

Preparing the debate about Space

Question :

There are currently many problems on Earth (to name just a few...: Poverty, Wars, Energy Crisis, Climate change, Overpopulation, Limited Resources ...etc.) so, in that context, do you think that spending time/ money/ energy/ scientific resources on Space exploration and Space conquest is a good idea? Why or why not?

For this debate, which will take place in the last TP class of this semester (12th December), I would like to have roughly the same amount of people on each side (In favor/ Against) and one or two people (depending on the size of the groups acting as “Judges”/ “Moderators”).

Once you have chosen your side, you will have to get ready for the debate!
In this document, you will find several points to help you in your preparation

I) Judges/ Moderators

They will have to answer questions, lead the debate, listen to the various arguments and counter-arguments and encourage people to speak (or to listen to the others...)

A) Questions:

Here is a space that you can use to prepare the debate by listing some precise questions for both sides...

B) Grid for the evaluation of the debate:

	Arguments	Counter arguments	Quantity of the arguments	Quality of the arguments	Examples (Dates, numbers, statistics...)	Use of appropriate vocabulary	Investment in the debate/ Politeness
Group + Students' names							
Group - Students' names							

Notes/ points to remember:

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Be ready to introduce the subject of the debate, to ask the participants to introduce themselves (work titles, degrees etc) and to launch the debate by asking the first questions.

During the debate you should make sure that everyone participates (ask some questions to the most silent members of each team) and that people do so in a polite and respectful way.

Try to keep track of what has been said (ideas, quality and quantity of the arguments...) and at the end be ready to tell us which side was the most convincing one!

II) Debating Vocabulary and tips:

Please make sure to check the other documents provided in my mail.

III) Preparing for your debate:

A) First, create your character (you work as an engineer for Space X/ as an expert on pollution for the European Space Agency/ as a student in .../ as a journalist specializing in...). Find also a name, a specific job, a place where you live...As many details as you need to convince us of your professionalism and expertise.

B) On your own, try to make a list of all your ideas and arguments to help you justify and defend your opinion during the debate.

Make a list, collect information, statistics, examples of what you would like to convince the other team of.

C) Meet with the other members of your team, gather your researches and make a collective list of arguments. Try to enrich it if possible and also, try to focus on the other side's possible counter-arguments.

Being ready for a debate also relies on your ability to be prepared for the other team's arguments and having some elements to refute what they are saying.

D) Once your arguments are ready, try to collectively elaborate a strategy to "win" the debate (you can have your own questions for the opposite side, you can start with "small" arguments and increase their strength as you go along, you can add examples, statistics, anecdotes from the pas...

IV) Interesting links to check before the debate:

A) In favor of Space conquest:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqrahBJkKAs&ab_channel=TEDxTalks

[https://www.ted.com/talks/eric_hinterman_how_going_to_mars_improves_life_on_earth?](https://www.ted.com/talks/eric_hinterman_how_going_to_mars_improves_life_on_earth?language=en)

https://www.ted.com/talks/joel_levine_why_we_need_to_go_back_to_mars

B) Against Space conquest

<https://www.space.com/nasa-scientists-health-risks-spaceflight-space-exploration>

<https://www.nasa.gov/hrp/5-hazards-of-human-spaceflight>

<https://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/space-missions/space-junk/>