inventors, innovators & influencers

debating resource pack for teachers

thanks

This project was generously funded by Glasgow City Council. We would particularly like to thank Gary Condie and Geraldine George for their time and hard work in making this project a success.

A huge thank you to all the teachers and pupils who took part in this project with such enthusiasm!

welcome!

This resource pack is based on a project run by the English-Speaking Union Scotland and Glasgow City Council's Education Department. The programme, open to P6-S2 pupils, comprised CPD for teachers, workshops for pupils, and a final competition.

These materials provide a lasting legacy. The activities are designed to be used with classes so that you can integrate debating into your everyday teaching. All pupils have a role to play and build skills that will help them at school and in their future learning and work.

The materials have been divided into a number of different sections and the activities can be used flexibly, so you can follow the plans from beginning to end, or choose those that are most appropriate for your group. Each part contains group exercises, information about debating techniques, and games to practise these skills.

You will also find that once you get started, these activities can be adapted for a wide range of topics so you can hold classroom debates on almost anything - the possibilities are endless!

happy debating!

contents

debating and curriculum for excellence

The format of preparation, debate, and follow-up provides a flexible approach and context for the learner experiences and outcomes detailed in Curriculum for Excellence.

confident individuals
- Pupils develop skills in a protected environment
- Tasks are allocated so pupils build on their strengths
- Experience of expressing opinions in public

successful learners
- Develops research skills
- Encourages self-instruction
- Develops structure and logical thinking
- Develops literacy skills

effective contributors
- Encourages team work as everyone can contribute
- Develops transferable skills
- Ensures pupils are better equipped by being more knowledgeable

responsible citizens
- Engaging with topical issues and current affairs
- Ability to see both sides of the argument
- Pupils understand debate process and practice

getting started with debating

what is debating?

Debating can take many forms, and this guide will show you different ways that debating can be used with your pupils. Not all debate formats have two sides, but all debating activities are governed by rules which limit the amount of time people have to present their argument, and how and when others can respond.

The best way to start is to ask your class for ideas about what debating is. They will probably come up with "an argument", "a discussion", "an opportunity to put forward views", "persuasion". Ask them to think where debates happen: in politics, at work, at home even.

Ask pupils to name some famous people who are good at debating. Pupils will probably think of people like Barack Obama or Alex Salmond, but they might not know that Brad Pitt, Bruce Springsteen and Dara O'Briain were all debaters at school. Try to elicit why these people are good speakers, thinking about persuasion, credibility, confidence, style, humour and, of course, the content of their speech.

Lastly, ask pupils to think about the differences between debating and public speaking. In debating there has to be some clash, as speakers respond to arguments put forward by the other side. It's no good turning up with a prepared speech and then ignoring what the other side says.

Finally, debating is not just about the debate itself. There is plenty of work to be done during the preparation and follow up sessions, and even during the formal debate there are many ways that the whole class can get involved, building on individual strengths and developing skills step by step.

planning your debates

Here is a suggested plan for the different stages in organising a debate. Better planning will lead to a better debate and you may need several sessions for a full debate.

However, you don't have to follow this exactly - if you are short of time there are plenty of games and activities in this guide that can be done quickly and with little or no preparation.

stage 1: planning

In class: Introduce the topic and general discussion around the background information. What do they already know? What are the key points? What will they need to find out?

Explain the format, roles and steps and allocate roles to the pupils, asking for volunteers if appropriate. Emphasise that ALL pupils have a part to play. Work through brainstorming, grouping and allocating arguments so that pupils have a focus for their research. You may choose to talk about structure here or leave it to the next lesson.

At home: Pupils research their arguments or topics.

stage 2: debate

By this stage the pupils should have a good idea of their main arguments and have done the research to find evidence to support their case.

In class: If you haven't done so already, go through speech structure with your pupils. This will help them to refine their arguments and structure their speeches. Pupils can work together to plan their speeches. Encourage them to make notes or bullet points rather than writing speeches out in full. This will help to avoid reading their speeches. Now you are ready to hold the debate!

stage 3: follow-up

A lot of the research, learning, and understanding will have taken place during the preparation and debate stages, but the follow-up stage is important to review and consolidate what has been discovered.

After the debate, start by discussing the main points with your pupils. Did the most important arguments come out during the debate? Were there any surprises? Have any of the pupils changed their opinion about the topic? What have they learnt during the process?

There are various ways that the information gathered can be recorded. Here are some ideas:
• Posters for the classroom on the topic(s) with the main arguments and facts.
• Newspaper style reports or article for the school newspaper/magazine/website
• A report in assembly or a podcast for the website
• Discursive essays based on the debate

introduction

These activities are designed to help pupils start to consider the objects and inventions that affect our everyday lives, and how they came about. There is a warm-up game, a main activity, an extension activity, and another speaking game. We suggest pupils work in small groups.

game: if i ruled the world...

