

FULL DEBATES

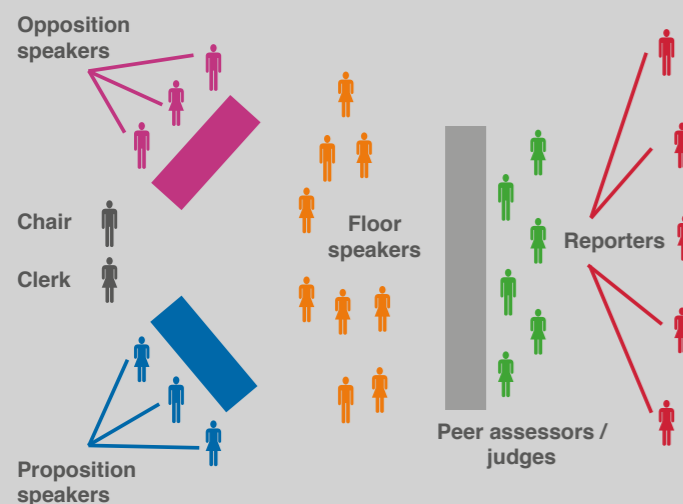
A WHOLE CLASS ACTIVITY

The audience is a key part of every debate. Not only do they speak in the **floor debate**, but they are the people who speakers must persuade as **active and critical listeners** who cast their important votes at the end.

Active critical listening is such an important part not just of secondary school but – perhaps even more – of study at university; we must prepare our students so they can listen actively during long lectures and seminars. After university, pitches, presentations and conference speeches all play a crucial part in modern careers.

ACTIVE LISTENING TASKS

What is important is that specific listening tasks are assigned to individual pupils. The suggested tasks below provide teachers with excellent opportunities to individualise and differentiate your debating lessons.



FLOOR SPEAKERS

Less confident or less able speakers might simply be asked to speak for, say, 15 seconds on any point. But more able speakers/listeners can be challenged to meet specific tasks. For example, they might:

- ▶ challenge speakers on a logical fallacy they have spotted, or on dubious uses of evidence
- ▶ give a point which has not already been made by the speakers in the main debate
- ▶ speak on a 'third way' or alternative course of action that should be investigated or pursued.

PEER ASSESSORS / JUDGES

This booklet includes two differentiated peer assessment sheets on pages 28-29. Advanced debaters can use the full *Up for Debate* judging sheets on pages 30-31 and follow the methods in the 'Judging Up for Debate' video at noisyclassroom.com.

Judging all five criteria at once is hard work, so we strongly recommend assigning at least six pupils to judge our five criteria separately; we have two sheets for 'Content' (one for 'Arguments' and another for 'Evidence & Examples') and single sheets for 'Responses', 'Structure', 'Language' and 'Delivery' available in the *Up for Debate* section of PiXL's Huddle platform.

Chairing the panel of judges to reach a decision on which side won the debate (this may be different from who won the class vote) is a challenging activity for your sharpest listeners and clearest thinkers to take on.

REPORTERS

From court reporters to political correspondents, a huge number of important writing jobs involve active listening as their essential starting point.

- ▶ Newspaper reporters might seek to give an objective view of the debate, but might also be assigned to write for a paper such as *The Sun*, *The Daily Telegraph* or *The Guardian* with its own distinctive house style and political biases.
- ▶ Armed with a decent MP3 recorder, you might assign a team to make a radio report on the debate, adding in their own commentary on what happened and perhaps interviewing some members of the audience for some 'vox pops' about the issues and how the debate was perceived by those who voted on it.
- ▶ You may want to keep an **official record** of the debates in your lessons in the same way that Hansard records our parliament. Transcribing a whole debate word for word is not practical; your record might consist of a summary of points made, with a few key quotes written out verbatim for each speaker. This team might be overseen by the Clerk, who should also record votes cast.

This page gives you just a handful of motions for each subject, but you'll be able to think of many more. Essay subjects are particularly rich in opportunities for simply turning exam questions into debates, but subjects such as Design & Technology, PE, Music, Drama or Computer Science can have some fascinating debates involving techniques, skills, materials or current developments in their respective industries.

