

Methodologies for organising a debate

Why debate and not argue? An introduction to what a debate is.

A debate is a more formal type of discussion where the goal is not to freely talk about a topic and/or combine multiple opinions in a conversation, but to use conversational skills to find arguments for or against a specific question. When debating, the participants learn fundamental skills like how to thoroughly research a topic, present standpoints, listen to others, and think quickly during an active conversation.

Personal benefits of a debate:

According to the rethorics of Aristotle, there are 3 main components to debating:

- **Logos:** Correct reasoning, participants learn how to construct a strong argument.
- **Pathos:** Touching your audience, participants learn how to speak eloquently and convince the people they are speaking to by emotionally connecting to them.
- **Ethos:** Raise credibility, participants learn how to seem credible by being adequately prepared and radiating confidence and authority.

Debate is an interesting and engaging way to improve your wits and quick thinking by training your brain to interpret information and give a cohesive rebuttal under a time limit. It also helps with being a convincing speaker outside of a debate context and being more credible to your peers or superiors when trying to persuade them.

Societal benefits of a debate:

The utility of a debate extends beyond a formal debate. Teaching young people how to use certain debate tactics is beneficial in a larger social context. For example:

- A population that asks critical questions and can express their opinions in a concise way
- People learning to listen to each other and have more interesting, constructive conversations
- debating about current socio-political questions in a critical manner contributes to a rounded political education

Why we chose Debate, not Argue as our theme:

We want to create an environment where we can exchange opinions, experiences, and discuss; not fight, over who is right or wrong. We believe that the philosophy of debate is the focus on substantive strong arguments and making a bigger societal change rather than playing on people's emotions to convince them of your personal opinions. In a society that is more and more polarised we are giving a platform to people, who can influence young minds. Together they can help shape a society of common respect and understanding.