A quick game to get pupils thinking and talking. The skills taught are helpful for good debating. Work in groups. The first person in the group announces their name and makes a statement about what they would do if they ruled the world. For example:

Person A - "My name's Bob and if I ruled the world, I would give everyone cake."

Person B – "His name's Bob and if he ruled the world he would give everyone cake. My name is Amy and if I ruled the world I would eliminate poverty."

Person C – "His name's Bob and if he ruled the world he would give everyone cake. Her name is Amy and if she ruled the world she would eliminate poverty. My name's Omar and if I ruled the world I would make everyone wear blue hats".

This continues round the circle. You can re-start the game again half-way round the circle.

pair and group discussion: everyday objects

Work in groups of 4 (2 pairs).

Each person in the pair takes it in turn to describe to their partner an object that has some significance for them, something they use daily as part of everyday life. Think about why the object is useful or enjoyable to use, how it is used, and how life might look without it. Speak uninterrupted for 1-2 minutes, and then answer a couple of questions from your partner.

Now report back to the group what your partner has talked about. As a group, make a list of what aspects of the object were mentioned (or could have been), in order to explain what makes it special or significant. Then start to think about how, when and why each object was invented. Feed back to whole class group.

extension activity

Bring in a variety of objects and ask the pupils to look at what it is made of and how it was invented. Objects could include: spectacles, a glass, a map, a jar of coffee... Ask pupils if they know who was important in the process of inventing, developing or designing these objects.

Learning objectives:

• To help improve general communication skills
• To help improve confidence
• To generate and share ideas
• To identify themes
• To encourage pupils to start thinking about their research
• To encourage listening and summarising skills
• To improve memory skills

Learning objectives:

• To help pupils look behind an object to its materials and production.
• To help pupils consider the historical context of objects and discoveries.

game: just a minute

Decide a topic that pupils can speak on without needing to prepare e.g. Should we abolish school uniform? This topic can either be set by the teacher or through discussion with the class. When a topic has been chosen, ask for volunteers to speak. Explain that the minute begins as soon as the first speaker starts. If the first speaker hesitates, repeats words or talks about something unrelated to the topic they can be challenged by one of the other pupils. To challenge, they should raise their hand and the speaker must stop, as will the stopwatch.

The pupil who has raised their hand will be asked to explain their objection. If the challenge is agreed they then will take over from the speaker (or can nominate another speaker) and the stopwatch will start again. The student speaking when one minute is reached is the winner!

introduction

These activities lead on from the initial group discussions and help pupils develop debating skills and knowledge to help prepare for the *Inventors, Innovators & Influencers* Debate. The Alley Debate generates ideas and gets pupils debating straight away. Pupils work in groups to prepare a speech to present to another group, which helps planning skills and builds confidence. We have provided two speech plan worksheets that you can use to help pupils structure their speeches. The second is more guided for younger pupils or more novice speakers.

game: alley debate: paper vs glass

Alley debates are a fun way to introduce debating to a class and to generate ideas. They emphasise persuasion, quick thinking, and rebuttal skills.

Divide the class into two groups and form two lines a few metres apart facing each other. Set a topic for the alley debate- this can be fun or serious. It should be a 'yes/no' topic e.g. 'Should I buy Fair Trade goods?' or a choice between two things, such as whether Christmas or birthday is better. Here we look at the benefits of Paper vs Glass (or two other objects/materials that you think your pupils would engage with).

Assign one side of the topic to one line and the other side of the topic to the other line. The teacher (or one of the pupils) stands halfway between the lines. The first speaker in favour of paper gives a reason why paper is the most useful. If the point is convincing the person in the middle takes a step towards that side - the more convincing the argument, the bigger the step. If the person is not convinced, they stay in the middle. Then ask the first speaker in the other line why glass is better, and repeat the process, working down the lines until they reach the final speaker.

group activity: brainstorming & developing arguments

In your groups, decide which of the everyday objects that you talked about yor team would like to represent.

Use a large piece of paper to write down as many of the arguments as you can remember. Are there any more that can be added? At this stage the important thing is to think of as many arguments as possible. You can choose the best later. If you know what object the other team have chosen, try to think of arguments that they might come up with so you can be more prepared for rebuttal.

Are any of your arguments saying the same thing? Can you link any of your arguments together by theme? Draw lines between the arguments and try to organise them into themes.

Look at the information about making R.E.A.L. arguments. Choose your three strongest points and make them into R.E.A.L. arguments. Be as persuasive as possible. Note that some of your points might be a Reason but some might be an Example or Evidence, in which case you need to go back and state the Reason.