ENGLISH

If the focus is on developing oracy, analysis and use of language, any motion can be used; see our past 'Topics of the Week' at noisyclassroom.com for hundreds of ideas. But debate can also be a vehicle for great debates about Language and Literature:

- ▶ **Language:** "This House would legislate for Plain English", "This House would reform our spelling", "This House prefers reading news to watching it"
- ▶ **Literature:** 📺 "This House believes Romeo and Juliet's parents are to blame for the tragedy", "This House believes that Willy Loman 'had all the wrong dreams'" ...

SCIENCE

- ▶ **Biology:** 📺 "This House believes that it is worse to eat too much than to eat too little", "This House would ban testing on animals", "This House supports genetic engineering" ...
- ▶ **Chemistry:** "This House prefers bioethanol to petrol", "This House believes that gold is too precious to be wasted on jewellery" ...
- ▶ **Physics:** 📺 "This House believes that nuclear energy can never be sufficiently safe", "This House believes in the Big Bounce" ...

HISTORY

- ▶ 📺 "This House believes that the Treaty of Versailles was the main cause of World War II" ...
- ▶ "This House would rather live in the 19th century than the 20th century" ...

GEOGRAPHY

- ▶ **Physical:** eg "This House believes better planning can solve the problem of flooding in the UK"
- ▶ **Human:** 📺 "This House would ban cars from city centres", "This House supports one-child policies in over-populated countries" ...

COMPUTER SCIENCE

- ▶ "This House prefers open source", "This House chooses Python over C#", "This House believes Drupal is the right CMS for this project" ...

MUSIC, DRAMA & ART

- ▶ **Music:** "This House places technical skill above passion and soul", "This House prefers live music"
- ▶ **Drama:** "This House believes theatre can change the world", "This House believes that the best musicals are as great as Shakespeare's plays"
- ▶ **Art:** "This House prefers [Artist X] to [Artist Y]" with lots of reasons and examples used

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

- ▶ "This House prefers to buy handmade products", "This House would make [this item] out of [this material]", "This House believes we met the brief"

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- ▶ "This House believes rugby is better than football", "This House would allow the use of performance enhancing drugs in sport", "This House would equalise TV coverage for women's sport" ...

PSHE / CITIZENSHIP

- ▶ 📺 "This House would lower the voting age to 12"
- ▶ "This House believes our parents have the right to know", "This House would not go to university"

Unless you have an advanced A-level class, you will find it more difficult to find a wide range of motions to debate in Mathematics or Modern Foreign Languages. But motions such as "This House sees no point in learning algebra" or "This House is ready to trust Google Translate" can be used to reflect on your subject, and we have ideas for 'Quick Debates' overleaf.

Debating is a great opportunity for us as pupils to take on roles as leaders of our own learning. When I chair a debate, I make sure that everyone has an equal chance to be heard, and I listen carefully to all the speeches to encourage a balance of contributions during the floor debate.



📺 The video camera symbol in the lists above denotes that a debate on this motion (or a similar one) is available to watch at noisyclassroom.com

WHERE?

GOOD PLACES TO HOLD CO-CURRICULAR DEBATES

IN YOUR SCHOOL

- ▶ A classroom is fine, but give co-curricular activities a special feel by using a space students aren't in every day, like the library.
- ▶ If your lunchtime club becomes really popular, or you start holding debates in assemblies, the hall is your next step.
- ▶ If your school has suitable outdoor spaces, they can be great debating venues in the summer months!



IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

- ▶ Organise a 'friendly' with the debating society in another local school – no need to keep it to 1 team per school; why not take 12 teams and hire a coach? We can help you find nearby schools who are also involved in debate.
- ▶ Local primary school pupils would love to see your debaters in action, and ask questions from the floor. More experienced debaters could even volunteer to run debating workshops for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.
- ▶ Get in touch with your local council; they will often be happy to host an inter-school debate in their council chamber. You could even debate against local politicians and see whether they, too, are Up for Debate.



AND, A BIT FURTHER AFIELD ...

- ▶ next year's regional heats of the *Up for Debate* competition
- ▶ other competitions like the ESU Mace or Debating Matters
- ▶ university-run competitions (in aspirational locations like Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Nottingham and Bristol)
- ▶ international events like World Schools Debate Academy in Slovenia, or even a place on the England Schools Debating Team.



WHEN?

GOOD TIMES TO HOLD CO-CURRICULAR DEBATES

07:00

BEFORE SCHOOL

Fed up of the *Today* programme? Why not have live debates in the '8.10 slot'! Or sit on the sofa for informal 'Breakfast News Club' debates.

