

## Up for Debate

**Time Needed:** One Class Period

**Materials Needed:**

Student worksheets

Up for Debate PowerPoint

**Copy Instructions:**

Skit (class set, double sided)

Analysis p.1-2 (class set, double sided)

Review (class set)

**Learning Objectives.** Students will be able to:

- Identify the key elements of a Lincoln/Douglas debate including affirmative, negative, moderator, etc. through examination of a debate script
- Interpret the role of debate in a democratic society through discussion of a historic quote about the role of debate

## STEP BY STEP

- ❑ **ANTICIPATE** the lesson by writing the following quote on the board or a transparency: "It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it." – Joseph Joubert, a French writer (1754-1824)
- ❑ **UNPACK** this quote with your students by asking the following questions:
  - "What does it mean to DEBATE something?"
  - "What does it mean to SETTLE a debate or argument?"
  - "What does the first half of his statement mean: 'To debate a question without settling it?'"
  - "What does the second half of his statement mean: 'To settle a question without debating it?'"
  - Poll your students to see who agrees and who disagrees with Mr. Joubert.
- ❑ **RUN** the "Up For Debate" PowerPoint presentation. Review the presentation with your students, using the mini-quizzes in the power point to check for understanding.
- ❑ **DISTRIBUTE** scripts and worksheets to all students.
- ❑ **ASSIGN** students to roles: moderator and #1-9. Instruct the students to perform the script, with everyone listening carefully to who was on the affirmative side and who was on the negative side. Also, students should listen for fact and opinion statements.
- ❑ **REVIEW** instructions aloud with your students. They should be circling and drawing rectangles in this activity. Circulate to check for understanding.
- ❑ **REVIEW** the students' answers as a class, asking for the following things:
  - Which numbers were for the affirmative side?
  - Which numbers were for the negative side?
  - What facts did you find in this debate?
  - What opinions did you find in this debate?
- ❑ **INSTRUCT** students to complete the Check for Understanding. Collect and review.

## A Uniform Debate

Roles: *Moderator, Speakers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9*

**Moderator:** Welcome to today's debate. Our two sides will be debating school uniforms. They will be using a formal model for debate and will be debating this topic: "School uniforms should be required in all schools."

**1:** We believe that school uniforms should be worn at all schools. School uniforms have been given a bad rap, but they are a solution for lots of problems faced by teens and schools. There is a lot of peer pressure in school to look "cool." Uniforms solve the problem of looking cool. Everyone is on the same level!

An added bonus is that uniforms prepare kids for the working world. When we get jobs we will have to dress professionally and uniforms help us learn how to do that.

Most importantly, uniforms will make the students' life easier! No more worrying about what to wear in the morning. You can use those extra five minutes to sleep in!

**2:** What kinds of big problems do uniforms solve?

**3:** Uniforms have been shown in several school districts to help with discipline, attendance, and academics.

**2:** Are uniforms going to stop people from wanting to be cool?

**3:** No, but uniforms take care of clothes which is the biggest way we judge each other.

**2:** Are uniforms going to stop people from wanting to be cool?

**4:** We believe that school uniforms are more harmful than helpful. Uniforms take away our ability to express ourselves.

Uniforms won't make us work harder in school. Kids who wear uniforms don't necessarily do better at school than kids who don't wear uniforms.

People also say that uniforms decrease violence rates in schools, but there is no evidence to support this argument.

Also, uniforms are expensive and we are entitled to a free education! All in all, uniforms are a bad idea for us and for our school.

**5:** What evidence do you have to support your claim that students who don't wear uniforms are just as good at school as students who wear uniforms?

# Up For Debate

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- 6:** A study by David Brunσμα and Kerry Rockquemore published in 1998 says that there is no direct connection between uniforms and good academic performance.
- 5:** Are all kids who wear uniforms unhappy?
- 6:** A poll of my classmates says that 95% of students say they would be unhappy if they had to wear uniforms.

**Moderator:** We will now begin the rebuttals.

- 7:** While my opponent raises some good points, it is important that we look at the facts. In Miami, Florida (1996-1997), schools reported that discipline improved after uniforms were made mandatory. Also, *Psychology Today* reported that in Long Beach, California, studies showed improved attendance and a drop in violence in schools with mandatory uniforms. While it is easy to say that uniforms have no good effect on students, the studies show that uniforms help solve problems in schools.
- 8:** David Brunσμα, an associate professor of sociology at the University of Missouri-Columbia has spent *10 years* researching how uniforms affect education. His study says that there are no *statistics* proving uniforms affect attendance, discipline, safety or substance abuse. He says that there are other factors, apart from uniforms, that have a bigger impact on behavior and academics.
- 9:** That is only one study. Uniforms are supported by teachers and principals everywhere because the effects of uniforms are clear. When schools implement uniforms, like in Long Beach, California, there is a drop in fights and an improvement in attendance. Kids like to be a part of something and a uniform makes kids feel like they are part of something important: school!