Learning objectives:

• To help improve general communication skills
• To encourage quick thinking skills
• To develop confidence speaking in front of others
• To encourage listening skills
• To generate ideas and assess prior knowledge
• To encourage rebuttal skills
• To identify stronger and weaker arguments

Alley debates can be used for almost any topic, including quite complex motions or issues.

Brainstorming helps to involve pupils who may find debating difficult, as they can make a direct contribution without having to make an extended speech in public, which helps to build confidence.

Learning objectives:

• To help pupils to think about structure and planning
• To encourage analysis of points
• To prepare content and arguments for the speeches
• To help pupils distinguish between fact and opinion
• To help pupils provide relevant supporting evidence

r.e.a.l. arguments & speech structure

It is not enough to simply make assertions or quote facts and hope the audience understands why your points are important. Your arguments should be clear, fully developed, and relevant. A useful way of structuring arguments is R.E.A.L.: Reason, Example/Evidence, Analysis, Link. It helps the audience to follow your point and it makes your arguments more effective and persuasive.

Reason: **This is what we believe (our point).**

Evidence/example: **This is how we know it is true - provide an example or evidence to support your point.**

Analysis: **This is why our point is important. Think about consequences, results….**

Link: **Link back to your team's topic - this is why the point supports our side.**

When you are making your points into R.E.A.L. arguments, try to link points together so that each of your arguments is based on a theme or heading.

speech structure:

Clear structure makes a speech easier to listen to and understand.
- **Introduction** - Establish a connection with the audience and include a preview of your points (and, if appropriate, a preview or recap of your partner's/team's speech). This helps the audience know what to expect, almost like a roadmap.
- **Body of Speech** - Each speech should highlight two or three main arguments. Use clear signposts in your speech to help the audience keep track of where the speech is going.
- **Conclusion** - Briefly recap what you have said and why your side wins the debate, and leave the audience with something to think about or a call to action.

Remember the Rule of Three: 'Say what you are going to say, say it, and say what you have said'! A well-structured speech is different from a scripted speech, so use notes as a guide rather than a script. With practice this gets easier and helps you become more convincing and confident.

group activity: preparing and delivering your speech

You are now going to prepare one speech per group to present to another team.

You will need to work together as a team to research your points and you can use the speech plans to help you organise all your points.

Each of you will say part of the speech and you can work together to write it. Start with your R.E.A.L. arguments from the previous exercise - these will form the main body of the speech, so decide which order to put them in.

Once you have the main body of your speech in place, look at the introduction and conclusion. As well as a preview and a recap of your points, you'll need a memorable beginning and end to your speeches. This is your real chance to catch the audience's attention right at the start, and leave them with something to think about afterwards.

Don't write your points out in full - if you have notes it will be much easier to deliver your points convincingly. You should NEVER read your speech.

Decide who is going to present which sections of your speech. Make sure that each person has something different to say and that you are not repeating points (apart from the brief preview and recap).

Present your speech to another group. Be prepared to answer a question from each person in the other group after your speech. Alternatively, the opposite team could make points of information during the speeches (see below).

Each group provides some feedback to the other group. Make it positive, helpful and constructive, e.g. 2 stars and a wish.

Learning objectives:

• To help improve general communication skills
• To help improve confidence in delivering speeches
• To encourage quick thinking skills
• To encourage listening skills
• To encourage & improve rebuttal skills
• To develop skill of structuring speeches
• To encourage teamwork

debate technique: points of information (p.o.i.s)

Points of information are short interruptions during a speech, where the opposing side can make a comment to the speaker. This can be a fact, a question, a statement or a challenge. Making a good POI shows that you are listening and responding to what the other side says.

Usually at the beginning and end of a speech there is a period of 'protected time' where no POIs can be given, signalled by the timekeeper. This is normally 30 seconds at the start and end of a 3-minute speech, or a minute in longer speeches.

To make a POI, stand up and say "Point of information". Remember that the speaker does not have to take the point, and can respond "yes please" or "no thank you". It is good to take at least one POI during a speech, and you should try to offer at least one during each of your opponents' speeches.

• Write the question down so you are less likely to fluff it, or you can pass it to your partner.
• Your POI should be current - don't go back to something they said earlier in their speech.
• If you are the speaker, try to answer the POI when it is made: don't say "well, I have that later in my speech...."
• Most importantly, POIs should be SHORT, SHARP, AND TO THE POINT! (Ideally less than 15 seconds.)

game: the point of information game

This game encourages pupils to question points of view and also offers an outlet to pupils who may find debating or public speaking difficult as they can be involved in the game by offering short points of information. This is a good way to start pupils speaking in public and to help them build confidence.

A speaker (the first time the speaker will be the teacher) will speak on a controversial topic for one or two minutes, for example 'I believe that children should be seen and not heard'. The speaker has to defend the controversial topic by giving reasons and examples and the rest of the class have to offer points of information. They do this by standing up and saying 'Point of Information'. The speaker either accepts the Point of Information by pointing at the person and saying 'Yes' or declines the point by saying 'No thank you'.

