

Debate: A Double Bill

An activity of "Why powerful groups are bullying a schoolgirl"

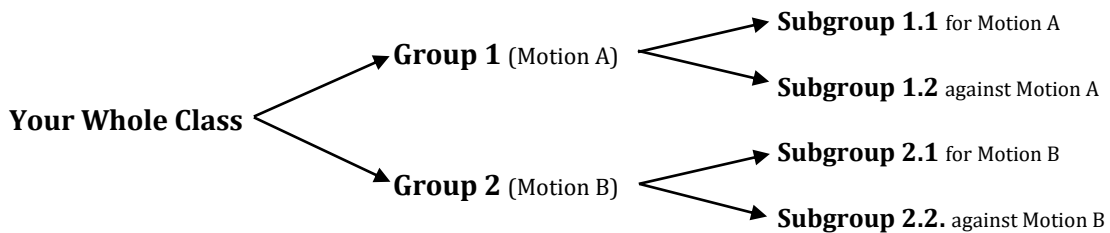
Read the article "**Why powerful groups are bullying a schoolgirl**" (page 8, *What's Up* October 2019). Why do some people applaud Greta Thunberg while others are upset with her? There are always two sides to every coin. It is good to be able to see both sides. Debates are one way to practice doing this even while speaking out for one side. Try this double-bill debate format in your class. So that more students are engaged, there are two motions.

Motion A: Kids should not miss school to campaign for action against climate change.

Motion B: Greta Thunberg is over-reacting to the climate change crisis.

1. Form your workgroups

Divide your class into two groups: Group 1 and Group 2. Group 1 will work on Motion A and Group 2 takes Motion B. Split up each group further into two: one subgroup for the motion, and the other subgroup against the motion. Subgroups then select their teams of four speakers each. The four subgroups help their respective teams prepare for the debate.



Work in your four subgroups. Discusses the motion and brainstorms to generate points supporting your subgroup's stand. For example, Subgroup 1.1 works on why kids must not miss school to campaign for action against climate change.

2. Form your debating teams

Each subgroup selects four speakers for their debating team. The team members then decide the order in which they will speak. The first speakers introduce their team's stand and lays the groundwork. The second and third speakers present new points and also respond to the other team's points. The fourth speakers make the final argument and wraps up. The team for the motion goes first and last.

3. Conduct the debates

The two debates take place simultaneously, in two separate rooms.

Motion A Debate: Group 1 teams debate in front of Group 2's non-debaters.

Motion B Debate: Group 2 teams debate in front of Group 1's non-debaters.

Each debate is chaired by a volunteer from the audience. The chairpersons double up as timekeepers. Every speaker gets four minutes. At the end, the audience gives feedback and votes for the winners.

NOTE: This format takes more planning than having only one motion and two teams. The advantages here are that your whole class can be more actively involved and reflect on two issues.