: what issues are they wrestling with? How can you summarize what they are weighing in their minds? • Do not bring up new issues at this point. Instead, keep your summaries to what has already been debated. |

| Skill and Technique | Guidance |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 5. Bring the Passion | <p>Passionate delivery is important throughout the debate, but it is especially important when you summarize key issues. Your summaries are a representation of everything you've been building throughout the debate. Get excited or urgent about it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your voice (red and gray vocal tones) to communicate urgency, passion, and enthusiasm. • Make sure you use your voice to clearly differentiate between what is good (i.e. you) and what is bad. • Increase speed and volume throughout, but use strategic pauses and points that are conversational. |



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 11

Parliamentary Debate Format

Parliamentary Debate is modeled after British parliamentary procedure and is an academic debate format used in competitive high school and university tournaments.

There is quite a bit of literature on strategies and techniques related to Parliamentary Debate (or “parli”), so this guidance sheet is intended as an overview for beginners to get started or for those interested in incorporating debate as an activity or exercise.

Protocol:

There are a few variations on parliamentary debate speech timing, but one common iteration is:

20 minutes of preparation time, followed by...

- Opening Speeches: Person A
 - o Affirmative (Pro): 7 minutes
 - o Negative (Con): 7 minutes
- Responses: Person B
 - o Affirmative (Pro): 7 minutes
 - o Negative (Con): 7 minutes
- Closing Speeches: Person A
 - o Negative (Con): 5 minutes
 - o Affirmative (Pro): 5 minutes

Parli Topics:

Given how widespread parliamentary debate is, it is fairly easy to find lists of topics online with in-depth guidance on facilitating parli rounds. By adding “for middle school” or “for high school” to your search, you can find topics that are good for beginners of any age. In general, topics can fall in the categories of “fact”, “value”, or “policy”, and should have equal ground on both sides. It’s also good to draw inspiration from Op-Ed articles and editorials about current issues, or think about important issues that no one is really talking about.

Here are some starters to create your own topics:

- Fact:
 - o “_____ is better than _____.”
 - o “All _____ are _____.”
- Value:
 - o “_____ ought to be valued over _____ in cases of _____.”
 - o “_____ have a moral obligation to _____.”
- Policy:
 - o “The government should substantially increase funding for _____.”
 - o “_____ should ban _____.”

Opening Case Example:

To get started, here is a specific example of how you might structure your opening speech during your 20 minutes of preparation time:

| Case Outline | Examples |
|--|---|
| An introductory explanation about why this is an important topic. | "Today we will be discussing the issue of... This is an important issue because..." |
| State the exact wording of the topic and state your side. | "Therefore, the topic for today is.... We take the affirmative/negative side of this topic." |
| State the definitions of key terms. | "We would like to define..." |
| Describe the "standard" for the round, or what is the most important goal or value we are trying to achieve. | "This round should be judged based on which side achieves... Therefore, the standard for the round is...." |
| State your first argument and prove it with reasoning and an impact. | "Our first contention is...." "This is true because..." "This is important because..." |
| State your second argument and prove it with reasoning and an impact. | "Our second contention is...." "This is true because..." "This is important because..." |
| Close your speech by reminding us what is most important in the round. | "Judge, you should vote affirmative/negative because we have shown that we are able to achieve the most important goal of..." |
| Give a strong final sentence. | "For all these reasons, we urge your affirmative/negative vote." |



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 12

Moral Judgment Debate Format

Moral Judgment Debate is a classroom method that offers a hybrid between debate and discussion.

It does not exist in competitive high school or university tournaments. Use this format whenever you want to debate philosophical questions. For a longer, more structured form of philosophical debate, look at “Lincoln-Douglas Debate”(or “LD”), which is a 40-minute long format used in academic debate competitions. This guidance sheet is for beginners getting started or for those interested in incorporating debate as an activity or exercise.

Protocol:

The goal of this style of debate is to explore multiple sides to a philosophical question. It takes place in groups of three, where one person represents the “pro” side, another represents the “con” side, and the final person is the “judge”. Unlike other forms of debate, the judge has a speaking role in this format and gives a speech in the middle of the speech as well as the end of the speech, in addition to asking elaboration questions. By giving a speech in the middle of the debate, the judge has to “reveal” or articulate current thinking, which challenges the debaters to adapt to focus their closing speeches on issues most central to the judge’s decision. In total, this debate is 15 minutes in length (25 minutes total with preparation time).

