



## Lesson Plan: The Great Debate

- **Context of the unit:** This unit is a year-long unit that will focus on a persuasive debate every month. The previous debate before this one was a pop culture debate to give the students an introduction about debates and persuasive writing. Each debate will be recorded and podcasted on my website. Also, the students will write persuasive essays to show them how a debate is formatted and to provide content for their debate.
- **Context of the lesson:** This lesson follows the unit on the formation of the U.S. government and the U.S. Constitution in the student' social studies textbook. Also, this lesson follows the first lesson of the students' pop culture debates and a persuasive writing lesson.
- **Standards Addressed in the Unit:**

### Language Arts Standards:

#### *Writing:*

##### 2.4 Write persuasive letters or compositions:

- a. State a clear position in support of a proposal.
- b. Support a position with relevant evidence.
- c. Follow a simple organizational pattern.
- d. Address reader concerns.

#### *Speaking:*

##### 2.2 Deliver informative presentations about an important idea, issue, or event by the following means:

- a. Frame questions to direct the investigation.
- b. Establish a controlling idea or topic.
- c. Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.



## **History Standards:**

*5.5 Students explain the causes of the American Revolution:*

3. Understand the people and events associated with the drafting and signing of the Declaration of Independence and the document's significance, including the key political concepts it embodies, the origins of those concepts, and its role in severing ties with Great Britain.

*5.7 Students describe the people and events associated with the development of the U.S. Constitution and analyze the Constitution's significance as the foundation of the American republic:*

3. Understand the fundamental principles of American constitutional democracy, including how the government derives its power from the people and the primacy of individual liberty.
4. Understand how the Constitution is designed to secure our liberty by both empowering and limiting central government and compare the powers granted to citizens, Congress, the president, and the Supreme Court with those reserved to the states.
5. Discuss the meaning of the American creed that calls on citizens to safeguard the liberty of individual Americans within a unified nation, to respect the rule of law, and to preserve the Constitution.

- **Standards Addressed in *this* lesson:**

## **Language Arts Standards:**

*Writing:*

2.4 Write persuasive letters or compositions:

- e. State a clear position in support of a proposal.
- f. Support a position with relevant evidence.
- g. Follow a simple organizational pattern.
- h. Address reader concerns.



*Speaking:*

- 2.2 Deliver informative presentations about an important idea, issue, or event by the following means:
- d. Frame questions to direct the investigation.
  - e. Establish a controlling idea or topic.
  - f. Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.

**History Standards:**

*5.7 Students describe the people and events associated with the development of the U.S.*

*Constitution and analyze the Constitution's significance as the foundation of the American republic:*

6. Understand the fundamental principles of American constitutional democracy, including how the government derives its power from the people and the primacy of individual liberty.
7. Understand how the Constitution is designed to secure our liberty by both empowering and limiting central government and compare the powers granted to citizens, Congress, the president, and the Supreme Court with those reserved to the states.
8. Discuss the meaning of the American creed that calls on citizens to safeguard the liberty of individual Americans within a unified nation, to respect the rule of law, and to preserve the Constitution.

**Common Core State Standards for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects K-5**

**College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening K-5**

**Comprehension and Collaboration**

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.



2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

#### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

#### • **Objective(s):**

1. Students will create a persuasive essay writing for one constitutional rights topics.
2. Students will present their persuasive essays for their sides in a debate format in front of the class and will be recorded for a podcast



## Lesson Plan: The Great Debate

### Big Idea(s):

**The strength of a democracy is equal to the strength of its citizens** (*The judicial branch interprets the Constitution and with people's participation into the judicial system, our Constitution is strengthened and our democracy is strengthened*).

**E Pluribus Unum: out of many, one** (*One person can make a difference in the legal system by bringing their Constitutional questions to the judicial branch*).

### Essential Questions/Issues:

1. How is the Constitution a living document?
2. When people participate in the judicial branch, how can citizens have an effect on interpreting the Constitution?

### Higher Order Thinking Questions:

1. How would you debate your side of each of the famous U.S. Supreme Court Cases? (analysis and synthesis)
2. After the debates, does the U.S. Supreme Court decisions to your case seem fair to you? (judgment).



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**Assessment:** Students will be evaluated through informal checks for understanding, teacher observation, self-reflection, and performing an authentic task evaluated by a persuasive writing and class debate rubric.

