



Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Free-for-all Debate

An activity of "Some governments do not want to join the big Winter Olympics party"

In the January issue of *What's Up*, you will find three exciting sports stories (see pages 1, 21, and 22–23). With the Winter Olympics around the corner, sporting events are making the news. Unfortunately, even while their athletes prepare to compete, there are ongoing tensions between some governments and the host country, China. Read "**Some governments do not want to join the big Winter Olympics party**" (page 1, *What's Up* January 2022) to learn more.

The *What's Up* story explains why some government leaders are boycotting the Winter Olympics ceremonies but allowing their countries' athletes to compete in the events. The possibility that they can then "compete and make friends" is an arguable notion. Can making friends and competing happen at the same time? Are there risks when you get friendly with your competitor? Or is it a good thing?

Have a free-for-all debate in your class to help you think through this complex issue. Unlike traditional debates with only four speakers per team, this free-for-all format allows for any number of speakers from each side.

THE MOTION

That athletes who make friends with their competitors are less likely to beat them in contests than if they remain strangers.

1. Split your class into two halves: one side for the motion, and the other side against the motion. You can either draw lots or sign up for the side you prefer on a first-come-first-served basis.
2. Get ready for the debate by having each team's members seated together, facing the other team. Each team selects a captain. During the debate, the captains decide who gets to speak and when. The captains also keep track of time.
3. As a team, brainstorm about the motion. Jot down key points. You may surf the internet to get more information. Don't write full speeches — you need the flexibility to be spontaneous and responsive to your opponents.
4. Conduct the debate. Every speaker gets only five minutes. The team for the motion starts and ends the debate. The teams take turns for as many rounds as your class has time for. During a team's turn, only one speaker from that team gets to speak. When you want to speak, put up your hand and wait for your captain to pick you.
5. If you wish to select winners, then the whole class votes for the three best speakers from each side. Otherwise, your class may prefer to enjoy the debate without worrying about winning (or losing). That way, everyone remains relaxed and focused on the arguments being voiced.