

# WHAT IS DEBATING?

## A SIMPLE CONCEPT

Debating might look a little complicated to those of you who are new to it but, in essence, it's very simple:

- ▶ Two sides – the **Proposition** and **Opposition** – take it in turn to give speeches for and against a **motion**.
- ▶ To ensure that each side and each speaker has an equal opportunity to have their say, **all speeches are of an equal set length**.
- ▶ Speakers prepare in advance, but they can't just read out a written speech; all **speakers have to respond to the other team** through **Points of Information** and, from the First Opposition onwards, through sections of **rebuttal** in their speech.
- ▶ It's a **team activity**; individual speakers must always tie what they say into their side's **case**.
- ▶ The final speaker on each side must be particularly responsive, as they must **summarise the debate as it actually happened** by telling us why their side won the key 'points of clash'.
- ▶ A good debater will convince the audience by using good **Content** with a compelling **Structure** and defending it against the other side's **Responses**. They will engage the audience with powerful **Language** and appropriate **Delivery**. But, in the final event, the key question which links all these aspects together is **"Has the speaker been persuasive?"**

## A POWERFUL TOOL

Once your students have grasped the basics of debate, it immediately becomes an immensely powerful pedagogical tool. Rather than the teacher having to prompt students to examine alternative perspectives, they are empowered with a structure within which it becomes second nature to challenge each other in a rigorous yet constructive manner.

Speaking & Listening work can easily become unstructured or difficult to assess. But the game-like nature of debate, with its exciting strategies for

engaging in a well-paced back-and-forth mean that structure becomes an exciting competitive challenge, not a chore. Our clear five-part assessment criteria make it simple for teachers to integrate debate with the overall structures of assessment for the wider English curriculum. But they are also designed to facilitate peer assessment, with students forming panels of judges who each take responsibility for listening to and making notes on one of the five assessment areas.

## A WHOLE-CLASS ACTIVITY

This involvement of students as peer assessors underlines one of the most essential elements of great debaters, **active listening skills**.

A common myth about using debate in class is that it can't meet Ofsted criteria for a good lesson, because not everyone is involved. But listening is just as important a skill as speaking, and our debating model is designed to develop it systematically.

For those in the debate itself, active listening is the essential prerequisite for the entire **Responses** category in the assessment criteria. But 'just' listening is an important skill in itself, no less so that 'just' reading:

- ▶ The **floor debate** is a crucial part of the proceedings, which necessitates active listening to the speeches which precede it. Teachers can differentiate and individualise effectively by assigning students specific types of question to ask, or specific errors to spot.
- ▶ **Two full debates can be held in one lesson** and, when both debates are on the same motion, **the speakers from the other debate can be tasked with analysing the differences** between the two sets of cases and then discussing which is more effective.
- ▶ **Peer assessors** can evidence their active listening by oral feedback to the debaters, or by writing up their adjudication after the debate, perhaps as homework.
- ▶ Just as reports in newspapers or online are essential to recording our parliamentary democracy, write-ups by **debate journalists** can be added to a class log book of debates throughout the year.

### 01 1<sup>ST</sup> PROPOSITION What do you stand for?

- Excite us about the debate with a strong opening
- Define the motion
- Lay out your side's case
- Develop two or three points
- Round off with a good conclusion.

### 03 2<sup>ND</sup> PROPOSITION Building and responding

- Remind us of your partner's points
- Rebut the 1st Opposition's points
- Develop two or three of your own points, in a way that acknowledges developments in the debate
- Conclude Proposition's main case.

The floor debate is an essential part of the debate, involving our audience (the rest of the class in this scheme of work), without whom debates would have no wider impact.

### PROP SUMMARY 07 The last word

- Examine what Proposition considers to be the main 'points of clash'
- Respond to the floor debate
- Conclude that Proposition must win!

### 1<sup>ST</sup> OPPOSITION 02 What's the other side?

- Introduce opposition case, relating it to what 1st Proposition has just said
- Engage in specific rebuttal of the 1st Proposition's two or three points
- Give two or three of your own points
- Keep momentum with strong finish.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> OPPOSITION 04 Building and responding

- Recap on the opposition case so far
- More rebuttal of the proposition
- Develop the remaining opposition points, in a way that responds to how the debate has developed
- Conclude Opposition's main case.