If the speaker says 'Yes' the questioner must offer a point of information. When the point has been given, the speaker must answer that point whilst continuing their speech. Pupils can take it in turns to be the speaker.

debate technique: rebuttal

Rebuttal is one of the main things which makes debating different from public speaking, as this is where the clash of ideas is introduced. There is *offensive rebuttal* where you attack what the other team has said, as well as *defensive rebuttal* where you say why your arguments are stronger than the rebuttal offered by the other team. The most important thing is to LISTEN and REACT to what the other side says and explain point by point why you believe they are wrong. It is always better to rebut your opponent's major arguments rather than pick holes in minor points. Just as you need to tell the audience why your points are important, you should also say why your rebuttal is important e.g. because it is disproving the most important argument of the other team or it is showing that one of their biggest arguments is based on an incorrect idea. Whilst researching, think about what the other side's case might be and use this to prepare the rebuttal of obvious points. However, you need to be flexible and must always rebut the points which the opposing speakers did make, rather than the points that you expected or wanted them to make!

• If you rebut the strongest arguments you are more likely to win the debate.
• Try to think beforehand what the other side will say so you are better prepared.
• Note down what the speaker says so that you can rebut properly point by point.
• Do it at the beginning of your speech before you go on to your main arguments.
• Don't be afraid of it!

game: i couldn't disagree more...

A useful and quick game that can help practise rebuttal techniques the ability to deal with p.o.i.s.
One pupil makes a statement (this statement could be serious, silly, topical, controversial or obvious, or on a certain topic). The next person has to reply to the statement by saying 'I couldn't disagree more' and then give a reason why. Here's an example:
Pupil A – ''I believe that politics is a waste of time''
Pupil B – ''I couldn't disagree more. Politics is incredibly important as politicians make decisions that affect every aspect of our lives'

Now it is Pupil B's turn to make a statement:
Pupil B – 'I believe that we should introduce road pricing in the UK'
Pupil C – 'I couldn't disagree more. In early 2007, over 1.8m people in the UK signed a petition saying that they didn't want it.

speech plan

introduction (introduction, preview, audience hook)

