

# Debate activity



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Debates are a great way of engaging children and young people in discussions about topics that are current and controversial. Debates are very well received by students and they often break up the classroom convention and allow them to have a much needed voice.

Using debates in the classroom can help students learn new skills too such as thinking in a critical way, presentation skills in front of others and helps them think outside the box.

Other skills they can acquire are learning to work in a team and planning and strategising. It can also help with confidence, friendships and self-esteem.

Using debates in a classroom is all inclusive and involves everyone no matter where their skill set may lie.

## **How to use the debate activity**

We have given you pre-set debate headlines and you can use these ideas or ask the young people to make up their own which is great for their creative and research skills. You can have time slots if you choose too, such as 15 minutes per debate or you can have them for as long as you would like.

Firstly, choose your teams and it is often a great idea to mix up the students into groups they may not often work in. This can help them learn necessary skills of working with new people.

Appoint a facilitator to introduce and manage the debate and then ask the teams to appoint their own speakers for their for or against argument.

Ask them to research the topic, look into it and come back with compelling arguments to state their case. It is important to remember the key messages which are anti-bullying and exploring bullying in more depth.

Getting them to understand the other person's position in bullying is also essential to help them learn specific outcomes and think about their own or others' behaviour if and when they witness bullying.

We have got many different forms of bullying to use for this activity, including cyberbullying, name calling, homophobic bullying, legal stance and innocent bystanders. They are all open to debate and issues that are current.

## **Let the debate commence and have fun!**



If someone is  
being bullied  
online, should  
they deactivate  
their account?

When does  
banter  
become  
bullying?

Do schools do  
enough to tackle  
hate behaviour  
like racism,  
homophobia?

Should all  
forms of  
bullying be  
against the  
law?

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Is there such  
a thing as an  
innocent  
bystander when  
seeing someone  
being bullied?

Has the  
impact of  
bullying been  
exaggerated  
in society?

Are parents or  
schools more  
responsible for  
preventing  
bullying?

Should social  
media  
companies  
do more to  
stop  
cyberbullying

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