### FLOOR DEBATE 05 The audience contributes

### 06 OPP SUMMARY Bringing your side together

- Present two or three 'points of clash' from the Opposition's viewpoint
- Take the floor debate into account
- Call on audience to vote Opposition!



# CURRICULUM LINKS

## SPEAKING & LISTENING

## SPOKEN LANGUAGE

“This House regrets the change of ‘Speaking & Listening’ to ‘Spoken Language’ in the new National Curriculum” would make a great debate for your next department meeting! Here are some of the arguments:

PROPOSITION	OPPOSITION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ You can't have a good debate or discussion without excellent active listening skills.</li> <li>▶ Listening is just as integral to the development of good speaking as reading is to good writing.</li> <li>▶ It's basic developmental psychology that Listening is a requisite for all other modes of communication; removing the teaching of Listening in English hampers learning in all subjects.</li> <li>▶ The new curriculum says pupils must build grammar and vocabulary by “knowing and understanding the differences between spoken and written language”. But that's under the ‘Reading’ rubric; shouldn't this be just as much a ‘Speaking’ activity?</li> <li>▶ Important skills unique to oracy (such as speaking from notes, or the details of narrative-level oral/ aural structures are left off.</li> <li>▶ The reduced emphasis on discrete drama work impacts negatively on the Delivery criteria of good debating.</li> <li>▶ Speaking &amp; Listening activities are fun, engaging and effective; they should have been an even bigger part in the new curriculum than they were before!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The new curriculum mandates participation in “formal debates and structured discussions”, including “summarising and/or building on what has been said”. Listening is implicit in this.</li> <li>▶ Developing Listening skills is already part of basic pedagogy; it needn't be in English specifically.</li> <li>▶ Listening gets sufficient time in the primary curriculum, and in “listening to and building on the contributions of others, asking questions to clarify and inform” and “evaluating content, viewpoints, evidence and aspects of presentation” in Spoken Language at KS4. At KS3, we should focus on Reading &amp; Writing.</li> <li>▶ Speaking from notes is implicit in the requirement to write “notes and polished scripts for talks” and to “plan, draft [and] edit”.</li> <li>▶ “Knowing the purpose, audience for and context of ... writing” transfers automatically to oracy.</li> <li>▶ “Improvising, rehearsing and performing ... using role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact” covers all important aspects of Delivery.</li> <li>▶ The new curriculum is concise and to the point; as debaters, we appreciate its rhetorical merits.</li> </ul>

## READING & WRITING

It's important to take on board the Opposition's point from the debate on the left that many statutory aspects of Reading and Writing can be partially taught through debate. For example, the thinking skills of “read critically ...” can be taught effectively through “listen critically”, even though the “read” part needs to be taught separately.

## TOPIC PLENARIES

Debating is an excellent skillset for great topic plenaries. From debating “This House believes we are now living in 1984” or “This House would rather be a Nought than a Cross” at the end of reading a novel, to language-focused debates like “This House deplores the state of tabloid journalism”, debate's requirements to use evidence, examples and explanation for each point ensure both the specifics and general points from a scheme will be summed up.

## CITIZENSHIP/ PSHCE & OTHER SUBJECTS

Many classic debate motions – including those in this scheme of work – are Citizenship / PSHCE topics, whether delivered in English, tutor time or specific lessons.

Our resource for using debate in other subjects will be out later in the spring term. Do spread the word to colleagues.

# ORACY FRAMEWORK

## PHYSICAL

### 1. Voice

- A** fluency and pace of speech
- B** tonal variation
- C** clarity of pronunciation
- D** voice projection

### 2. Body language

- A** gesture and posture
- B** facial expression and eye contact

## LINGUISTIC

### 3. Vocabulary

appropriate vocabulary choice

### 4. Language variety

- A** register
- B** grammar

### 5. Structure

structure and organisation of talk

### 6. Rhetorical techniques

rhetorical techniques, such as metaphor, humour, irony and mimicry

## COGNITIVE

### 7. Content

- A** choice of content to convey meaning and intention
- B** building on the views of others

### 8. Clarifying & summarising

- A** seeking information and clarification through questions
- B** summarising

### 9. Self-regulation

- A** maintaining focus on task
- B** time management

### 10. Reasoning

- A** giving reasons to support views
- B** critically examining ideas and views expressed

### 11. Audience awareness

taking account of level of understanding of the audience

## SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL

### 12. Working with others

- A** guiding or managing the interactions
- B** turn-taking

### 13. Listening & responding

listening actively and responding appropriately

### 14. Confidence in speaking

- A** self-assurance
- B** liveliness and flair

We've linked all the lesson plans in this scheme of work into the exciting new oracy skills framework developed by the University of Cambridge and the Voice21 project at School21 in Stratford, East London.