reason

example/evidence

analysis

link

reason
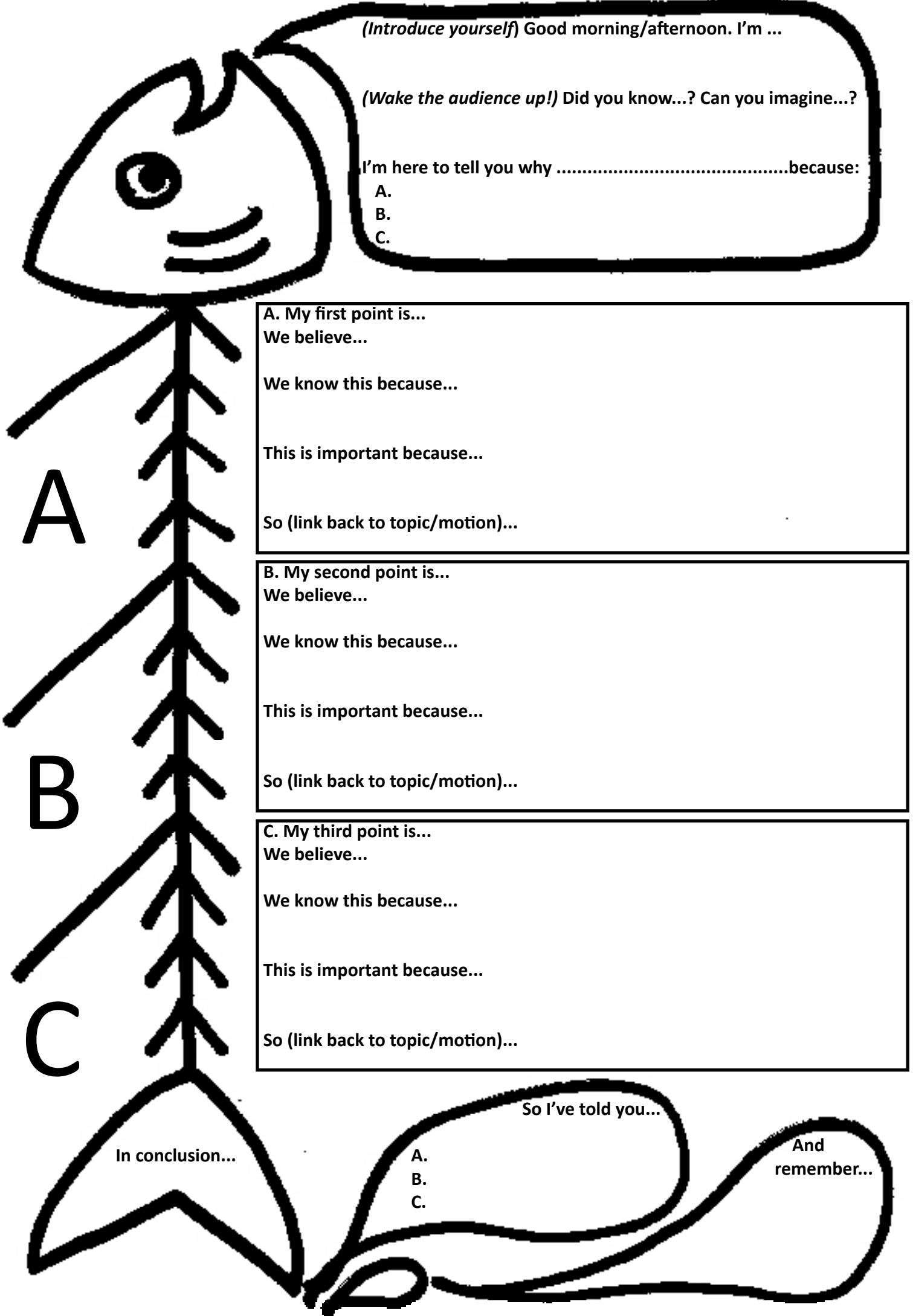
example/evidence

analysis

link

reason

example/evidence

analysis

link

conclusion (tell the audience you're concluding, recap, final call to action)

(Introduce yourself) Good morning/afternoon. I'm ...

(Wake the audience up!) Did you know...? Can you imagine...?

I'm here to tell you why ....**because:**
- A.
- B.
- C.

A

A. My first point is...
We believe...

We know this because...

This is important because...

So (link back to topic/motion)...

B

B. My second point is...
We believe...

We know this because...

This is important because...

So (link back to topic/motion)...

C

C. My third point is...
We believe...

We know this because...

This is important because...

So (link back to topic/motion)...

In conclusion...

So I've told you...
- A.
- B.
- C.

And remember...

topic 2: inventors, innovators & influencers

introduction

This section takes you through holding a debate to decide which Inventor, Innovator or Influencer has made the most significant contribution to the world. The person each team represents will be agreed in advance so pupils have plenty of time to prepare. For the competition, pupils needed to choose someone from the field of STEM, but outside of the competition it's up to you! If you prefer, your pupils can choose anyone, from any field, past or present who they believe has had a positive impact on our lives.

debate format

In this debate each team will put forward a case to support the most significant INVENTOR, INNOVATOR or INFLUENCER.

During the debate, each team will make their opening speech in turn. This can be given by one pupil or shared between two, in which case the two speakers should divide the speech between them in a sensible way, but it is up to them how it is divided.

After each opening speech, a questioner (or two questioners) from another team will ask the speaker(s) one or two questions. Alternatively, you can allow other teams to offer points of information during the speeches.

After every team has given their opening speeches, the summary speaker from each team will give a short speech to recap their team's main points and provide some rebuttal of other teams' speeches.

It is up to you how long each speech should last. For our competition, the opening speeches were three minutes long and the summary speeches were two minutes, but you will know how long your pupils will be able to speak for, and it will also depend on how much time you have for the debate.

After all the opening and summary speeches you can then hold a floor debate which can last as long as you wish.

roles in the debate

There are a number of different roles for pupils during the debate. Role cards are provided over the page.

Some roles are essential and some are optional, so which you include in your debate will depend on how you want to organise it. Examples of teams are shown in the box. Teams should prepare together to research their chosen person and plan their speeches.

- **OPENING SPEAKER - essential**
The job of the opening speaker is to present a speech about their chosen person on behalf of the team. They will need to explain a little about their person and put forward the main arguments in favour of their achievements. They will need to explain in their arguments why each point they make is important (REAL arguments) and why their contribution to the world is the most valuable.

Suggestions:

- Greta Thunberg
- Alexander Fleming
- Marie Curie
- James Watt
- Rosalind Franklin
- Katherine Johnson
- Nikola Tesla
- Charles Darwin

There are lots more ideas here: https://invention.si.edu/explore

Examples of team organisation

Team of 3 pupils:
- Opening speaker, summary speaker, questioner
- Opening speaker, summary speaker, judge

Team of 4 pupils:
- Opening speaker, summary speaker, questioner, judge
- Opening speaker x 2, summary speaker, judge

Team of 5 pupils:
- Opening speaker x 2, summary speaker, questioner, judge
- Opening speaker, summary speaker, questioner, judge, coach

- **SUMMARY SPEAKER - essential**

The summary speeches come after all the opening speeches in the debate. The summary speaker has two main tasks: briefly recap the main points from their team, and then provide rebuttal, where they highlight some flaws in the other teams' speeches or make comparisons between their person and those of their opponents. Summary speakers will need to write their speeches during the debate, and can be helped with this by the questioner, if there is one.

