



Hold a Climate Change themed debate

About this resource

This resource is designed to be used following completion of The Playground. It prompts students to use what they've learnt in order to structure arguments for or against a series of statements, each linking to one of the six Playground topics.

Each statement represents a real-world perspective and the debate that pupils will have reflects the ongoing discourse in our society around climate change.

If pupils are confident with the topics, the activity can be delivered within one lesson. Alternatively, pupils can be given research time to prepare their arguments.

Curriculum Links

This activity is adaptable and can help you meet the needs of the National Curriculum in a wide variety of subjects. We recommend you make links to your learning and implement the activity in a way that is suitable for your curriculum and pupils. Here's 3 ideas to inspire you:

- KS2 English, Spoken Language - this activity is ideal for developing pupil's ability to form arguments, explain their ideas, converse and hypothesize ideas.
- KS3 Chemistry - this activity provides a creative extension to your work on 'the production of carbon dioxide by human activity and the impact on climate'.
- KS3/4 PSHE, Health and Wellbeing and Living in the Wider World - this activity can help to develop research and presentation skills, balanced thinking, assertiveness and the ability to self-reflect.

Delivery Resources

To deliver this activity, you will need to print 3 copies of each of the worksheets on pages 4 and 5 of this document.



Delivery Steps

Assign groups and a debate statement

- 1 Split your class into 3 evenly sized groups.
- 2 Assign each group a statement from the 6 options below. This is the statement that they will debate in front of the rest of the class.
 - "Eating meat and animal products (like cheese and milk) should be illegal."
 - "Buying second hand should be everyone's first option. Buying new should only happen if there are no second-hand options."
 - "There should be a limit on how much electricity we can each use in one day."
 - "Fuel-powered vehicles should be banned immediately."
 - "This rhyme should be mandated in school - "If it's yellow let it mellow, if it's brown, flush it down""
 - "The government should pay for all schools to replace their fossil-fuel powered boilers with renewable alternatives."
- 3 Split each of your 3 groups in half and set one as 'TEAM FOR' and one as 'TEAM AGAINST'. As the names suggest, TEAM FOR' will argue for the perspective of the statement and 'TEAM AGAINST' will argue against it.

Preparing to debate

- 1 Give each 'TEAM FOR' the worksheet on page 4 of this document. Give each 'TEAM AGAINST' the worksheet on page 5 of this document.
- 2 Prompt the groups to use the worksheets to identify points for and against the debate statement, outlining their key arguments/rebuttals, and drafting their closing statements. (This is the part that may require research time, depending on the knowledge of your pupils.)
- 3 At this point, you could also discuss the 'Debating Top Tips' which are presented below.



The debate

- 1 Give each team - for and against - a fixed amount of time (i.e. 3 minutes) to stand up and present their side of the argument to the class.
- 2 Then, give each group a fixed amount of time to present counterarguments and ask the other group questions.
- 3 Give each group the opportunity to provide a closing statement, perhaps capped at 30 seconds, summarizing their key points.
- 4 Finally, the other pupils can vote for the side that they agree with most.

Delivery Top Tips

- Try and think about the statement from a variety of perspectives in order to craft your argument and counter the opposing view:

Is it realistic?

Would people be happy or sad about it? Why?

What effect might it have on the environment?

- The best arguments in a debate are supported by evidence. Are there any facts you can use to back-up your points?
- Consider using emotive language, rhetorical questions and imperatives to build a persuasive argument
- Try building in repetition to give emphasis to your points
- Keep your audience engaged by addressing them directly

Research Sources

BBC's [The Regenerators](#) provides terrific pupil-focused materials for researching the topics. It gathers all their environmental learning resources into one place, inspiring children and teenagers to live a greener life.

What next?

Here's a selection of further activities you could build into your lessons to expand on this topic:

- Write a persuasive letter to a key decision maker in your community, advocating for/against your statement and recommending a linked action or policy.
- Write a newspaper article, imagining an event that may happen if your perspective is not listened to and actioned.
- Design a poster, aimed at persuading people to agree with your perspective.





Select which side you're on:

FOR / AGAINST

Our statement:

Arguments **FOR**
our statement

Arguments **AGAINST**
our statement

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Our 3 main arguments

1

2

3

Useful facts

Our closing statement (30-60 seconds long)