08:00

FORM-TIME & ASSEMBLY

Build the bridges between co-curricular and core-curricular debate by getting everyone involved.

09:00

10:00

DROP-DOWN DAYS

Once your debate culture is really growing, an annual debate competition on a day off-timetable can be an amazing experience. Club members or older debaters can help judge. See page 14 for ideas on organisation.

11:00

LUNCHTIME CLUBS

With lunch breaks shorter than ever, it can be difficult to hold a debate club at lunch, but our 25-minute format on page 4 is just what you need. Bring sandwiches and start on time to leave as much time as possible for the floor debate.

12:00

13:00

14:00

15:00

AFTER-SCHOOL

This model provides you with the most time for in-depth debates and for training activities. Read our case study on pages 16-17 for more ideas. Or open it to the community and other schools as a Saturday club.

16:00

17:00



YEAR 7 INDUCTION

Get them while they're young, and use your top Year 9/10 debaters to run an induction day for new pupils using debate.



UP FOR DEBATE

We'll be back from September, with training on use of debate in both curricular and co-curricular settings (and a refreshed set of resources) in advance of next year's competition in the spring term. Will you start with a club, or our new scheme of work?



OTHER FORMATS

Check our list of external competitions on page 15 for details of other debate programmes like the ESU Schools Mace and Debating Matters. You will need to register in the summer term for some of these.



EXAM PREPARATION

If some pupils are now finding extra-curricular debate way more fun than writing essays, keep them on track with after-school revision clubs with GCSE or A-level topics used to help revision.



GRAND FINALES

Our second *Up for Debate* final will take place in the summer. Whether or not you reach it, why not have an end of year debate final in school?



HOLIDAY

Can't wait until August? World Schools Debate Academy takes place in Slovenia in late June / early July. See page 18 for info.

RUN A COMPETITION

Once you've had a few terms of lunchtime or after-school debates, and perhaps some 'friendlies' with other schools, competitions can be a great way of having fun while also challenging students to excel.

SIMPLE KNOCKOUT

This is easy to run, but debaters who lose the first round only do one debate.

ROUND 1

8 teams go head to head in 4 debates



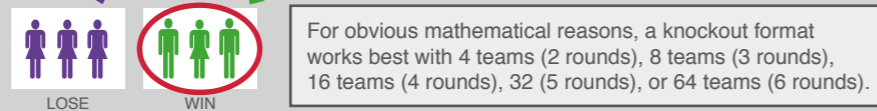
ROUND 2

The winning teams debate each other



FINAL

The two teams who won every time debate each other.

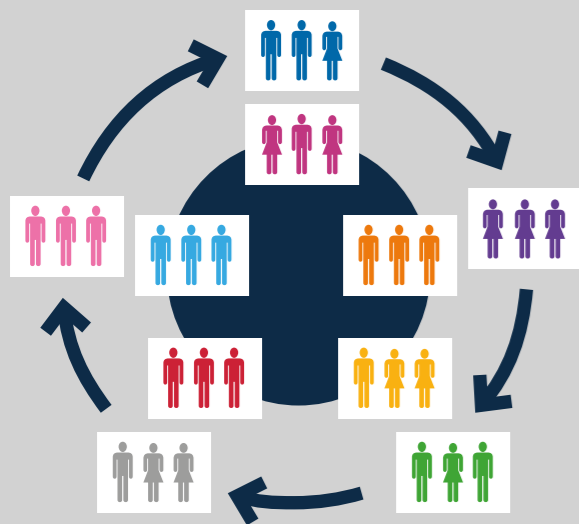


For obvious mathematical reasons, a knockout format works best with 4 teams (2 rounds), 8 teams (3 rounds), 16 teams (4 rounds), 32 (5 rounds), or 64 teams (6 rounds).

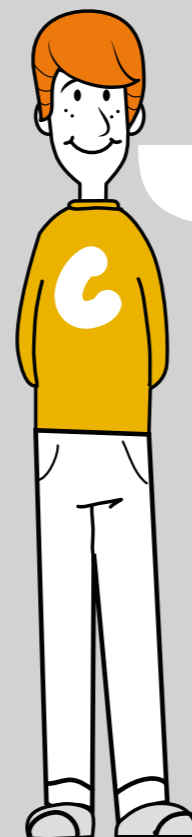
MULTI-ROUND FORMATS

If you want to keep everyone debating in as many rounds as possible, there are lots of different formats to choose from, and different ways to organise the draws for each round. Most of these are based on sporting concepts like leagues, and if spreadsheets or index cards aren't your thing, you'll find many sports-mad or maths-savvy pupils or colleagues who'll be delighted to help you organise that side of things.

