

Lesson Plan – Debate

Topic – Hydro Power

Debate question: *Should each village generate its own energy?*

A structured practice debate on a controversial topic. The different ‘rounds’ of the debate help students think through the issues and reconsider their opinions. The structure also shows them how to build a discussion and back up their opinions with facts.

Learning Objectives

To practise discussing and debating issues and expressing an opinion	To understand more of the technical, social and environmental factors around community energy generation
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Other Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:		
Consider social, ethical and factual issues in an integrated way	Think about different points of view	Learn to back up their opinions with facts

Resources

Slide deck

Eight characters – you can use all eight if you wish, or fewer. The minimum is the four main characters (in bold) this give two for and two against. The extra characters give more opinions for and against

Characters for	Characters against
Brian Kirkham – local business	Fran Wilson – otter conservationist
Trent Beckett – musician	Len Bramley - restaurant owner
Mollie Horner - baker	Pat Davison - engineer
Ella Peebles – nursery teacher	Tina Cullen – retired

Activity

Facilitation tips

Ensure pupils know there is no right or wrong answer. Be observant of ones who want to speak and are not getting a chance. Encourage students to give a reason for their opinions. For groups who may need extra support you can put the following prompt sentences up on the board:

"I think every community should/shouldn't generate its own energy because....."

"I think is the most important point to think about."

Starter – 10 minutes

(The PowerPoint slides could be used here)

- Opening slide 'Headline News' gauge immediate reactions
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Round 1 Show the debate question: ***Should each village generate its own energy?***

Do the students already have an opinion?

Round 1 For/Against/Don't know. Note the number of responses on the board (tell them there will be three rounds)

Main activity – 40 minutes

- 1) Split students into character groups
- 2) Give them the **character cards** – one per group, and give them a few minutes to read them over.

(They can stay in their roles for the whole debate or just the first round. If it is all the way through – give them a chance to express their views in the plenary session at the end. For groups who are not confident at class discussion it might help them to discuss their character's position then compare in their groups. Then they will have had a chance to rehearse some of what they want to say before saying it in front of the whole class)

- 3) Get one student in each group to read out the **first section only** to the rest of the class. What are their initial thoughts? Are there any positions they identify with or reject?
- 4) Take it in turns to read out their **fact**. Does it change the way they think?
- 5) **Round 2** For/Against/Don't know. Note the number of responses on the board
- 6) Read the **issue**. Any different feelings.
- 7) Each team asks their **question** to the character of their choice.

Plenary - 15 minutes

Vote for the position they agree with most

Note the number of responses on the board **Round 3** For/Against/Don't know.

Look at how the views have changed during the debate.

Why have their opinions changed? Which arguments were the most persuasive?

(If time show the **You Tube** of community hydro <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1GU6Lp9js>

If you had shown this first – what difference would it have made to their views?)

Complete the section in the S4S week booklet and answer the two questions 'What did I learn in this lesson?' and 'How does Ethical Science or Technology Justice apply to this lesson?'

OR

Reflect on the use of **science for good** in community energy generation.