

Debate and Discussion

KS3 English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Build one argument for the motion 'This house would ban homework in Year 7'.

Step 1 · Point

Homework in Year 7 adds stress at a time when students are already adjusting to a new school.

Step 2 · Evidence

Many Year 7s travel further, have more subjects and more teachers than at primary school.

Step 3 · Explanation

Removing homework would give them time to rest, read for pleasure and settle in, so they learn better in lessons.

Answer: Point, evidence and explanation together make a complete, convincing argument.

Check: Could the opposition simply say 'that's not true'? The evidence makes it harder.

2. Now try one with the steps

Rebut the opposition's point: 'Homework teaches independence.'

Step 1 · Name their point fairly

Step 2 · Concede what is reasonable

Step 3 · Counter it

Answer:

3. Practice

Show your working. The marks tell you how much is expected.

1. What is the 'motion' in a debate? [1]

2. Which side argues FOR the motion? [1]

3. In a debate with two speakers on each side, how many speakers are there altogether? Write the number. [1]

4. What is a rebuttal? [1]
-
-
5. What does the chair do in a debate or discussion? [1]
-
-
6. Give a sentence starter for building on someone else's point. [1]
-
-
7. Give a sentence starter for challenging a point politely. [1]
-
-
8. What is wrong with the argument 'Everyone knows phones are bad'? [1]
-
-
9. What is a personal attack in an argument? [1]
-
-
10. Why should you not introduce new arguments in a closing speech? [2]
-
-
11. Why is it important to listen carefully during a debate? [2]
-
-
12. Write an argument (point, evidence, explanation) against the motion 'This house would make school start at 10 a.m.' [3]
-
-
-
13. Rebut this point: 'Longer lunch breaks would make students lazy.' [2]
-
-
14. How is a structured group discussion different from a debate? [2]
-
-

4. Before you hand it in

Reading a prepared speech and ignoring what the other side said.

Leave space in your notes to respond to their arguments, and name their points directly.

Getting louder instead of giving better reasons.

Stay calm; add an example, fact or explanation.

Attacking the speaker: 'That's a stupid idea.'

'I disagree, because...' Respond to the reasons.

In group discussion, everyone says their own idea in turn without linking.

Use building and challenging stems that refer to what others said.