

Preparing a debate with a class

(adapted with kind permission from <http://noisyclassroom.com/primary/ideas/preparing-a-debate-with-a-class.html>)

- Divide the class into groups
- Give each of the groups one side of one of the topics to prepare
- Give each member of the class some sticky notes to write on
- Follow the five steps

Step 1: Brainstorm ideas

- Individual brainstorm – allow five minutes silent time for individual brainstorming – the pupils should write one point on each of the sticky notes. Tell them to use key words rather than full sentences.
- Group brainstorm – each group needs a sheet of paper and a “chair”. The chair should go around the group hearing all the ideas and sticking them on the paper. Duplicated ideas get stuck on together.

Step 2: Organise ideas

- The group then need another sheet of paper on which they write 1-9 down the side. From the brainstorm they need to identify between 7 and 9 arguments. They may have more than these, so to get them down they can:
- Scrap small or insignificant arguments
- Join together similar arguments to make larger ones
- On their sheet they need to write the names of the arguments. EACH NAME SHOULD BE NO LONGER THAN THREE WORDS.
- They then need to divide the arguments between the three speakers. The first speaker should have three arguments. The second and third speaker should have two or three arguments.

Step Three: Structure the speeches

Introduce the idea of the speech structure on the board:

- **Introduction** – who are you and what do you stand for?
- **Preview** – What are the names of the points you are going to cover?
- **Rebuttal** – unless you are the first speaker, you’d say “first lets take a look at what we heard from the previous speaker” and disagree with their points.

- **Point One** – “Now onto my points”

Name

Explanation (the reasoning – why is your point true and why does it mean your overall position is right?)

Evidence (facts, analogies, examples, imagery or authority to support your reasoning)

- **Point Two** – Name, Explanation, Evidence
- **Point Three** – Name, Explanation, Evidence
- **Reminder** – remind the audience of the three points you have covered
- **Vote for Us**

Step 4: Prepare your speeches

Introduce the Idea of developing your arguments by “Making Them REAL”

- **Reason**
- **Evidence**
- **Analysis**
- **Link**

Choose the first speakers in each group and allow them some time to think about how to make each of their points REAL. Only allow them to write down six words for each point (in addition to the name) – it’s speaking and listening not reading out!

Step 5: Prepare the rest of the class

Whilst the speakers are preparing their speeches:

- The other pupils should try to think what the other side might say and come up with rebuttal.