- **QUESTIONER - optional**

The questioner asks a question to the opening speakers on one of the other teams. It is easier if the questioner knows beforehand which team they need to question. An alternative to the questioner role is to allow other teams to offer points of information during the speeches.

- **JUDGE - optional**

You can judge the debate yourself or you can ask a panel of pupils to be the judges. During the preparation stage the judges can either prepare with their teams, or use this time to work together in a group to decide on a set of criteria they will use to judge the debate. This helps pupils to consider what skills are needed to be a persuasive speaker.

- **COACH - optional**

The role of the coach is to help the team research and prepare and to help the summary speaker write their speech during the debate. It can be a non-speaking role, or you can encourage the coach to make a point during the floor debate.

If you have a large number of teams taking part, you can divide the debate into shorter sessions so you have a few opening speeches followed by a few summary speeches. This makes it easier to manage, especially for the summary speakers who will need to write at least half their speeches during the debate.

In addition to these roles you can also ask one or two pupils to chair the debate, introduce the speakers and manage the floor debate, and a time-keeper to time the speeches.

preparation

Ask pupils to think of people who have made an important contribution to the world. What do they already know about these people? Decide which team will represent each person. Give pupils the debate information and role cards. Pupils work in teams to brainstorm, research, build REAL arguments and prepare the Opening Speech. During the speech writing time, pupil coaches can help the speakers plan, write, and practise their speeches. This provides an opportunity for pupils who aren't so confident speaking to use their knowledge.

You might want to do this preparation stage over more than one lesson so that some of the research can be done for homework.

debate

During the debate pupils can complete the audience task. After the speeches you can hold a floor debate. This is where all the members of the audience can ask a question, make a comment or give a short speech. You can task each member of the audience to make a contribution during the floor debate.

Participating in a floor debate can be a great way of building confidence and moving from asking a brief question, to making a short speech, to eventually becoming a main speaker.

follow-up

The follow-up session can really help consolidate the knowledge gained during the preparation and debate. This is a great opportunity to consider who were the most persuasive speakers. Why? Which arguments came up in the debate? Have the pupils changed their ideas about any of the topics? If you have pupil judges, ask them to provide feedback, or use the audience task as a group or class activity.

Other follow up activities could include making posters or displays for each of the innovations.

inventors, innovators & influencers debate

You are going to have a debate about who is the most significant Inventor, Innovator or Influencer. Each team will represent a different person and try to persuade the audience why your chosen person has had the most important impact on the world. You can choose anyone, past or present.

Think about what makes your inventor, innovator or influencer so important:

- **The achievements of this person – what did they do?**
- **What impact has their work or actions had on the world?**
- **What would the world be like without their contribution?**
- **Did they overcome any significant barriers or hurdles to achieve what they did?**
- **What makes this person the most significant?**
- **How did their work influence others?**

Sometimes it's helpful when you are comparing concepts/people/things in a debate to use criteria. For example, a debate about whether apples are a better fruit than oranges is a very messy debate. But if one team says 'we think the best fruit is the one that works best in a fruit salad', or 'we think the best fruit is the one that is the most healthy', the debate will be a lot clearer.

During the debate, each team will make an Opening Speech to explain your person and why they are so special. After every team has given their Opening Speeches, the Summary Speaker from each team will give a short speech, reminding the audience of the main points in the Opening Speech and then providing some rebuttal highlighting some flaws in the other teams' speeches and making comparisons between your person and those of your opponents. The Summary Speeches will need to be written during the debate.

Your teacher will tell you how long the speeches will last. You will need to work as a team to prepare your speeches.

There are different roles in this debate. Look at the role cards and decide who will take which roles in your group.

debate role cards

opening speaker

The job of the opening speaker(s) is to present a speech about your chosen person on behalf of your team. You will need to explain a little about your person and why they are the most significant or important.

You will need to explain why each point you make is important by making your arguments REAL. You can use the speech structure guide to help you plan your speech.

summary speaker

You speak after all the opening speeches. You have two main tasks: briefly remind the audience of the main points from your team, and then provide some rebuttal, where you identify some important arguments put forward by the other teams and say why they are wrong.

You will need to write your speech during the debate, and can be helped with this by your team.

questioner

You will need to ask a question to the opening speaker on one of the other teams. You will know beforehand which team you need to question.

Try to make sure that your question is directly related to one of their most important points if you can.

coach

Your role is to help the team prepare. You will be sitting next to the summary speaker during the debate so you can also help the summary speaker write their speech during the debate.

