

# Supporting Skills - Walking Debates



## Lesson 3: Structuring Discussion and Debates

A walking debate is a useful and engaging strategy to develop your learners' communication and critical thinking skills. The aim is to encourage movement in the debate as students' minds are changed by powerful arguments by their peers.

This lesson aims to develop learners' skills of sharing opinions, arguing perspectives respectfully and reflecting on debate

**Vocabulary:** Argument; Analyse, Evaluate, Reflection

**In this lesson, the learner will...**

- consider different perspectives on one statement
- put themselves into the position of others when considering a topic for debate
- share opinions with others
- listen to other opinions and argue them respectfully
- summarise and paraphrase ideas verbally
- reflect on debate and discussion

**Materials:**

- Whiteboard/ blackboard
- Paper, pens & colouring pens
- Poster paper x 3, labelled - AGREE, DISAGREE, NOT SURE
- Non-walking variation resource sheet
- Students reflection worksheet

## CURRICULUM AREAS

SPHE, CSPE

SDG 4 Supporting Skills

Walking Debates

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



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## Activity Instructions

### Activity 1 Preparing for debate (20 minutes)

- 1) Present the learners with a debating topic that is relevant to their lives or discuss a number of topics and select one.
- 2) Write it as a statement on the board.
- 3) Divide them into small groups.
- 4) Ask each group to come up with 5 arguments, in bullet point form, in favour of the statement.
- 5) Ask each group to come up with 5 arguments, in bullet point form, against the statement.

***NB: These do not have to be their personal opinion - they just need to envisage what kind of arguments people would put forward for/against the statement.***

### Activity 2 Walking debate (30 minutes)

- 1) Ask a spokesperson from each group to summarise their arguments for and against the statement. Write them down for your own notes.
- 2) Put the AGREE and DISAGREE posters up on the sides of the room. Put the NOT SURE poster on a wall/floor in the centre of the room.
- 3) Ask learners to stand in the middle of the room.
- 4) Read out one statement from the list compiled of their arguments (that you recorded from activity 2 earlier)
- 5) Ask learners to walk to the poster that best represents their own personal opinion.
- 6) Give learners 1-2 minutes to discuss with the people near them and then ask for volunteers to summarise the discussion.

## REFLECTIVE EXERCISE: 3-2-1

- Three things they feel they have learnt from the tasks
- Two things they found most interesting and would like to explore more
- One – their opinion they have about the tasks

# SD4 Supporting Skills - Digital Literacy

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## EXTENSION / REDUCTION ACTIVITIES

Reduction: For a shorter class, reduce the number of statements in Activity 2 or use the non-walking debate variation

Extension: For a longer class include the following activity, Reflecting (10 minutes)

1) Students return to their groups from Activity 1 to reflect on the debate and discussion.

Prompts:

- What new things did you learn about the topics discussed?
- Did you hear any opinions they hadn't considered before?
- Did your own opinion change about anything? Why/why not?
- Choose 3 words that describe an effective debate or discussion.

Create a poster with all of these words / phrases to show visually what constitutes an effective discussion / debate. Students can also use the reflection worksheet to continue their reflections

## MEDIA BOX: (materials, online video links, extra resources, case studies etc)

Debate Skill: Argument Building <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zZ4YEuThRw>

The Debate skill video can be used as a flipped classroom activity to introduce the concept and discuss the value of being able to build and argument – see also next resource in the media box

50 Great Debate Topics to Encourage Teens' Critical Thinking

<https://kidadl.com/articles/great-debate-topics-to-encourage-teens-critical-thinking>

Toastmasters International helps people from diverse backgrounds become more confident speakers, communicators, and leadership <https://www.toastmasters.org/Membership/Community-Based-Programs>

## Local Trip / Expertise / Additional Work and Assessments

Invite students in from the school debate team to talk about the ways they structure a debate that they are preparing for.

Invite someone from the Kerry Toastmasters (Killorglin, Listowel, Killarney or Tralee) to speak to the learners about debating our public speaking or to sponsory the Youth Leadership programme.

Linked learning: Communication Skills and Media Communication Skills micro-modules support the development of the 4Cs skills – Creativity, Communication, Critical Thinking and Collaboration.

Tutors are encouraged to work with other tutors to develop the project through multiple outcomes such as video, poster, Pecha Kucha



## Non- Walking Debate - Variation

Variation on the standard walking debate to focus on just one statement instead of multiple statements:

- Hang 4 posters agree, strongly agree, disagree strongly disagree in 4 corners of the room.
- Choose a statement, read it aloud, give students 5 minutes to discuss and formulate their opinions.
- Then ask students to go to the poster that best reflects their personal opinion.
- One student in each of the 4 groups acts as note-taker.

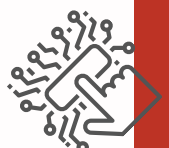
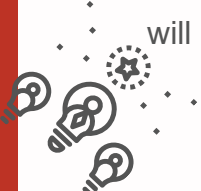
Give the students, in their groups, time to discuss together why they hold that opinion and how they would defend it.

At the end of the discussion ask one student from each group to present their argument to the class based on the notes.

If any student changes their mind at the end of this process they may move to a different poster.

### Examples of Starting Statements

- We could do more as a class to stand up for others.
- We could do more as a country to stand up for the rights others.
- Our world needs more human rights defenders. The more friends I have the better.
- Oil, gas, and coal companies should be held liable for damages caused by burning fossil fuels
- We have to essentially ban fossil fuels in the coming decades
- Social Media does more harm than good
- Investing in the further scientific exploration of space is a waste of resources
- Investing in the further scientific exploration of space is a good use of resources that will ultimately help to stimulate global economies



# INSTRUCTIONS FOR WALKING DEBATE



## Reflection (Worksheet for Students)

Students may have experience of these practices from Junior Cycle as there is an opportunity to write a Student Reflection after each CBA.

**Students return to their original groups. Ask students to reflect on how the discussion went:**

- Was it worthwhile?
- Did they learn something new about the topic?
- Did they hear opinions they hadn't considered before?
- Did they change their own opinion in any way? How? Why?
- Was it a good discussion?
- What made it a good discussion?

<b>KWL</b>	<b>SUMMARISE YOUR REFLECTIONS</b>
<p><b>WHAT DO I <b>K</b>NOW</b></p>          <p><b>WHAT DO I <b>W</b>ANT TO FIND OUT</b></p>          <p><b>WHAT DID I <b>L</b>EARN</b></p>	

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR WALKING DEBATE

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



## General Reflection Worksheet for Students

<b>REFLECTION</b>	<b>SUMMARISE YOUR REFLECTIONS</b>
<b>REMEMBER</b>	What did I accomplish?
<b>UNDERSTAND</b>	What is important about what I did?
<b>APPLY</b>	Where could I use this again?
<b>ANALYSE</b>	Are there patterns in my work or my behaviour?
<b>EVALUATE</b>	How well did I do? what could be done differently?
<b>EXTEND</b>	How can I use this knowledge in Future work
<b>WHAT HAVE I LEARNT ABOUT MYSELF AS A LEARNER?</b>	