Preparation of Opening Speech – 10 minutes (or longer prep days or weeks ahead of time)

- Affirmative (Pro) Opening Speech (with two points) – 2 minutes
- Cross-Examination (with “tell me more” questions by the judge) – 1 minute
- Negative (Con) Opening Speech (with two points) – 2 minutes
- Cross-Examination (with “tell me more” questions by the judge) – 1 minute
- Cross-Fire (Pro and Con ask questions to each other, starting with Pro) – 2 minutes

Judge Prepares Reveal Speech – 1 minute

- Judge Reveal Speech (starting with “Here is where I am right now”) – 2 minutes
- Preparation Huddle (both sides think about closing situation or issue) – 1 minute
- Affirmative (Pro) Closing Speech (focused on a specific situation or issue) – 1 minute

- Negative (Con) Closing Speech (focused on a specific situation or issue) – 1 minute
- Judge Closing Decision (with reason for decision) – 1 minute

Moral Judgment Topics:

Topics in this format are always worded as a question. Some examples include:

- Is it possible to cure poverty?
- Is stealing ever okay?
- Does equal opportunity exist in sports?
- Is violence ever the appropriate response to injustice?
- Is war ever necessary?
- Do people who commit violent crimes deserve the death penalty?
- Should student evaluations determine teacher job security?
- Is it okay for teachers to play favorites?
- Is it okay to block websites in schools?

In addition to searching for “philosophical debate questions” for more topics, you can also specifically focus on different types of morality. These philosophies are obviously much more complex than articulated here, but can include:

- Utilitarianism: What is good for the greatest number of people?
- Virtue Ethics: What is just inherently good in principle?
- Deontology: Was the intent of the action good?
- Rights-Based Ethics: Does the action protect rights?
- Ethical Egoism: Which action is good for me?

Opening Case Example:

The structure for an opening speech is similar to most styles of debate, including the Parliamentary Debate format, except that it focuses even more on defining key values:

| Case Outline | Examples |
|--|--|
| An introductory explanation about why this is an important topic. | "Today we will be discussing the issue of... This is an important issue because..." |
| State the exact wording of the topic and state your side. | "Therefore, the topic for today is.... We take the affirmative/negative side." |
| State the definitions of key terms. | "We would like to define..." |
| Describe your "value" for the round, or how you define what is good and right. | "This round should be judged based on which side achieves the value of..." |
| State your first argument and prove it with reasoning and an impact. | "Our first contention is...." "This is true because..." "This is important because..." |
| State your second argument and prove it with reasoning and an impact. | "Our second contention is...." "This is true because..." "This is important because..." |
| Close your speech by reminding us what is most important in the round. | "Judge, we have shown that we are able to achieve the most important goal of..." "For all these reasons, we urge your affirmative/negative vote." |



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 13

Debate Skills Drills and Warm-ups

In full-fledged formats, debate can be overwhelming if you have not yet built up your spontaneous speaking and argumentation skills.

Drills and warm-ups can help you keep sharp and focus on specific debate-related skills. While many of these warm-ups are designed to be done in groups or pairs, it is possible to practice on your own with slight variations. For adults trying to improve their debate skills for the workplace, these activities work best if you can find someone to help you at home (otherwise, use the variation for individuals).

In classrooms or debate practices, these activities are designed to be short 10-12 minute exercises before going into a more involved debate or discussion. If time is limited, it is also possible to not do a debate at all and just do one or two of these exercises with more repetitions, followed by a debrief discussion about what everyone felt like they improved.

