

Partnership for learning –Follow On Conference
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Assiut university-Egypt
Cascading new visions for teaching
“Using debate as a tool of assessment”
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Objectives:

By the end of this workshop I hope the participants will be able to:

- 1-Recognize the importance of using debate as a part of the learning Process.
- 2-Demonstrate the characteristics of a good debater.
- 3-List different types of debating.
- 4-State language areas that can be tested by the use of debate.
- 5-Integrate different activities of debate to their strategies of teaching.

● **What is debate?**

- It is a formal argument or discussion of a question at a public meeting or in congress .At the end there may be a vote. (1)
- It is a discussion or talk expressing different opinions.

● **What are the advantages of debate?**

Government officials, community and business leaders, educators and parents often see debating as means of: (2)

- 1- Familiarizing young people with the everyday practice of democratic governance.
- 2- Imparting social and forensic skills key to success as a civil servant, lawyer, politician or businessperson.
- 3- Broadening and strengthening connections with the international community.

● **What are the characteristics of good debaters?**

Good debaters should have developed the following skills:

1- Social integration:

Debaters must be able to work independently, yet also as part of a team. So, they must listen well, follow rules and show respect for other participants. They are obliged to learn how to maintain self-control and be courteous in any discussion.

2- Intellectual development:

Debaters must be able to relate specific to generalization. They must be able to construct and state arguments and how to memorize key material (For example numbers and pertinent quotations).

3- Study skills:

Debaters must be able both to plan research and to carry it out.

4- Verbal self-expression:

Debaters need to learn to speak fluently and confidently in longer turns and, when speaking stick to a topic and generally be relevant. They must be able to challenge and defend positions and to use both humor and figurative language constructively. They must be able to deliver their ideas effectively with, for instance, good eye contact, well-timed gestures, good voice control and an ability to pause for dramatic effect.

- **Note:** The previous skills can best be developed through the process of debating itself.

What are different types of debating?

- 1- Extra-curricular club debates in the Oxford style (based on academic disputation).
- 2- Parliamentary style (based on the House of Commons debating).
- 3- Cross-examination style (based on courtroom interrogation).

• What language areas that can be tested through debating?

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1-pronunciation | 2- stress & intonation |
| 3-vocabulary | 4-grammar |
| 5-fluency | 6-critical & creative thinking |

References:

- 1- The Oxford Dictionary of American English, Oxford University press, 2005.
- 2-Seth Lind Stromberg, Language Activities for teenagers, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- 3-Bruce Marsland, lessons from nothing, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- 4-Teryne Dorret, Breaking the writing Barrier, pro lingua associates, publishers, 2001.
- 5- Penny Ur, A course in language teaching. Trainee book, Cambridge University Press, 1999

Activities:

Activity 1: Single Switch off

This activity can be used as a warmer. It can be carried out as follows: the teacher selects a topic and students have to mention the advantages and disadvantages of this topic. This process is timed. When the teacher says change a student should switch off from speaking about advantages to speak about disadvantages or vice versa. This process can be repeated three or four times.

Activity 2: (3) Voting

This activity can be used with beginners as it reduces debate to brainstorming sessions followed by a vote. For example the teacher might ask the class about the advantages and disadvantages of a proposition. Then a simple vote is carried out to decide if the proposition is acceptable or not. This happens when all possibilities have been exhausted.

Examples:

- Everyone should use the same currency.
- Smoking should be banned.
- T.V should be banned for under 16.
- All cars should run on electricity.
- Everyone should learn English.

Activity 3: Please let me out

Mr. X was arrested by the police for committing murder. They have searched his house and found a knife covered with blood. They also found a lot of money, which he couldn't prove how did he get it. Discuss this case within your group and try to find a way out for Mr. X.

Note: The court scene is shown after the discussion. The researcher appoints three judges who choose a prosecuting attorney from one group and the defendant chooses his defense attorney from another group. The researcher also appoints the jury (nine persons).

Activity 4: Qualities of a good teacher

A good schoolteacher should have the following qualities. Can your group agree together in what order of priority you would put them?

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| - Sense of humor | - enthusiasm for teaching |
| - Honesty | - pleasant appearance |
| - Love of children | - fairness |
| - Knowledge of subject | -ability to create interest |
| - Flexibility | - ability to keep order |
| - Clear speaking voice | - intelligence |

Activity 4: Problems to solve (4)

Problem (A)

A public high school has some very difficult problems:

- 1- only half of the students come to school everyday. The students aren't very interested in their classes and don't see why school is very important to their lives.
- 2- Many of them have to work after school and on the weekends to help their families.
- 3- Some of the students have children and have to stay at home to take care of them.
- 4- The school is constantly losing money because of the poor attendance rate and can't buy enough materials for the students.
- 5- Many of the students are involved in gangs and have been involved in violence. So, here is a lot of fear among students at school everyday.
- 6- There is also a big drug problem at this school. Students can buy and sell drugs very easily, and teachers are constantly having problems with students who come to class stoned or drunk.

In your group, come up with a plan with at least five ideas to help this school and its students. Remember to allow everyone to contribute his or her ideas. Come up with the most creative solution you can.

Activity 5: Conflicting opinions (5)

Opinion (1)

Children should be taught in heterogeneous classes: setting them into ability grouping puts a 'failure' label onto members of the lower groups, whereas putting more and less able learners together encourages the slower ones to progress faster, without penalizing the more able.

Opinion (2)

Children should be divided into ability groupings for most subjects: this enables the less able ones to be taught at a pace suitable for them, while the better students do not need to wait for the slower ones to catch up.