### Quality Criteria:

### Class Debate Rubric:

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Respect for Other Team	All statements, body language, and responses were respectful and were in appropriate language.	Statements and responses were respectful and used appropriate language, but once or twice body language was not.	Most statements and responses were respectful and in appropriate language, but there was one sarcastic remark.	Statements, responses and/or body language were consistently not respectful.
Information	All information presented in the debate was clear, accurate and thorough.	Most information presented in the debate was clear, accurate and thorough.	Most information presented in the debate was clear and accurate, but was not usually thorough.	Information had several inaccuracies OR was usually not clear.
Rebuttal	All counter-arguments were accurate, relevant and strong.	Most counter-arguments were accurate, relevant, and strong.	Most counter-arguments were accurate and relevant, but several were weak.	Counter-arguments were not accurate and/or relevant
Use of Facts/Statistics	Every major point was well supported with several relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.	Every major point was adequately supported with relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.	Every major point was supported with facts, statistics and/or examples, but the relevance of some was questionable.	Every point was not supported.



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Presentation Style	Team consistently used gestures, eye contact, tone of voice and a level of enthusiasm in a way that kept the attention of the audience.	Team usually used gestures, eye contact, tone of voice and a level of enthusiasm in a way that kept the attention of the audience.	Team sometimes used gestures, eye contact, tone of voice and a level of enthusiasm in a way that kept the attention of the audience.	One or more members of the team had a presentation style that did not keep the attention of the audience.
Organization	All arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) and organized in a tight, logical fashion.	Most arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) and organized in a tight, logical fashion.	All arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) but the organization was sometimes not clear or logical.	Arguments were not clearly tied to an idea (premise).
Understanding of Topic	The team clearly understood the topic in-depth and presented their information forcefully and convincingly.	The team clearly understood the topic in-depth and presented their information with ease.	The team seemed to understand the main points of the topic and presented those with ease.	The team did not show an adequate understanding of the topic.

### Persuasive Essay Rubric:

CATEGORY	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards
Attention Grabber	The introductory paragraph has a strong hook or attention grabber that is appropriate for the audience. This could be a strong statement, a relevant quotation,	The introductory paragraph has a hook or attention grabber, but it is weak, rambling or inappropriate for the audience.	The author has an interesting introductory paragraph but the connection to the topic is not clear.	The introductory paragraph is not interesting AND is not relevant to the topic.



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	statistic, or question addressed to the reader.			
Focus or Thesis Statement	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.	The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.
Support for Position	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader's concerns, biases or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).
Evidence and Examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.



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Sequencing	Arguments and support are provided in a logical order that makes it easy and interesting to follow the author's train of thought.	Arguments and support are provided in a fairly logical order that makes it reasonably easy to follow the author's train of thought.	A few of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem a little confusing.	Many of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem very confusing.
Closing paragraph	The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the writer's position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph.	The conclusion is recognizable. The author's position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph.	The author's position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning.	There is no conclusion - the paper just ends.
Audience	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the potential reader and uses appropriate vocabulary and arguments. Anticipates reader's questions and provides thorough answers appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates a general understanding of the potential reader and uses vocabulary and arguments appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates some understanding of the potential reader and uses arguments appropriate for that audience.	It is not clear who the author is writing for.



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Sentence Structure	All sentences are well-constructed with varied structure.	Most sentences are well-constructed and there is some varied sentence structure in the essay.	Most sentences are well constructed, but there is no variation in structure.	Most sentences are not well-constructed or varied.
Grammar & Spelling	Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
Capitalization & Punctuation	Author makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the essay is exceptionally easy to read.	Author makes 1-2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the essay is still easy to read.	Author makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.	Author makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.



## Lesson Plan: The Great Debate

### Lesson Activity Steps:

Purpose	Teacher	Students
Hook 5 minutes	Teacher starts yelling “Fire” and starts a discussion about if it is right to do that when there is no fire.	Actively discuss with the teacher the consequences of saying “Fire” when nothing is on fire.
Set 10 minutes	Introduce Big ideas and objectives for this lesson.	Listen to the teacher
Into 20 minutes	Watch videos of each case from the Courts in the Classroom and have them fill out the worksheet.	Students watch the videos and fill out the worksheet.
Through 10 minutes	Have the students pick the topics for the debates	Students pick a topic they want to be for the debate
Through 20 minutes	Go over the persuasive writing format for their debate and the rubrics for the writing and oral debate	Students listen and present any questions about the task to the teacher.
Assessment 1-2 hours for writing and 1 hour for the class debate	Students will write their persuasive essays on a lined piece of paper and discuss ideas with their neighbors.  Students present their debates to the class (also being recorded on the microphone).	Students writing their persuasive essay and discussing with their neighbors.  Students presenting their debate to the class



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Closure 20 minutes	Having students listen to their recordings.	Students listening to their recordings and grading themselves on their persuasive checklist.
Beyond	Students find recent U.S. Supreme court cases online or in the newspaper and we discuss the decisions in class	Students finding real cases online or in the newspaper and discuss with the other students in class

### **Special Needs of students are considered in this lesson:**

Students are put into groups that will benefit learning for all types of learners and special needs. Each student has a different part in the debate so all students will participate in the writing of the essay and the debate. The teacher will also provide persuasive essay writing outlines to help ELL and special needs students.