| Warm-up Activity | Goals and Variations |
|---|---|
| Wordsmith In a circle, have one person state an argumentative claim in a complete sentence with reasoning. For instance, "Schools should increase funding for mental health services because dealing with stress helps students do better academically." The next person in the circle then restates the claim, but with fewer words. The next person builds on the new version but with more powerful words (i.e. "Schools are responsible for students' mental health to prevent academic failure.") Repeat until the claim is concise with powerful words and then have someone start a new claim. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construct more concise and powerful claims.• In pairs, you can just go back and forth to practice.• By yourself, you will have to talk to yourself (which is still okay!), stating a claim and then whittling it down to fewer words with a more powerful impact. You can also do this in writing, but it is more difficult out loud, so it's worth doing (even if it is a little weird). |
| Justify It One person says that a certain statement is true (they don't have to believe it), such as "Gorillas would make great pets." The other person has to respond by saying why this statement is true, such as "Totally! Gorillas can help you reach things up high and they always have bananas, which are a great source of potassium." Switch roles with new statements each time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice giving warrants and reasons for your arguments. For more difficulty, you can increase the number of reasons you have to give.• This is a hard activity by yourself, but you can put statements on index cards and draw them out of a hat. |
| Devil's Advocate This is similar to "Justify It", except that after one person makes a statement, the other person responds on the other side with an opposing statement, starting with "To play devil's advocate..." For instance, if one person said "Gorillas would make great pets", the other person would say, "To play devil's advocate, gorillas would not make great pets because they are wild and unpredictable and could pose a great deal of danger." | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice coming up with counter-arguments off the top of your head.• Similarly, this activity can be done individually by putting statements on index cards and responding to them as you draw them out of a hat. |

| Warm-up Activity | Goals and Variations |
|---|--|
| <p>Pulled from the Headlines</p> <p>Find a random news article from your favorite periodical -- this can be serious but can also easily be from a tabloid magazine. Skim the article and then summarize it out loud to someone in 1 minute without any preparation. The summary should be intriguing as well as clear and to the point.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice summarizing content out loud. • By yourself, practice this exercise by audio recording your summary and listening back. You get used to the sound of your voice and improve your work. |
| <p>Take Action</p> <p>Write 10 "problems" on 10 index cards, one problem per card. These can be societal problems (i.e. "There are too many homeless people in the Bay Area.") or light, ordinary problems (i.e. "The living room is too cold."). Shuffle the deck and draw a problem card and then set the timer for 1 minute while you suggest a course of action and why you think it will work to solve the problem.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice justifying proposals and plans for action. • This activity works as well in any size group without any variation, including by yourself. |
| <p>Blow up the Balloon</p> <p>In a circle or small group, one person makes an statement (i.e. "Traffic in the Bay Area is at an all-time high."). The next person adds on by saying, "which leads to..." and the next person adds on by saying, "which leads to..." Each result should be increasingly bigger and more impactful to "blow up the balloon".</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice stating short and long term impacts. • By yourself, you can practice by listing as many impacts as you can following a statement, before getting ridiculous (or "popping the balloon"). |
| <p>Talking Code</p> <p>Have someone discuss 2-3 arguments about any simple prompt (i.e. "Spring is better than summer."). Listeners take notes using as few full, real words as possible -- the goal is to try use abbreviations, symbols, and codes to represent ideas.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice fast note-taking. • This activity can be done easily in pairs, but can also be in a whole group. By yourself, you can do the same thing by taking notes on a podcast, newscast, or YouTube video. |
| <p>Quick Outlines</p> <p>Give everyone a topic and set a timer for 4 minutes for them to silently outline 2-3 arguments on both sides. Repeat with a new topic, but this time set a timer for 3 minutes to outline both sides. Keep repeating with new topics, but reduce the outline preparation time each time.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice quick outlining skills and avoiding perfectionism. • This activity can be done in any size group or in pairs. By yourself, you will need to prepare index cards with debate topics and set the timer for yourself. |



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 14

Activity Examples: SPAR and Extemporaneous Panels

To improve debate skills, it is important to practice frequently and strategically.

Running entire debate rounds can be helpful to practicing all of the different elements of argumentation, but it is also important to break down the skills into smaller, shorter exercises. Short, easy debates and discussions can help isolate particular skills, while also giving time for more frequent practice. Selecting easy, fun topics can also make it possible for all students to fully participate and feel capable of being successful at debate.

What is the purpose of these activities?