You can also make points during the floor debate after the main debate.

judge

Your role is to judge the debate. Think about how the teams have worked together to present their topic.

You might be asked to provide feedback to the speakers. If so, make it positive and useful to help the speakers improve. For example, say two things you liked about each speech and one thing to work on.

chair

Your role is to manage the debate. You will need to introduce the speakers and make sure they speak for the right amount of time. You may have a timekeeper to help you time the speeches.

If there is a floor debate you need to ask members of the audience to contribute and you can invite the speakers to respond.

finding things out

Once you have decided which inventor, innovator or influencer you want to represent, you'll be able to brainstorm lots of ideas about why they are important. As you brainstorm, start making a list of things that you need to find out more about, or questions you will need to find answers to.

using the internet

You can find lots of useful and up to date information for your research on the internet. When you put the key words into the search engine you'll find a lot of stuff. Anyone can publish online, so how do you know what's reliable and accurate? You'll get better at deciding what is fact and what is fiction. Don't take the word of one website - cross check with others.

Here are a few things to look out for which will help:
• Does the website you are looking at have an 'about us' section where you can find out about the aims of the website and who wrote its content?
• In general a site with the suffix .gov.uk (government); or .ac.uk (university) is likely to be more reliable, but you still can't assume everything is 100% accurate.
• Who is the author - are they an expert, or someone with an opinion?
• Is there information about when the website was last updated, or the article written? Are there details of sources for the information the author has used?
• Is the material well written or are there grammar and spelling mistakes? If there are you should be wary that the author may not have taken any more care with their 'facts'.

When you are writing your speech or notes put what you are reading into your own words- don't cut and paste. This will help you work out if it makes sense, and you'll probably write it as you like to speak. It also means you won't run the risk of being accused of plagiarism (taking someone else's work and passing it off as your own).

There are some great resources on this site: https://invention.si.edu/explore

being persuasive

Debates are awarded to the team that is the most persuasive. After a debate, most judges will have a fairly good idea of which team they believe this to be, but to come to the decision properly it is useful to consider which elements make a speech more persuasive, and which elements lessen a speech's persuasiveness.

Things that make a speech more persuasive

- Speaking clearly and understandably
- Making relevant, powerful arguments
- Providing evidence and reasoning to back up arguments
- Responding to the other team's arguments
- Adding to arguments with appropriate stylistic flourishes, e.g. quotes, anecdotes
- Accepting at least one point of information (if P.O.I.s are allowed in format)
- Offering points of information (if P.O.I.s are allowed in format)
- Making good use of time, giving each point enough time to be explained properly
- Structuring arguments in a way that is logical and easy to follow

Things that make a speech less persuasive

- Speaking in a way that is hard to follow, e.g. speaking too quickly, mumbling
- Speaking in an over-prepared style, e.g. reading out a speech without making eye-contact
- Asserting arguments, not providing evidence or reasoning to back them up
- Not responding to the other team's arguments
- Accepting no points of information (if P.O.I.s are allowed in format)
- Offering no points of information (if P.O.I.s are allowed in format)
- Making poor use of time, e.g. rushing a point at the end of your speech
- Messy, hard-to-follow structure- unclear when one point ends and another begins

summary speech plan

introduction (introduction, preview, audience hook)

recap main points of team:
1.

2.

3.

rebuttal of arguments from other teams:
1.

2.

3.

conclusion (tell the audience you're concluding, recap, final call to action)

audience task

Something I really enjoyed about the debate:

Something that one of the speakers did really well that I would like to learn from:

Something that I noticed one of the speakers could work on to get better:

A question I would have liked to ask during the debate:

audience task

Something I really enjoyed about the debate:

Something that one of the speakers did really well that I would like to learn from:

Something that I noticed one of the speakers could work on to get better:

A question I would have liked to ask during the debate:

judging & helping first-time speakers

introduction

There are many ways you can judge a classroom debate and this will depend on your aims for the debate. You can be the judge (or another teacher) or you can have a panel of pupil judges. However, it is likely that although the pupils will be very keen to know which team won, you will be using debating as an opportunity to assess pupils' progress in developing skills. There are some very useful resources to help you do this on the the Cambridge University Oracy site: https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/oracytoolkit/tasks/afl/ and the ESU website: https://www.esu.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/19641/4-ORACY-SKILL-SETS-A-GUIDE.pdf

judging criteria

Judging a debate is all about determining the persuasiveness of the speeches. Persuasiveness is subjective, but you can use the criteria below to help examine and compare speeches and provide feedback on how speakers can improve. The criteria should be applied holistically: all should be considered when judging a speech and no one aspect is significantly more important than another.