You can find out more about it at [voice21.org/assessment/oracy-skills-framework](http://voice21.org/assessment/oracy-skills-framework).

Our scheme of work on debate addresses all fourteen of the areas in the skills framework; there are particular links between:

- ▶ ‘Physical’ in the Oracy Skills Framework and ‘Delivery’ in *Up for Debate*
- ▶ ‘Linguistic’ and ‘Language’ (although Oracy Skills’ ‘Structure’ is part of *Up for Debate*'s ‘Structure’ category)
- ▶ ‘Cognitive’ and both ‘Content’ and ‘Structure’ in *Up for Debate*
- ▶ ‘Social & Emotional’ in the Oracy Skills Framework and ‘Responses’ in *Up for Debate*

# STRUCTURING LESSONS FOR OUR 2016-17 TOPICS

Our 2016-17 scheme of work for Year 9 pupils uses two exciting new topics:

- ▶ “This House would censor music videos and lyrics with discriminatory content”
- ▶ “This House would ban international adoption”

It’s up to you how you prepare for these; you might deliver a short, sharp scheme of 8 lessons, use our materials in a co-curricular club, or make debate the focus of an entire half-term of English lessons.

However, we’re keen that *everyone* in Year 9 gets Up for Debate. Pupils of all abilities can advance through debate (see page 9); in groups of 3-4, each pupil works on one of the motions. Even a short 8 lesson scheme has time for four full debates, each with 6 debaters – and opportunities to chair, clerk, judge or give floor speeches – so everyone in the year can participate fully.

Then, you can then pick your top 3 or 4 debaters to represent your school at a regional round. They’ll need to know both sides of each of the two motions inside out, add a bit more material to speak for 4 minutes (rather than 3), and also practise a few impromptu debates with just 20 minutes to prepare!

## COURSE COMPONENTS

			essential?	min time required (hours:mins)
A	What Do You Think?	page 20	optional	00:45
B	Intro to debate format	page 21	✓	00:40
C	Content	pages 22-23	✓	00:45
D	Responses	pages 24-25	✓	00:45
E	Using Notes	page 26	✓	00:10
F	Definitions	page 27	✓	00:05
G	Structure	pages 28-29	✓	00:30
H	Language	pages 30-31	✓	00:45
I	Delivery	pages 32-33	✓	00:15
J	Summaries	page 34	✓	00:10
K	Holding the debates	page 35	✓	01:20
L	Peer judging	page 36	optional	00:15
M	Impromptu debates	page 37	optional	00:45
N	Topic Plenary	pages 38-39	✓	00:10
Total guided learning hours (minimum)				06:00
Minimum lessons (based on lesson length of 50 minutes)				8 lessons

## RESOURCES

### ▶ Overview of course components and teaching / coaching ideas

Everything you need to plan your scheme of work or coaching programme is here in this book, broken up into components from A-M as in the list on the left.

### ▶ PowerPoints, Videos and PDF resources

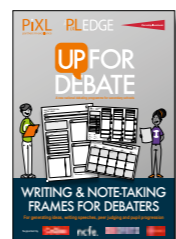
All of the materials for each course component are easy to find via sections A-M of the *Up for Debate* Huddle folder and the password-protected section of noisyclassroom.com. Ask your coordinator for login details.

Versions of the PowerPoints with all the videos embedded are available on Huddle, while the new noisyclassroom.com site (launching in mid-November 2016) will offer streaming video versions of each of Ivan and Hugh’s films.

### ▶ Other booklets

You can download our other core books *Debating Across the Curriculum* and *Debating Beyond the Classroom* from Huddle or the website.

*Writing and Note-Taking Frames for Debaters* has all the non-topic specific sheets in one place, although each is also in the folders A-M when called for in the scheme of work.