1. Students practice taking an assigned position, quickly outlining arguments, posing questions to the other side, defending their points, and summarizing key takeaways.
2. These activities can be done in small groups for a faster, more low-stakes version, but can also become more high-stakes presentations when done for the entire group.
3. The overall level of difficulty depends on the nature of the topic -- in terms of learning debate skills, easy, silly topics can be as useful as more complex current event topics.

How do these assignments connect to Common Core Speaking & Listening Standards?

- **Debate is one of the most comprehensive speaking formats for addressing the majority of standards.** The standards listed here are only a few examples, but debate also addresses standards under “Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas” and can be supplemented to include more preparation and/or digital media to meet additional standards.
- The anchor standards across all grade levels for “Comprehension and Collaboration” require students of all ages to “prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.” (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1).
- Anchor standards for all ages also require students to “evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.” (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3)
- Starting in Grade 1, the anchor standards for “Comprehension and Collaboration” require students to be able to build on others’ talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.1.B).
- Starting in Grade 2, the anchor standards for “Comprehension and Collaboration” require students to be able to build on others’ talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.B).
- Starting in Grade 4, students need to follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles (CCSS.ELA-

LITERACY.SL.4.1.B).

- Starting in Grade 8, students need to engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, building on other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1).
- In Grades 11 and 12, students need to respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D).

What do these assignments look like?

Extemporaneous Panels:

Students get into groups of 4. Give each group 4 index cards, labeled with different roles, “Facilitator”, “Supporter”, “Critic”, and “Alternator”. Students draw a card to decide what role they will be taking in a 25-minute mock panel. The facilitator runs the panel, while all other roles are the panelists. Regardless of their actual opinions, students have to take on the role that they are assigned.

- Give a controversial question to the class inspired by current events OR ask a student to choose a prompt from a list of questions. For topics, search for “extemporaneous practice questions”.

- Explain the panel protocol and start the activity (25 minutes total with preparation time)
- Everyone: 10 minutes of preparation time for the facilitator to come up with questions and for the panelists to outline their remarks
- Facilitator: 1 minute to pose question to the panel and why it is interesting
- Panelists: 3 minutes total, 1 minute per person to present their initial point of view
- Everyone: 7 minutes total for the facilitator to pose different questions for a free-form discussion with all of the panelists
- Panelists: 3 minutes total to summarize their final words
- Facilitator: 1 minute to summarize key takeaways

SPAR:

This activity stands for “Spontaneous Argumentation”. As an easy, mini-format for debate, SPAR is highly flexible in terms of timing, topics, amount of preparation time, and grouping size.

- Write on the board: _____ vs. _____ and write an example like “Giants vs. A’s”. Get more suggestions from students of possible topics (up to 8).
- Take a vote from the class, where they have 2 votes for topics they want to debate.
- Narrow it down to the top 3 and have the class vote again, but only 1 vote.
- Split people into pairs for 1 vs. 1 debates, small groups for 2 vs. 2 debates, or just split the class in half for group vs. group debates.
- Assign people to either pro or con.
- Give everyone 5-10 minutes of preparation with people on their side. Tell each side to elect a group leader who takes notes on the 2-3 arguments that support their side.

- Explain the debate protocol and start the activity:

2 minute Pro speech

(followed by 1 minute of questions by the Con side)

2 minute Con speech

(followed by 1 minute cross-examination by the Pro side)

1 minute Con closing

1 minute Pro closing

- If you think it promotes learning, you can determine a winner; that said, as an easy debate format, the purpose is more about being able to complete the exercise than actually winning the round.



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 15

Class Project: Debate Scrimmages

A Note to Teachers



This assignment is intended as a longer 1-week experience following 1-2 weeks of instruction on debate. While the description below has been adapted so the scrimmage takes place during regular classroom time, scrimmages are originally designed to take place in a 2 to 4 hour block of time (usually outside of school). Outside of school, scrimmages can be used to conduct practice debate rounds with other schools; in the classroom, they also work well as an assessment of students' debate skills and improvement. The decision to conduct a scrimmage should be considered carefully, since it inherently involves competition. Based on your knowledge of your students, the timing of a scrimmage should line up when students feel ready and have participated in a few practice rounds, as it is important to avoid shutting down more timid students.