> When a decision is not clear because the teams are strong in different areas, the judge should step back and ask: who was I most persuaded by?

using pupil judges

Judging can be a great way of encouraging less confident pupils to take part in a debate. Judging also helps pupils to analyse what makes a good debate and focus on the skills required. Pupil judges can work together during the planning stage to develop a list of criteria that they can use during the debate to judge. Alternatively, you can adapt the audience task (earlier in this handbook).

> Ask judges and pupils in the audience to say two things they liked about each speech and one thing to work on. Encourage peer support and learning from each other.

constructive feedback

Judges (either pupils or adults) should always provide positive and constructive feedback to speakers. Highlight the strong aspects of a speaker's performance and, rather than criticise elements, suggest areas where the speaker can improve. Positive and constructive feedback builds a speaker's confidence.

reasoning & evidence

This is about the content of the arguments that a speaker makes and how clearly they explain them - the 'What you say' category. Judges look for clear and logical arguments and well-chosen examples, relevant analogies and a deep analysis of the arguments. All of these tell the judge that the speaker understands the issues in the debate. Facts, statistics, case studies, relevant news stories, and historical references can all add to your case and judges will be impressed if they are used well. Speakers that use REAL (Reason, Evidence, Analysis, Link) will be more likely to be persuasive than speakers whose arguments are not so clearly laid out.

organisation & prioritisation

It's important to show teamwork between speakers and that the team's arguments are fairly, equitably and sensibly split between the two speakers. Structuring a speech is very important to good debating. Speakers should lay out what they are going to say at the beginning of their speech and should, if possible, follow that structure. Although, there may be many reasons to support a certain case these reasons can normally be usefully grouped into 3 main arguments. Timing is also important. A speaker should speak for their allotted time and also divide their speech sensibly between their different points so the speech is balanced.

expression & delivery

This is the 'how you say it' category. Speakers should use notes rather than writing out their speech in full - reading speeches makes it difficult to make eye contact with the audience, harder for the speaker to react to what other teams say, and awkward if the speaker loses their place on the page. Good debaters speak clearly, loudly and slowly. Speakers who modulate the tone and volume of their voice and use pauses to emphasise points are more interesting to listen to. Think about the choice of words and the structure of sentences. Body language is also important- think about hand gestures and facial expressions and make eye contact with the judges and audience.

listening & response

As well as focusing on their own speech, a speaker should listen carefully to the other speakers and respond. It can help to make notes during the debate so they can reply to other teams' points by showing how they disagree. This is called rebuttal. Teams can also interact through Points of Information. The person offering the POI should challenge the speaker the speaker should answer a POI. When summating a debate, a good debater is able to identify the main disagreements between teams (the 'key points of clash') and explain why their team has won. This requires good listening skills as the summating speaker will need to pick and choose which areas of the debate to focus on.

supporting first time speakers

For many pupils, speaking in a debate for the first time will be a nerve-wracking experience and even very experienced debaters get nervous before speaking in public. Some confident pupils will immediately volunteer for speaking roles whilst others may be reluctant to speak. They may, however, become more involved in debating over time (speaking in floor debates and then taking part in the debate as a speaker). You will know who will be able to take on speaking roles initially and who will need more help to become a confident speaker.

building confidence

Let pupils know that it is perfectly natural to be nervous before speaking in a debate and that, in many ways, it is a positive thing – a few nerves can encourage dynamism and quick thinking. Most young people are much better public speakers than they think are. However, many pupils will be very nervous about speaking in public, especially in front of their peers. Encourage a positive mental attitude by encouraging speakers to be confident. Team mates should support each other and pupil coaches should say encouraging words to their teams.

Team mates or pupil coaches help encourage speakers, both in their preparation and showing them that all speakers get nervous before a debate.

preparation

Good preparation helps. The preparation stage will give the pupils plenty of time to plan for the debate and prepare themselves. If a speaker has done a lot of research and worked with others to develop their arguments and practise their speeches, they will be much less nervous.

If a pupil is especially worried before a debate, the teacher can go through their speech with them and offer reassuring advice.

the audience is on your side!

As the whole class is involved in the debate and has invested time in preparing, they want the speakers to succeed. Speakers should not see the audience as an intimidating factor but remember that they are on their side!

Encourage the audience to applaud when they agree with a point – this will really boost the speakers.

English-Speaking Union Scotland

An educational charity and membership organisation dedicated to helping people realise their potential through giving them the skills and confidence in communication to articulate their ideas and share them with others. Our vision is to provide people with communications skills, confidence and opportunities to engage in an exchange of ideas and opinions. We believe that good communication and cultural exchange is essential to individual, community and global development and understanding. Central to our mission is a commitment to working with schools and young people to narrow gaps in opportunity and assist in closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Glasgow City Council

This programme forms part of an ongoing partnership between the English-Speaking Union Scotland and Glasgow City Council's Education Department as part of their Determined to… Programme, dedicated to building employability skills and opportunities.