You can also organise formats where teams are more fluid, and pupils debate with different partners over the duration of a term or a year. There are great benefits to working as a team with regular partners, but it's also good to have some 'transfer windows' where pupils experience different personalities and team dynamics. Individual, rather than team scores, will be more important there, for keeping score.



The 'Round Robin' is just one example of how you can organise multiple rounds. From 4 teams to 400 teams, half of them 'stay put' in your draw for the event, and half of them move round one place after each round. Switch those 'staying put' between Proposition and Opposition each round so everyone gets to speak on both sides.



Competitions are great for so many different purposes; you can run one just with members of your club, or run inter-form, inter-house or whole school events.

Don't forget to reach out to other schools in your area, including primary schools. I love to judge Year 5s and Year 6s in their debates.

ENTERING OTHER COMPETITIONS

ESU SCHOOLS MACE

The English-Speaking Union's Schools Mace is the longest established of the UK schools competitions. Rounds start in the autumn term (you can enter your teams from end of the summer term), using a knockout system. But, based on the performance of our Up for Debate participants this year, we would expect to see many of this year's Year 9s get through to the second or third rounds, or even further; while it's open to all ages up to sixth formers, national finalists from Year 10 are not unheard of.

The ESU also runs a National Public Speaking Competition.

For London schools, you can also enter the ESU's London Debate Challenge, with borough rounds next spring or summer.

www.esu.org

DEBATING MATTERS

Run by the Institute of Ideas, this fresh and approachable format is very popular with state schools, with helpful briefing packs to help you prepare your topics. Entry for each year's competition normally closes early in July.

www.debatingmatters.com

WORLD SCHOOLS FORMAT EVENTS

Ibstock Place School in London often runs a 1-day WSDC event in the late summer, and we are keen to encourage more WSDC events; check noisyclassroom.com for more details.

BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY COMPETITIONS

The last few years has seen tremendous growth in the 'BP' circuit of competitions run by university student debating societies. Aside from the different format (see page 12) with two teams on each side rather than one, there are some other differences which take a little time to get used to:

- ▶ 15-minute 'short-preparation' impromptu debates are standard
- ▶ experienced teams may use quite a lot of additional jargon such as "the comparative" and "impacting", and use a number of stock arguments with which you and your teams will quickly become more and more familiar
- ▶ as they are run by students (rather than professional educators), some of the feedback and organisation may be slightly different from how you might organise a competition yourself but, in return, there is a special aspirational quality in your pupils mixing with students studying a wide-range of degrees and coming from across the UK and around the world
- ▶ currently, the scene is dominated by private schools, but we're hoping that an influx of PiXL schools who are *Up for Debate* will rapidly change that!

ICYD: INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION FOR YOUNG DEBATERS

ICYD is a great place to start, with opening rounds taking place in the spring. The first motion of regional rounds is pre-announced (although you may have to speak in any position), and only the second is short-prep. It's open to anyone in Year 10 or below, so it's a perfect additional opportunity for our new *Up for Debate* students. Organisation rotates between Oxford and Cambridge's societies, and the finals day is held in their amazing, world-famous buildings. See icyd.cus.org for information on ICYD 2017.

SENIOR COMPETITIONS

Many university societies (including Cambridge, Oxford, Durham, Nottingham, Bristol and several London universities) run competitions open to all secondary pupils. Although many experienced competitors are in Year 12 and 13, this isn't just something for your sixth formers. If your Year 9s approach the day with a sense of fun and adventure, and are prepared to learn quickly from their first attempts, it's an amazing scene to be part of. Check our list of competitions at noisyclassroom.com for up-to-date info.

DEBATE MATE SCHOOLS TROPHY

Debate education charity Debate Mate has recently opened its annual one-day BP competition to schools outside its own network of regular after-school activities. Visit www.debatemate.com for more information.

OTHER SPEAKING & LISTENING FORMATS

Many other organisations run public speaking competitions (including many Rotary societies), mock trials (check out the Bar and Magistrates mock trials at citizenshipfoundation.org.uk) and Model United Nations events.