As you facilitate the lead-up to the final assessment, it is best to have completed: 1) fun exposure to debate in general; 2) lessons to familiarize students with the debate format; 3) warm-ups, exercises, and drills for unpacking key skills (including how to give good feedback); 4) lessons to get familiar with unfamiliar topics and improve literacy and background knowledge; and 5) practice rounds in small groups with feedback and peer coaching on a variety of topics.

For the scrimmage, make sure you prepare: 1) scrimmage schedule; 2) 4 topics; 3) scrimmage "pairings" (or who is debating who); 4) outside judges, if any; 5) ballots or judging sheets; 6) tabulation system for recording results; 7) awards or certificates, if any. If you are running multiple rounds at once, you will also need a plan for rooms/spaces for the debates to take place. In terms of the schedule, you can either run all 4 rounds in one half day or you can spread them out over 4 days, with one round per day (schedule is highly variable based on time and space available).

Scrimmages can be either a graded or ungraded assignment. If graded, then make sure the grade is based on: 1) win or loss record; 2) points on content; 3) points on delivery; 4) quality of written feedback when judging others; 5) teacher discretionary points for noticeable effort or improvement.

Debate Scrimmage Assignment Sheet

Debate is a great way to practice advocating for different sides of a position and defending your arguments. This assignment highlights your ability to think on your feet, structure clear arguments, respond with logical reasoning and passionate delivery, and summarize the heart of an issue. It also gives you a chance to see what it is like to participate in debate competitions and gain experience with spontaneous speaking in a public event.

What is the purpose of this assignment?

- To demonstrate your understanding of debate skills and practice applying debate techniques to argue effectively about multiple controversial issues

What does a scrimmage look like?

- A scrimmage is made up of 4 rounds of debate competition using the Parliamentary Debate Format. You will have a debate partner who stays the same during all 4 rounds, so the debates will be 2 vs. 2. You will have a mixture of peer judges and/or outside judges.
- Each round will take place on a different day and everyone will have a chance to be a judge. In total, you will be debating for three rounds and judging for one round.
- During the round, you will not be debating in front of the whole class. Instead, you and your partner will face one opposing team in front of one judge. All of your other classmates will be debating or judging at the same time as you. For instance, in a class of 30, there will be 6 rounds of 4 people each going on at once, with the 6 remaining students as judges for each round.
- Rounds will be judged based on a points system that accounts for both the quality of your argument content and the quality of your delivery. You will also have a win/loss record based on the judge's decision.
- When it is your turn to judge, your grade will be based on the quality of your written feedback.
- Each round will have a different topic. Once the topic is announced, you and your partner will have 20 minutes to prepare your arguments. You may use the Internet and other resources during this time. There is no preparation time allowed in the middle of the round.
- You will not find out if you "won" until the end of all four rounds. Judges should not reveal their decision, but instead record their thoughts through written feedback.

How can I prepare?

- To prepare for the scrimmage, it is important to be familiar with the latest current issues. Make sure you are clear about the different types of topics, including fact topics, value topics, and policy topics. Practice debate warm-ups and drills to improve your ability to outline quickly, take notes efficiently, and justify your reasoning.
- Improve your skills by practicing redoing your speeches from previous practice debates. Get a partner to give you feedback on your content and delivery. Film or record yourself to see if there are any distracting habits that you should avoid.
- You will know your partner in advance of the scrimmage, so it would be good to work out a system for how you will approach the 20 minutes of preparation time and how you plan to work together. Get to know each other's strengths and areas of expertise.

When is it due?

- The scrimmage will take place during class time during the week of _____.
 - Each round will take place on a different day, so you will have one preparation day followed by four days of the scrimmage.
 - Absences count as a loss and there will be no make-up options for the scrimmage.
 - The scrimmage will be graded with an emphasis on effort and improvement, in addition to the win/loss decision and total points on content and delivery from your judge. The quality of your written feedback to your peers will also factor into your overall grade.
 - The scrimmage is worth ____% of your grade.
- Good luck!



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 16

Debate Judging Instructions

Tips for Teachers: When preparing outside judges, make sure you spend time guiding them on what to look for and what to avoid. These instructions can be adapted depending on the event, but are designed to give you an idea on what to prepare.

