

Debate

SALTISE

Description:

Within the classroom, debating can be an effective way to encourage students to engage, analyze and develop critical thinking, as well as public speaking skills. Consult the SALTISE website for more details on [Debate](#) and to see how other instructors in the SALTISE community are using this in their courses visit [Debate Activities](#)



Preparation (Instructor)



In Class (Instructor)



In Class (students)



Assessments

An instructional approach used to encourage discussion between two or more people who are positioned on opposite sides of an issue or topic

Prepare debate

Instructor:

- Determine the debate objective(s) and learning outcome(s).
- Design or acquire guidelines for debaters and rubric for student evaluators

NOTE: Relevant content may be presented prior to a debate; OR the research in preparation may be part of the instructional plan.

Explain debate process

Instructor - Provide students with a debate topic/resolution/ proposition, with rules, guidelines and procedures for the two roles:

- Debate team (or teams).
- Audience (peer assessors).

Assign team(s)

Instructor - Assign students to teams (small groups) to argue different perspectives, either

- Supporting or
- Refuting the resolution/proposition.

OPTION: Divide class into multiple teams to argue the same topic or different topics.

Research debate topic

Students, in their assigned teams - Research the selected topic, identifying arguments/claims and relevant evidence to prepare an appropriate argumentation using given guidelines.

Provide peer evaluation rubric

Instructor - Provide non-presenting students (evaluators) with rubric or model for evaluating the arguments.

OPTION: Students are guided through the process of developing a rubric.

Team(s) present position

Students, in their assigned team(s) - present their prepared statements or materials.

Suggestion: Students debate in the following sequence: Introduction of arguments (4 mins for each side); rebuttals (3 mins for each side); 2 mins. recess for both sides to discuss concluding remarks; concluding remarks (2 mins each).

Non-presenting students evaluate

Individually - Non-presenting students evaluate quality of the arguments based on rubric.

OPTION: Instructor can select a 'winner' by asking the class to vote on the quality of the arguments.

Conduct debrief

Instructor - Conduct a debrief with the class on the process and the arguments presented.

