

FREE DOWNLOAD

READY, SET, DEBATE!

A complete first debating club session for Years 3-6

Everything you need to get pupils talking

30-40 minute session plan

12 ready-to-use motions

Role badges and speaking stems

Planning, feedback and reflection sheets

Low prep. High participation. Every voice matters.



What to display and print

Most pages can be displayed on your classroom screen, so you only need to print the pupil resources you choose to use.



DISPLAY

- Page 4: The 5-part debate
- Page 5: Opinion line warm-up
- Page 9: Debater sentence stems
- Your chosen motion from pages 6-7



PRINT ONCE

- Pages 6-7: Motion cards
- Page 8: Role badges
- Page 9: Sentence stems, if table copies would help



PRINT FOR PUPILS

- Page 10: One planning sheet per team
- Page 11: Audience sheets, if used
- Page 12: One reflection sheet per pupil

Quick set-up

Choose one motion. Split pupils into **FOR** and **AGAINST** teams. Assign roles. Give each team a planning sheet. Display the speaking stems. Keep a timer ready.

Teacher tip: Laminate the role and motion cards so they can be reused at future club sessions.



Your first debating club session

Everything you need for one lively, purposeful session.

YEARS 3-6 30-40 MINS 6-30 PUPILS

What pupils will practise

Giving a clear opinion, building on ideas, disagreeing respectfully, listening for key points and speaking with growing confidence.

What you need

Printed resources selected from the teacher guide, a timer and two signs marked AGREE and DISAGREE.

Before pupils arrive

1

Choose one motion from pages 6-7.

2

Put pupils into FOR and AGAINST teams.

3

Choose a chairperson and timekeeper.

4

Display the speaking stems on page 9.

5

Keep feedback and reflection sheets ready if using them.

Teacher tip: The aim is not simply to win. It is to help pupils make ideas clearer, stronger and kinder through talk.



The 5-part debate

Keep it brisk. The short stages make it easier for every pupil to contribute.

1

Warm up

Use the opinion line on page 5. Pupils move, choose and explain.

5 min

2

Prepare

Reveal the motion. Teams use page 10 to build three strong reasons.

8 min

3

Debate

Opening statements, team arguments, respectful challenges and questions.

15 min

4

Close and vote

Each team gives a final summary. Vote on the strongest case, not the most popular view.

5 min

5

Reflect

Use page 12. Name one speaking strength and one listening goal.

5 min



The opinion line

Label one side of the room AGREE and the other DISAGREE. Pupils stand where their opinion fits.

Three simple rules

Choose honestly. Listen to understand. Move if somebody changes your mind.

1. School should start later.

2. Every child should have a pet.

3. Books are better than films.

4. Winning is more important than taking part.

5. Children should choose what they learn.

6. It is always better to tell the truth.

Ask pupils...

What makes you think that?

Who can build on that idea?

Has anybody changed position? Why?



Cut-out debate motions

Choose a motion pupils can argue from both sides. Cut out and reuse.

MOTION 1

School uniform should be optional.

Think about: fairness, identity, cost, belonging

MOTION 2

Homework should be banned.

Think about: learning, family time, responsibility, wellbeing

MOTION 3

Breaktimes should be longer.

Think about: health, friendships, lesson time, focus

MOTION 4

Every class should have a pet.

Think about: care, learning, allergies, responsibility

MOTION 5

Children should choose their own seats.

Think about: choice, focus, friendship, fairness

MOTION 6

School should begin one hour later.

Think about: sleep, routines, learning, family life



Cut-out debate motions

Choose a motion pupils can argue from both sides. Cut out and reuse.

MOTION 7

Zoos should not be allowed.

Think about: protection, freedom, education, animal welfare

MOTION 8

All journeys under one mile should be car-free.

Think about: safety, environment, time, accessibility

MOTION 9

Competitive sport is good for everyone.

Think about: motivation, teamwork, pressure, inclusion

MOTION 10

Pupils should help decide school rules.

Think about: voice, fairness, experience, responsibility

MOTION 11

Robots will make schools better.

Think about: support, creativity, jobs, human connection

MOTION 12

One day each week should be screen-free.

Think about: balance, learning, communication, enjoyment



Choose your debate role

Cut out the cards. Roles can be doubled up or shared.



CHAIRPERSON

Introduces the motion, invites speakers and keeps the debate respectful.

Name: _____



TIMEKEEPER

Gives time warnings and makes sure both teams have equal speaking time.

Name: _____



OPENING SPEAKER

States the team position and previews the main reasons.

Name: _____



REASON BUILDER

Explains one reason clearly and adds an example or evidence.

Name: _____



CHALLENGER

Listens for a point to question, test or respectfully disagree with.

Name: _____



CLOSING SPEAKER

Summarises the team case and explains why it is convincing.

Name: _____



Talk like a debater

Choose a stem, then add your own thinking.

SHARE A VIEW

- 💬 I believe that...
- 💬 In my view...
- 💬 Our strongest reason is...

BUILD AN IDEA

- 💬 I would like to add...
- 💬 This connects to...
- 💬 An example of this is...

CHALLENGE KINDLY

- 💬 I understand that point, but...
- 💬 Could you explain why...?
- 💬 Have you considered...?

USE EVIDENCE

- 💬 We know this because...
- 💬 For example...
- 💬 This matters because...

CLARIFY

- 💬 What I mean is...
- 💬 In other words...
- 💬 The key point is...

RESPOND

- 💬 That question makes me think...
- 💬 I agree with part of that because...
- 💬 Our response is...



Build your case

Motion: _____

We are arguing: FOR / AGAINST

Our Point:

Example or evidence:

The other team might say...

Our Point:

Example or evidence:

The other team might say...

Our Point:

Example or evidence:

The other team might say...

Predict and prepare

The other team might say...

We could respond...



Listen like a debate judge

Judge the quality of the case, not whether you personally agree with it.

Motion: _____

Clear reasons

1 2 3 4

Could you follow the team thinking?

Examples and evidence

1 2 3 4

Did they support their claims?

Listening and responding

1 2 3 4

Did they answer the other side?

Respectful challenge

1 2 3 4

Did they disagree with ideas, not people?

Teamwork

1 2 3 4

Did speakers share the floor and support one another?

The strongest moment was...

One question I still have...



My debate reflection

Name: _____ Date: _____

One idea I shared was...

A strong idea I heard was...

Someone made me think when...

Next time I will...

My confidence today

1

2

3

4

5

Just starting

Ready to lead



Keep the conversation going

A good debate does more than fill a club session. It helps pupils think carefully, listen actively and find the words to take part.

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