Overview of Judging:

First of all, thank you for judging! Your service is incredibly important to helping students learn this important skill. If you have never judged before, do not worry – your opinion and advice is incredibly useful to the students and as long as you can justify your decisions, there is no “correct” or “right” choice. We hope this guidance sheet will help you feel more confident about your decisions.

Golden Rules for Judging:

- Do not include your own knowledge, opinions, or biases in your decision. The best thing you can do as a judge is be open-minded.
- Rely only on the arguments presented in the debate. If the students didn't say it, you cannot use it in your decision.
- The winning team is the one who persuades you that their arguments are the ones that matter most in the round. You should be able to identify which argument(s) were the ones that made the difference.
- Make sure to account for what they say and how they respond in addition to presentation skills like gestures, eye contact, volume, etc. Persuasion will result from a combination of their speech content and their speech delivery.
- Remember that the students are assigned their side and their task is to find a perspective that they can support. If they are less familiar with that side or the topic, they may feel nervous, so look encouraging!

Steps for the Round:

- Step 1:** Ask the competitors who is pro and who is con, and write down the code number of each team on the ballot.
- Step 2:** Start the round and set your timer for the appropriate time (first speech is 3 minutes). When there is one minute left, hold up a “1”, and when there are 10 seconds left, hold up your hands and count down from 10.
- Step 3:** Take notes on the most compelling arguments on each side.
- Step 4:** When the round is finished, circle the appropriate points on the ballots and write down the winner. **DO NOT TELL THE STUDENTS YOUR DECISION!**
- Step 5:** Turn in your ballot to the tournament leads (you can keep your notes).

Judge Ballot

ROUND (circle one) 1 2 3

Government Team Code (Pro):

Opposition Team Code (Con):

Point Scale (take both team members into account):

Emerging (12-13 pts): getting started, good effort

Developing (14-15 pts): some shining moments, but inconsistent

Meets (16-18 pts): solid skill base throughout the debate

Exceeds (19-20 pts): memorable and impressive performance

| Criteria | Element | Pro Team Pts | Con Team Pts |
|---------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| CONTENT | Clarity (out of 20) | | |
| | Reasoning (out of 20) | | |
| | Use of Facts/Examples (out of 20) | | |
| | Quality Questions Bonus (out of 5) | | |
| DELIVERY | Voice (volume, modulation, diction, tone) (out of 20) | | |
| | Physicality (gestures, eye contact, facials) (out of 20) | | |
| TOTAL SCORE | | | |
| WINNER (check one) | | | |
| COMMENTS: | | | |

Judge Signature _____

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DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 17

Community Change Idea: Creating a Debate Team

Debate teams are a fun, interactive way to learn important life skills and also build strong friendships with people who love communicating about controversial issues. The academic and social benefits of debate teams are long-lasting and life-changing. They provide the opportunities for practice and mentorship that can help people utilize sophisticated collaboration and analytical skills that can open up doors in the future. They enable students to care deeply about social issues and become more civically interested and engaged.

At the same time, debate teams are also plagued with several problems that risk leading to inequity. For many students, parents, and educators, the perception of what it means to be a “good debater” is still limited by preconceived notions that you have to be outgoing and academically successful. This leads to the same kind of student being encouraged to join debate teams, and the lack of diversity is perpetuated when recruitment relies solely on student word-of-mouth and they recruit their friends. Depending on the number of outside competitions, the activity can be prohibitively expensive and burdensome on both time and financial resources, especially since debate teams rely heavily on parent volunteers. Debate team practices also must be designed intentionally to be inclusive and supportive of all students, as opposed to an overemphasis on winning and positioning some students as better than others. When starting up a debate team, keep diversity, equity, and inclusion front of mind to ensure that the opportunity to learn debate is available to all.

Get Interest and Buy In

- Talk to the administration to see if there is interest and support in starting a team.
- Gather people who are interested in starting the debate team, including at least one teacher, several families, and an initial group of student leaders.
- Create a planning committee to support the early stage.

