



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

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Free-for-All Debate: Biodiversity

*An activity of "Time for countries to get serious about protecting biodiversity"*

Adults are meeting this month to decide what to do next about the Biodiversity Plan. To find out more, read "Time for countries to get serious about protecting biodiversity" (page 1 & 28, *What's Up* October 2024). A lot is being done. Yet, biodiversity is still very much in danger. Whose problem is this? Loss of biodiversity was caused by adults, not children. In which case, why should children help to fix the problem? What do you think?

Have a free-for-all debate in your class to help you construct your own understanding of the issue of biodiversity loss. Unlike traditional debates which have only four speakers per team, this free-for-all format allows for any number of speakers from each side.

### THE MOTION

"Children should not be burdened with helping to fix biodiversity problems created by adults. Children can help when they grow up."

### PREPARE FOR THE DEBATE

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.

Note: If you are opposing the motion, you would disagree with the motion.

2. As a team, brainstorm about the motion and your team's stance. Jot down key points. You may surf the internet to get more information. Don't write full sentences. Instead, referring to only words and phrases will give you the flexibility to be spontaneous and responsive to your opponents.

### CONDUCT THE DEBATE

3. Get ready for the debate by having the two teams seated, facing the other team. Each team selects a captain. During the debate, each captain decides who gets to speak from his or her team and in which order. The **captains** double up as timekeepers.
4. Every speaker gets **only three minutes**. The team for the motion starts and ends the debate. 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. The teams take turns for as many rounds as your class has time for.
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.