**Moderator:** And that concludes today's debate.

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**What's what? Who's who?** Look back through the debate and complete the following steps:

- What was the topic of today's debate? \_\_\_\_\_
- **CIRCLE** the numbers of people who were arguing for the AFFIRMATIVE side.
- Draw a **RECTANGLE** around the numbers of people who were arguing for the NEGATIVE side.

# Up For Debate

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

**Organize the Arguments.** List the *arguments* for either side in the chart below. Arguments are reasons that each side supports their position.



Topic Statement

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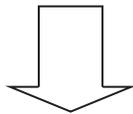
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Negative Position

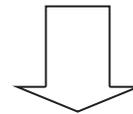
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The reasons that they support their side are...



**AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENTS**

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**NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS**

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# Up For Debate



## Evidence

In a debate it is very important to support your argument with evidence. There are three kinds of evidence listed below: studies, opinion polls, and examples. Use the script to locate evidence used in the debate over school uniforms.

### Studies

Researchers studied the effect of uniforms and found that...

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Which side of the debate does this evidence support?       AFFIRMATIVE    or     NEGATIVE

### Opinion Polls

A survey was conducted to get opinions about uniforms and it was found that...

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Which side of the debate does this evidence support?       AFFIRMATIVE    or     NEGATIVE

### Examples

In one location, \_\_\_\_\_, uniforms were found to...

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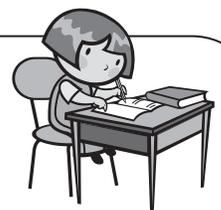
Which side of the debate does this evidence support?       AFFIRMATIVE    or     NEGATIVE

### **What do *you* think??**

Do you think that uniforms should be required in school?

YES      or       NO

I think that uniforms (should / shouldn't) be required in school. I think this because...



# Up For Debate

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

**Vocabulary.** Answer each question by circling the best answer below...

1. What does the AFFIRMATIVE side stand for?
  - A) supports the statement up for debate
  - B) against the statement up for debate
  - C) does not care who wins or loses
  - D) tells everyone what is going on
2. What does the NEGATIVE side stand for?
  - A) tells everyone what is going on
  - B) against the statement up for debate
  - C) supports the statement up for debate
  - D) does not care who wins or loses
3. What does the MODERATOR do?
  - A) gets people to argue with each other
  - B) separates fact from opinion
  - C) tells everyone they did a good job
  - D) introduces and controls the pace
4. What does it mean to REBUT an argument?
  - A) to agree with an argument
  - B) to go against an argument with evidence
  - C) to treat something very carefully
  - D) to insult someone during a debate
5. What does it mean to SUMMARIZE something?
  - A) to make something hot, like summer
  - B) to add everything together
  - C) to restate the main point in fewer words
  - D) to cut out all the main ideas
6. In a debate, who speaks first?
  - A) flip a coin
  - B) affirmative
  - C) negative
  - D) no one goes first
7. Why is structure important in a debate?
  - A) It makes sure everyone gets to speak.
  - B) It makes a debate as short as possible.
  - C) Structure isn't important in a debate.
  - D) Without it people would throw things.
8. How does debate help us?
  - A) It doesn't help us at all.
  - B) It helps us see both sides of an issue.
  - C) Debate is really silly.
  - D) Debate is the same as an argument.



Debate and argument are alike and different. Complete the fill in the blanks below to compare and contrast debate and argument..

1. Debate and argument are alike because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Debate and argument are different because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Organize the Arguments.** List the *arguments* for either side in the chart below. Arguments are reasons that each side supports their position.

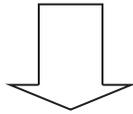


## Topic Statement

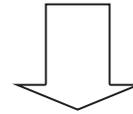
School uniforms should be worn at all schools.

## Negative Position

School uniforms should not be required because they have no measurable benefit.



The reasons that they support their side are...



## AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENTS

School uniforms reduce the pressure to look cool.

Uniforms prepare kids for the working world by teaching them to look professional.

School uniforms mean you don't have to worry about what to wear in the morning.

Uniforms have been shown to help with issues like discipline, attendance, and academics.

## NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

There isn't enough proof that kids who wear uniforms do better in school.

There is not enough evidence that uniforms help with social issues like attendance and behavior.

Uniforms are expensive and we are entitled to a free education.

A poll of the class shows that 95% of students would be unhappy if they had to wear uniforms.



**Vocabulary.** Answer each question by circling the best answer below...

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2. Debate and argument are different because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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