### **Extension Ideas:**

The extension idea for this unit is to do a class debate each month on different topics so we can extend this unit by using our other topics we cover in history for debate such as a Patriot and Loyalist debate or who really discovered the New World debate. This lesson can be extended by finding other recent U.S. Supreme court cases to debate.



## Lesson Plan: The Great Debate

### Materials and Resources Needed:

1. Microphone
2. Computer
3. Audacity recording program

### References:

Courts in the Classroom: <http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/lre2/CourtsLRE/index.html>

Audacity recording download: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Famous Supreme Court Cases

1. Go to <http://www.courtsed.org/courts-in-the-classroom>
  
2. Click on Landmark cases and find your highlighted case below:
  - First Amendment- Tinker
  - First Amendment- Edwards
  - First Amendment- Hazelwood
  - Fourth Amendment- T.I.O.
  - Fourth Amendment- Vernonia
  - Fourteenth Amendment-Brown
  
3. Watch the cartoon (you may have to wait at some parts to click next)
  
4. What is your video about?

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5. Do you agree with the video and why do you feel that way?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Persuasive Essay Score Sheet

### Opening Paragraph (1<sup>st</sup> paragraph)

**1. Does it have an attention grabbing sentence(s) in the beginning of the essay?**

- Yes, (4 pts)  
 No (0 pts)  
 It does, but it doesn't match the topic (2 pts)

**2. Is there a sentence that lists the position and three reasons to support the position?**

- Yes (4 pts)  
 No (0 pts)  
 It lists the position, but not three reasons (2 pts).  
 It lists the reasons, but not a position (2 pts).

### Body Paragraphs (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> paragraphs)

**3. Do the body paragraphs match the reasons in the thesis statement?**

- Yes (4 pts)  
 No (0 pts)  
 Some of them do (2 pts)

**4. Are there at least 3 facts or examples that support each of the 3 reasons?**

- Yes (4 pts)  
 No (0 pts)



There are less than 3 facts or examples that support each of the 3 reasons (2 pts)

**5. Are the facts and examples explaining each reason in detail?**

Always ( 4 pts)

Never ( 0 pts)

Sometimes (2 pts)

**6. Are there transition words (first, next, last, finally) that start each of the body paragraphs?**

Yes (4 pts)

No (0 pts)

Some, but not all of the body paragraphs (2 pts)

**Closing Paragraph (5<sup>th</sup> paragraph)**

**7. Is there a counterargument answering the problems with the other side?**

Yes (4 pts)

No (0 pts)

Yes, but it is not good or doesn't make sense (2 pts)

**8. Does it have the position of the essay again?**

Yes (4 pts)

No (0 pts)



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### **9. Does it have a catchy ending?**

- Yes (4 pts)
- No (0 pts)
- It has a ending, but it is boring (2 pts)

### **Grammar, Capitalization, Punctuation, Indentation, Word choice, Sentence Structure, and Spelling**

#### **10. Are there fragment sentences (Example-When we went)?**

- None (4 pts)
- 1 to 2 fragments ( 2 pts)
- More than 2 (1 pts)

#### **11. Does each sentence start with a capital letter?**

- Always (4 pts)
- Never (0 pts)
- Sometimes (2 pts)

#### **12. Do the names of places and people start with a capital letter?**

- Always (4 pts)
- Never (0 pts)
- Sometimes (2 pts)



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**13. Is "I" capitalized?**

Always (4 pts)

Never (0 pts)

Sometimes (2 pts)

**14. Does each sentence end with a period or question mark?**

Always (4 pts)

Never (0 pts)

Sometimes (2 pts)

**15. Are there commas at the appropriate places (in a list, dates, after fragments, and after transition words)?**

Always (4 pts)

Never (0 pts)

Sometimes (2 pts)

**16. Is each paragraph indented?**

Yes (4 pts)

No (0 pts)

Sometimes (2 pts)



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**17. Are there complex and compound sentences (sentences using and, or, but/ sentences using because, since, and when)?**

Always (4 pts)

Never (0 pts)

Sometimes (2 pts)

**18. Do all of the sentences start with the same word?**

Never (4 pts)

Sometimes (2 pts)

Always (0 pts)

**19. Does the essay have persuasive words throughout the essay (interesting, magnificent, shocking, popular)?**

Yes (4 pts)

No (0 pts)

Some, but needs more (2 pts)

**20. Are there spelling errors?**

0-1 (4 pts)

2-3 (3 pts)

4-5 (2 pts)



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More than 5 (1 pt)

**Total points**

**Divide total points by 80**

**Percent and grade**



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Persuasive Essay Outline

### Circle your topic:

1. Should women be allowed to play on men's sport teams?
2. Should James Foster have a dress code?
3. If we had a school newspaper written by students, should they be able to print any article they want?
4. Should Foster have surveillance cameras?
5. Should girls and boys have their own separate schools?