Logistics

- Secure a room/space for practice sessions.
- Select dates/times for practices.
- Identify a faculty sponsor -- most tournaments require a credentialed teacher in attendance, so it is good to find this person from the beginning.
- Get necessary approvals to start the team, if any paperwork is required by the school.
- Get a lot of bulk snacks (or set up a system for potluck-style snacks).
- Secure materials, including paper, water, writing utensils.
- Determine goals for any initial outside tournaments to attend (i.e. how many to attend in the first year with how many students). The infrastructure required to attend tournaments can often seem daunting for a first-time team, but do not let it discourage you! Start small and slow and build up the team over time so not to burn anyone out, including yourself.
- Set the tournament calendar with the planning committee.

Recruitment

- Start as early as possible. Since the debate tournament season is usually October through March, you will be too late if you wait until October to recruit. Ideally, recruitment should happen at the very start of the school year, so planning should take place before the school year begins.
- Identify students and ask them personally. Be persistent and make a big deal about why they would be perfect for the team. Starting a team does not require a huge number of people: 8-10 students is actually quite ideal for a first-time team.
- Approach students from a wide range of ages (younger is better when the team is first starting out).
- Remember that many different kinds of people can be good debaters. You don't need to only approach the students with the best grades. Instead, think about who has strong opinions, an underrepresented voice, or someone who always captures people's attention (even if it is sometimes in a negative way). Think about students who are curious and interested in a range of issues.
- If possible, plan a tester session or short example workshop with easy, fun warm-ups and a silly SPAR debate to get students interested -- lunch is good for this session.
- Create flyers and coordinate with English/Language Arts and History teachers to help distribute them to interested students.
- Recruit possible coaches and assistant coaches, unless planning to be largely run by students and/or teachers.

Culture

- ❑ Encourage student leadership by creating student officer roles.
- ❑ Make a concerted effort to create an inclusive team environment. Break down cliques by creating buddy systems or planning social events to support team-building. Plan activities that encourage students to help one another.
- ❑ Together, create team rituals and traditions that everyone can appreciate. Establish a team identity through cheers, a nickname, motto, colors, and/or clothing gear/swag. Decorate the room, if that's possible.
- ❑ Early on, teach everyone how to give supportive and constructive feedback and establish community norms.
- ❑ Encourage different students to lead warm-up activities to enhance student ownership.

Programming

- ❑ Start off with fun activities to expose students to the basics of debate (i.e. "Take a Stand or SPAR debate).
- ❑ Teach the specific debate format(s) that the team will use.
- ❑ Incorporate deep-dive lessons with warm-ups, exercises, and drills to unpack key skills like argument structure, refutation, note-taking, limited preparation, teamwork, oral delivery, and synthesis.
- ❑ Include discussions to analyze different topics to familiarize students with unfamiliar topics and improve literacy and background knowledge;
- ❑ Make sure to spend enough time on practice rounds on a variety of topics, either in small groups or for the whole class, including feedback and peer coaching.
- ❑ To save time, create a large bank of debate topics that you can pull from.
- ❑ Gradually build up to attending outside tournaments when students are ready -- consider making the first tournament a field trip to observe only, if there is a risk that students might find tournaments intimidating.

Costs and Fundraising

- ❑ Debate team costs typically include: tournament registration, coach salaries, transportation and travel costs, membership fees to debate organizations, materials, and any clothing/gear.
- ❑ Create a fundraising committee to plan fundraising activities throughout the year. This might include more traditional school fundraising activities and digital fundraising methods as well as bigger undertakings like hosting a showcase or a tournament.

Tournaments

- ❑ For a first-time team, you will need to join a league, circuit, and/or a debate organizing body to access any tournaments. There is typically a national, state, and local level of membership, so make sure you find the appropriate memberships. Check out resources from the National Speech and Debate Association or search "debate league near me".
- ❑ Create accounts on the appropriate tournament sign-up sites (i.e. tabroom.com, joyoftournaments.com).
- ❑ Pay any annual fees to join a league. For a school in the SF Bay Area in California, for instance, this means fees to the National Speech and Debate Association, California High School Speech Association, and Golden Gate Speech Association.
- ❑ Register all student members and coaches on the appropriate site.
- ❑ Sign up for tournaments early. Many deadlines require schools to register several months in advance, unless they are small and local.
- ❑ Enter competitors and judges from the school list and pay any tournament fees.
- ❑ Secure volunteers to judge and drive to tournaments.
- ❑ Set expectations to prepare students and parents for the tournament experience, including the fact that most tournaments take all day and do not usually run on time.
- ❑ Prepare students with practice rounds or scrimmages so they feel ready.