## 12 LESSONS

We recommend a dozen lessons for enough time to really dig into the Content, and to keep developing pupils’ ability to give Responses to each others’ points, as they become more familiar with the material.

A longer scheme of work also enables some or all pupils to take an additional role as peer assessors, and share feedback in the last lesson.

1	What Do You Think?	A
2	Format	B
3	Content 1 (Brainstorm)	C
4	Content 2 (Develop NEE) + Definitions	C F
5	Responses 1 + Using Notes	D E
6	Structure	G
7	Language	H
8	Responses 2 + Summaries	D J
9	Delivery + Debate 1	I K
10	Peer judging + Debate 2	L K
11	Debate 3 Debate 4	K
12	Plenary, inc. peer judging discussions	L N

## 8 LESSONS

After a lesson looking at the format using a display debate on the motion “This House Would Lower the Voting Age to 12”, Lesson 2 needs to be a very tight session in which pupils really focus on their topic stimulus sheets and work hard in group discussions.

With this foundation, Lessons 3-5 improve and enhance this content, with four debates in Lessons 6-8.

1	Format	B
2	Content	C
3	Responses + Using Notes	D E
4	Structure + Definitions	G F
5	Language	H
6	Delivery + Debate 1	I K
7	Review of debate 1 + Debate 2	K
8	Debates 3 & 4 Very brief plenary	K N

## 16 LESSONS

With 16 lessons to prepare your motions, you can focus entire lessons on fascinating specific areas like defining the motion or developing students’ abilities to speak from notes.

Peer judges will have the opportunity to see their feedback taken on board as some students debate a second time in one or more impromptu debates.

1	What Do You Think?	A
2	Format	B
3	Content 1 (Brainstorm)	C
4	Content 2 (Develop NEE)	C
5	Definitions	F
6	Responses 1 + Using Notes	D E
7	Structure	G
8	Responses 2	D
9	Language	H
10	Delivery	I K
11	Summaries	D J
12	Peer judging + Debate 1	L K
13	Judges feedback + Debate 2	K L
14	Debate 3 Debate 4	K
15	Judges feedback + impromptu debate 1	N M
16	Impromptu debate 2 + Topic plenary	M N

## A NOTE ON OUR TIMINGS

The timings given in this booklet are all approximate, and are based on the lowest possible amount of time needed to undertake an activity with a relatively high-paced teaching style, and a medium-ability class.

If you are teaching lower-ability pupils who will need more time to grasp the concepts, or if you are teaching higher-ability pupils who will want to think about everything in more detail and are likely to engage in prolonged discussions, you will need more time than our suggestions.

# G STRUCTURE

There are lots of different kinds of structures for speeches, just as there are lots of different structures for houses. But all houses have a front door, some windows and a roof. Similarly, all speeches need an introduction, some points and a conclusion. How many points you give isn't set in concrete, but three often seems to be a magic number.

## FOR STARTERS

Will someone please tell me why I'm here?

## SNEAK PREVIEW

Say what you'll tell them. Tell them. Say what you told them.

## THEMES

It can help for each speaker to focus on a theme.

## TIMING

Time is an asset. Spend it wisely.

## CLEAR POINTS

Make points well-defined, without excessive overlap.

## GRAND FINALE

Send us out through the gift shop, not the fire exit.

- Use the start of your speech to grab your audience's attention.
- Research shows that people make quick judgements so prepare a confident opening to make a strong first impression.
- First speakers will start with the main thrust of their argument.
- Second speakers might look to explore more, switch focus or put the debate back on the right track.
- Summary speakers need finality.
- Early on, you should clearly lay out your 2, 3 or 4 points.
- This might seem a bit boring, but it's important for the audience; they need to know your structure so they see your line of thought.
- When each new point comes up, flag up where we've got to. If you made it clear at the start what the points' names are, you can experiment beyond the prosaic "and now for my second point ..."

Say we're proposing "This House would ban cars in city centres". You might find it useful for each speaker to focus on points in one area:

- 1<sup>st</sup> benefits to environment → 2<sup>nd</sup> benefits to individuals/business *or*
- 1<sup>st</sup> why cars are bad → 2<sup>nd</sup> why public transport is good *or*
- 1<sup>st</sup> short-term effects of policy → 2<sup>nd</sup> long-term effects of policy *or*
- 1<sup>st</sup> why it's a good thing in theory → 2<sup>nd</sup> why it'll work in practice

### Use all your time

If you've taken your time to prepare, and you've been listening carefully to the rest of the debate, you should have enough to say. Use plenty of details and examples.