### **2. Body Paragraph**

First of all, \_\_\_\_\_ (**write 1st reason**).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

### **3. Body Paragraph**

Next, \_\_\_\_\_ (**write 2nd reason**).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

### **4. Body Paragraph**

Finally, \_\_\_\_\_ (**write 3rd reason**).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).



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\_\_\_\_\_ (Example or fact).

## 1. Opening Paragraph

\_\_\_\_\_ (attention grabbing sentence).

I think that \_\_\_\_\_ (position) because \_\_\_\_\_

(first reason-see above#2), \_\_\_\_\_ (second reason-see above #3), and

\_\_\_\_\_ (third reason-see above #4).

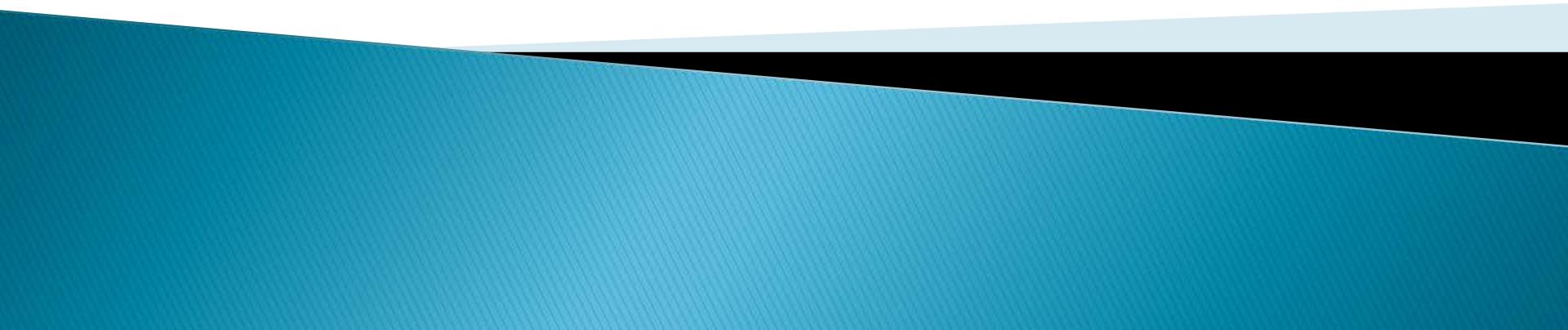
## 5. Closing paragraph

\_\_\_\_\_ (counterargument).

\_\_\_\_\_ (rewrite position).

\_\_\_\_\_ (catchy ending).

# The Great Debate



# **Should Boys and Girls have Separate Schools?**

## 2. Body Paragraph

- ▶ First of all, boys and girls need to learn how to get along (write 1st reason).
- ▶ Boys and girls work together in class and on the playground which helps them both effectively communicate with each other (Example or fact).
- ▶ \_\_\_\_\_(Example or fact).
- ▶ \_\_\_\_\_(Example or fact).

### 3. Body Paragraph

- ▶ Next, girls and boys help each other in school. (write 2nd reason).
- ▶ Both my male and female students help each other on their classwork. (Example or fact).
- ▶ ----- (Example or fact).
- ▶ ----- (Example or fact).

## 4. Body paragraph

- ▶ Finally, girls need to be exposed to pressure they will face in the real world. (write 3rd reason).
- ▶ Girls need to be in a mixed classroom to understand that they can't let boys push them around or intimidate them. (Example or fact).  
-----  
(Example or fact).
- ▶ -----  
(Example or fact).

# 1. Introduction Paragraph

- ▶ How would you like to live in a world where boys and girls don't talk? (attention grabbing sentence).
- ▶ I think that girls and boys need to be in the same school (position) because boys and girls need to learn how to get along (first reason—see above#2), girls and boys help each other in school (second reason—see above #3), and girls need to be exposed to pressure they will face in the real world (third reason—see above #4).

# 5. Closing Paragraph

- ▶ I know that girls would get more attention in the classroom if the boys were not around, but girls would not be prepared for real life when they graduate because men rule the workplace. (counterargument).
- ▶ Keep boys and girls in the same school! (rewrite position).
- ▶ Please save your teacher from a room filled with endless girl drama or a room filled with a bunch of loud, chatty boys. (catchy ending).