Volunteer Needs

- ❑ Running a debate team relies on volunteers -- you cannot and should not do this alone! This can include volunteers who can:
 - ❑ Judge at tournaments (most important!)
 - ❑ Drive to tournaments
 - ❑ Plan and organize fundraisers
 - ❑ Facilitate finance needs, like maintaining the checkbook, making payments, and creating team budgets
 - ❑ Help coach or give feedback at practices
 - ❑ Organize admin needs, like sign-ups for tournaments
 - ❑ Help out at any tournaments hosted by the school
 - ❑ Help out with any graphic design needs, like with flyers, programs, or gear



DEBATE GUIDE: RESOURCE 18

Project Sketcher

This tool is to help you map out a plan for your public speaking project, beginning with the big picture idea, the anticipated struggles and needs, the milestones and activities, and finally the specific timeline and actions.

I. Overall Description

Summary of Change Idea: What do you want to change through your voice project or activity?

What work is public?

What are your speaking/listening goals
(or required standards)?

II. Skills and Struggles

What communication skills, techniques, or capabilities are the focus of this work?
(while they are all relevant to strong public speaking, choose a few areas for more targeted focus)

| Content-Related | Delivery-Related | Process-Related |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> Selecting content relevant to audience <input type="checkbox"/> Outlining <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing and sequencing content <input type="checkbox"/> Explaining complex ideas clearly <input type="checkbox"/> Speech writing <input type="checkbox"/> Use of compelling language and memorable phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to be succinct and to-the-point when needed <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive speech construction <input type="checkbox"/> Story construction <input type="checkbox"/> Slide design <input type="checkbox"/> Spontaneous speaking <input type="checkbox"/> Argumentation skills <input type="checkbox"/> Identifying and using credible sources <input type="checkbox"/> Research skills <input type="checkbox"/> Strong beginnings that capture audience attention <input type="checkbox"/> Strong transitions between ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Strong endings that definitively conclude and leave audience wanting more <input type="checkbox"/> Summarizing or recapping ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Breath support and control <input type="checkbox"/> Strong posture and stance <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to balance being relaxed with being energized <input type="checkbox"/> Using gestures to highlight content <input type="checkbox"/> Volume: Appropriate use and variation <input type="checkbox"/> Using voice to strengthen content (including sounding confident and using the right tone) <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate use of eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Speed: Appropriate use and variation <input type="checkbox"/> Using facial expressions to highlight emotions <input type="checkbox"/> Movement and use of stage <input type="checkbox"/> Correct use of a microphone and/or other sound equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to avoid distracting movements and fiddling <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to avoid distracting filler phrases or words | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety-coping <input type="checkbox"/> Listening <input type="checkbox"/> Asking clarifying questions <input type="checkbox"/> Asking probing questions <input type="checkbox"/> Note-taking <input type="checkbox"/> Time management <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration with others <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation of discussions and/or teamwork <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to be authentic (true to self, style, and beliefs) <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to be connected with the emotions behind the content <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to get “in the zone” and be fully focused on the material <input type="checkbox"/> Adapting to different audiences <input type="checkbox"/> Relating to others <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching others <input type="checkbox"/> Providing constructive feedback |



Out of the skills, techniques, and capabilities, what high-priority needs do you anticipate taking longer to address?

III. High-Level Plan

Public Speaking Milestones

Activities to Include

Materials Needed

People Involved and Help Needed

IV. Calendar

The calendar on the following page is intended to be used as a hard copy to be used with small post-its to color code and/or move around different milestones and activities. After mapping out the plan for each month, use any system you usually use for planning out specific daily activities and their timing.

Color Key: (suggested categories: 1) learning new content; 2) preparation day; 3) practice day; 4) performance day; 5) reflection day.

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|-----------|
| | | | | | MONDAY |
| | | | | | TUESDAY |
| | | | | | WEDNESDAY |
| | | | | | THURSDAY |
| | | | | | FRIDAY |



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