

DEBATES

Subject

English

Prepared By

[Instructor Name]

Grade Level

4

Overview

This lesson plan covers teaching content for;

1. Learning to speak for a motion and against it

Objectives

Students should be able to;

- present an oral argument using evidence
- to use functional language related to agreeing, disagreeing, and showing contrasting opinions

Assessment Activity

- Assess them during the guided practice

Summary

1. Review what a debate is to students
2. Review what makes a good debater
3. When doing the review make sure you erase the lesson on the board.

Activity Starter/Instruction

1. Explain the purpose of the lesson.
2. Before leaping straight into the full activity, review what a debate is with your students
3. Explain that most debates have a similar structure
4. There is an opening presentation, rebuttal, response and closing summary.
5. Basically, this just means that both sides state their opinion before taking turns giving reasons why they believe their opponent is incorrect.
6. Explain that most debates have a pretty strict time limit as well.
7. You don't have to follow any of the limits set by official presidential debates, but you should still come up with a time that both you and your child are comfortable with.
8. Keep it short -- if you only have a minute or two to state your case, it makes the challenge even harder.

Teacher Guide

Day 1/ Lesson 1: 20 Mins

1. Ask students if they have ever participated in a debate or if they have seen a debate in person or on television.
2. Ask volunteers to share their opinions about what makes someone a good debater.
3. (Answers may include "uses examples /facts to support an argument"; "listens to opponents and "stays calm"; etc.)
4. Write students' contributions on the board and elicit or suggest other qualities to include in the list.
5. Tell students that a debate participant's goal is to make a convincing yet respectful argument.
6. Explain that debaters must be skillful at agreeing, disagreeing, and contrasting opinions.
7. Draw a chart on the board and elicit examples of the language used in each of the three categories

Materials Required

- Blackboard and chalk, or whiteboard and marker
- paper and pencils or pens;
- a timing device

Additional Resources

- <https://www.teacher.org/lesson-plan/debate-environmental-issue/>
- <https://www.teachhub.com/classroom-activities-how-to-hold-classroom-debate>
- <https://www.sadlier.com/school/ela-blog/madness-inspired-classroom-debate-lesson-debate-activities-for-students>
- <https://educators.brainpop.com/lesson-plan/citizen-science-game/?bp-topic=debate>
- <https://www.education.com/activity/article/debate/>
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Additional Notes

Teacher Guide

Day 2/ Lesson 2: 15mins

1. Divide the class in half to make Group 1 and Group 2.
2. (If you have a class with more than 50 students, consider creating four groups instead of two.)
3. Select a student—or ask for a volunteer—in each group to serve as the group leader.
4. Write the debate theme and associated topics on the board from the topic set that you selected or developed.
5. Ask each group to vote on the topic they most want to debate; the two groups should choose different topics from the set.
6. Give the groups two minutes to vote; ask the group leaders to count the votes and report the outcome.
7. If both groups voted for the same topic, Group 2 can use its second choice.
8. Have teams sit together in different areas of the room to prepare for the debate.
9. Direct students' attention to the list of "good debater" qualities on the board
10. Remind them that good debaters use evidence and examples, not just opinions, to support their arguments.
11. Tell teams to go home and work together as a team to prepare for the debate.
12. Tell them to brainstorm evidence (information, facts, examples, and, anecdotes) to support their debate position
13. Tell them to discuss their brainstormed list and identify the strongest pieces of evidence

8. The Functional Language Chart is an example of what a completed chart might look like.
9. Tell students they are going to complete an exercise to prepare for two debates and that everyone will participate in the debates.

Guided Practice

Day 3/ Lesson 3: 25 Mins

1. Ask all students to stand up and bring their notes with them.
2. Tell the opposing teams for each topic to form two lines facing each other.
3. There will be two lines in all: Team "For" faces Team "Against"
4. Explain that these are "debate lines," and ask students to stand so they directly face one person from the opposing side.
5. Tell students they will debate by using the evidence and counterarguments they developed during the team discussions.
6. Explain that, at your signal, everyone will individually debate with the opponent across the line for one minute.
7. The person in the "For" line speaks first.
8. After a minute, you will tell students to "Switch!"
9. The class might get quite noisy— students are engaged and practicing speaking!
10. Remind students to use "inside voices" if the volume becomes too loud.)
11. If you feel it is necessary, model the one-minute debate process with a student.

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14. Tell them to discuss possible arguments the opposing team might make and how to counter those arguments

Guide Practice

Day 4/ Lesson 4: 25 Mins

1. Tell students that they will perform another debate on another topic you choose for them
 2. Tell them they will working with the same team used for the last lesson
 3. Tell them they will have only few minutes taken from the class time for preparation.
 4. Choose a topic for them from the topic list
 5. Ask team 1 to pick a side of the coin while team 2 automatically takes the other side
 6. Roll the coin to select the team that is for the motion and team against the motion
 7. Tell them to brainstorm evidence (information, facts, examples, and, anecdotes) to support their debate position
 8. Tell them to discuss their brainstormed list and identify the strongest pieces of evidence
 9. Tell them to discuss possible arguments the opposing team might make and how to counter those arguments
 10. Remind students to take turns speaking during the debates.
 11. Inspect the students while the practice is going on
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12. Remind students to take turns speaking during the debates.
 13. Tell students they can refer to the Functional Language Chart as well as their team discussion notes, if needed
 14. Begin the one-on-one debates. Have the “For” team members speak first. Keep time and monitor student progress
 15. After several rounds, bring the class back together.
 16. Ask teams to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of each other’s arguments.
 17. Review any problematic or challenging language points, such as grammar and pragmatics topics, based on observed student performance.
 18. You can also ask students whether they found the debate easier after the first round.
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