### Don't take too long

It's very easy to spend lots of time on rebuttal and your first point, and then realise you've got no time to make points 2 and 3. Practise the timing of your speech.

Be careful how you choose your points. In addition, check once more when structuring that none of the Content of your team's points contradicts another point you're making.

Your Content and Language should combine with your Structure to leave us with a memorable thought or phrase, with all the physical and vocal forethought that goes into really great Delivery.



**When you're organising your team's case, and your individual speeches, it helps to have a goal in mind: what do you most need to have proved by the end of the debate?**

You might start your Structure lesson(s) with a few games of Rebuttal Tennis (D4); use the motions set for this scheme of work, or any of the hundreds of topics listed at [noisyclassroom.com](http://noisyclassroom.com). If any of your teams didn't generate enough points during the Content work, rebuttal can help create more.

- ▶ Go through points from each part of A3 sheets: think of a rebuttal for each.
- ▶ Do any of these rebuttals create a good new point *for the other side*?
- ▶ Do any rebuttals show up weaknesses in points? Make them stronger!

If your debaters still don't know whether they're debating in Proposition or Opposition of their motion, now's the time to tell them!

## G0 REVISE YOUR POINTS

10:00+

Teams revise the points for their side of the motion, taking into account the points from the A3 sheets, research from homework, and ideas generated by rebuttal. Teams should write down their six best points.

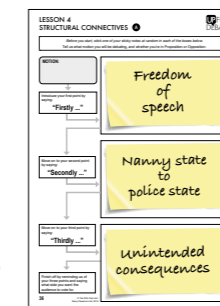
Video G1 revises speech structures from the voting age debate.

## G2 FIRSTLY, SECONDLY, THIRDLY ...

10:00+

Using their team's list, debaters should write out their six finalised points on to the six fresh Post-It Notes.

Each team member needs a different variant of the four Structural Connectives sheets (G2). Each pupil should stick three of their Post-It Notes at random on the sheet. Then, following the instructions on each sheet, pupils should give a 1 to 2 minute speech, using the listing connectives given, and making sure they tell us what their three points are at the start, and remind us of their three points at the end.



## G3 ORDER! ORDER! ORDER!

02:00 (video)

08:00+ (groupwork)

- ▶ Watch the video (G3) about ordering points.
- ▶ As a group, teams should decide together whether there a better way of ordering the speeches than just a random one: Do some points need to be made first? Might some points be better in the second speech, as 'substantive rebuttal'? Do any themes linking 3 points together suggest themselves?
- ▶ Teams then agree the final order for their points, and which speakers will make them. Whether speaking first, second or in summary, the "Team Points" section of their notes sheet should be identical.

**Time to fill in notes sheets fully:** This will vary greatly, and may be done either in class, or as homework, or both.

**Plenary:** What similarities are there between 'beginning, middle and end' types of structure used elsewhere in English? What differences?

## OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Revise how to structure a speech with 3 points
- ▶ Decide on each speaker's 3 points, and how to order them

## KEY LANGUAGE

- ▶ case structure
- ▶ speech structure
- ▶ listing connectives
- ▶ strategy, organisation, ordering
- ▶ definition, mechanism
- ▶ summary, peroration

## ORACY SKILLS

- 5 structure and organisation of talk
- 7A choice of content to convey meaning and intention
- 8B summarising

## DIFFERENTIATION

- ▶ Although this lesson seeks to get students to group all their six points in an a strategic way between the first two speakers, many teams will not manage to do this.
- ▶ The simplest option for structuring is just to put the most important or strongest point as the first point for a team's first speaker.
- ▶ One of the hardest skills to master is giving the right amount of time to each point; practice is the key to this, and using a stopwatch.

## RESOURCES

- ▶ 6 more Post-It Notes per pupil (12.5 x 7.5cm standard notes are fine for this session)
- ▶ G1 Structures in the voting age debate.mp4
- ▶ G2 Structural connectives sheets.pdf
- ▶ G3 Ordering your points.mp4
- ▶ Plus plenty of clean copies of E2 Notes sheets.pdf