



Debate Disarmament in the Classroom*

A debate is an opportunity to hear two sides of a story, with equal time given to each side. You'll get to hone your public-speaking skills and learn to think on your feet.

When it comes to changing the world, you need to be able to make your case with well researched and convincing arguments. Use this activity to help you learn to formulate arguments and make your case.

Steps:

1. Divide the class into groups of six plus an adjudicator.
2. Allocate each group a topic (See sample topics below).
3. Divide each group into two teams of three.
4. Allocate each team member a speaking role (See below).
5. In teams brainstorm arguments that support your position.
6. Divide these arguments between the first and second speakers.
7. Decide on a time limit for each speaker, e.g. two minutes.
8. Commence the debate with the first speaker for the affirmative.
9. Alternate between the negative and affirmative teams.
10. Announce which team won the debate!

Sample topics:

- That landmines are still an important problem in the world.
- That Canada should join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons banning nuclear weapons.
- That autonomous weapons systems should be banned before they are ever used
- That the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a useful step towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.
- That ordinary people can have an extraordinary impact even on tough issues like disarmament

Some resources to get you started:

- Mines Action Canada www.minesactioncanada.org

* Adapted from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons' Learn Peace (2011)

- The International Campaign to Ban Landmines www.icbl.org
- The Landmine Monitor www.the-monitor.org
- The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots www.stopkillerrobots.org
- The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons www.icanw.org
- The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs www.un.org/disarmament/
- The Ottawa Treaty banning landmines www.apminebanconvention.org
- The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons <http://www.icanw.org/treaty-on-the-prohibition-of-nuclear-weapons/>

Sample plans for the debate:

<p style="text-align: center;">Affirmative team <i>Agrees with the topic</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Negative team <i>Disagrees with the topic</i></p>
<p>Speaker 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Defines what the topic of the debate is ▪ Presents the affirmative team’s main line/argument ▪ Outlines what the rest of the affirmative team will argue ▪ Presents the first half of the case for the affirmative 	<p>Speaker 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presents the negative team’s main line/argument ▪ Outlines what the rest of the negative team will argue ▪ Rebutts what the first affirmative speaker has said ▪ Presents the first half of the case for the negative
<p>Speaker 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rebutts what the first negative speaker has said ▪ Presents the second half of the case for the affirmative 	<p>Speaker 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rebutts what the affirmative speakers have said ▪ Presents the second half of the case for the negative
<p>Speaker 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rebutts all the remaining points of the case for the negative ▪ Presents a summary of the case for the affirmative ▪ Concludes the debate for the affirmative 	<p>Speaker 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rebutts all the remaining points of the case for the affirmative ▪ Presents a summary of the case for the negative ▪ Concludes the debate for the negative