

Lesson 3

We debate – we decide – we report

Debating and decision making in public

This matrix sums up the information a teacher needs to plan and deliver the lesson.

Competence training refers directly to EDC/HRE.

The learning objective indicates what students know and understand.

The student task(s), together with the method, form the core element of the learning process.

The materials checklist supports lesson preparation.

The time budget gives a rough guideline for the teacher's time management.

Competence training	Speaking freely; arguing with an opponent; co-operating in a team. Observing and assessing an exchange of arguments.						
Learning objective	Related to the topic under discussion.						
Student tasks	The students take part in, or watch and listen to a debate. Follow-up tasks for the groups to prepare for the reflection lesson.						
Materials and resources	☞ Student handouts 8.2-8.5, 9.1.						
Method	Debate, group work (vote), debriefing.						
Time budget	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>1. The debate.</td> <td>25 min</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. The audience's vote.</td> <td>10 min</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Homework: inputs for the reflection.</td> <td>5 min</td> </tr> </table>	1. The debate.	25 min	2. The audience's vote.	10 min	3. Homework: inputs for the reflection.	5 min
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Information box

This lesson includes the key task of the whole unit, the debate. The extensive preparation in the previous lesson was intended to give the students the confidence to act out their roles.

The chairpersons are responsible for managing the debate and the audience's vote.

The teacher opens and concludes the lesson, and primarily acts as an observer.

The ☞ student handouts give the groups rules and instructions on how they are to perform their roles. This setting is typical for task-based learning: the lesson is highly structured through different tasks and strictly framed by the rules and schedule, while the teacher almost never takes the floor. But nevertheless, the learning objectives that the teacher has in mind are present throughout the lesson – even more so than in frontal instruction, as now the students have taken ownership.

Lesson description

✍ Student handout 8.4 (The role of the chairpersons) gives a detailed description of how the debate and the audience's vote take place. Therefore the description of these stages can be very brief.

1. The debate

The teacher announces the agenda of the lesson: the debate, followed by the audience's vote and a debriefing. If necessary, the teacher asks the students to arrange the tables and chairs in the seating order as indicated in ✍ student handout 8.2.

Then the first chairperson takes over. The students take their seats, as debating teams, chairperson, audience and press reporters. The teacher takes a seat in the audience, preferably in a back row. The students should not seek and establish eye contact with the teacher, but instead with each other. They perform in their roles, and the teacher listens.

2. The audience's vote

The second chairperson conducts the audience's discussion and the vote. The teacher leaves the audience here, and observes the students from a distance. While the students in the audience are discussing their vote, the debating teams and the news reporters listen.

After five minutes, the chairperson ends the discussion and conducts the vote. After the chairperson has concluded the vote, the teacher takes over.

3. Homework: inputs for the follow-up lesson (lesson 4)

The teacher thanks the chairpersons for managing the lion's share of the lesson. Then he/she thanks the students and the audience, and praises as he/she thinks appropriate. No critical comments should be made at this point. The fourth lesson gives an opportunity to give feedback and to reflect on the debating and voting lesson, and this is what the teacher tells the students.

He/she asks all the students with the exception of the news reporters to think about their feelings, impressions and views on the debating session and the follow-up discussion and vote, and to prepare a brief statement as input for the next lesson, addressing the following key questions:

1. State your opinion on the issue under debate. Explain what argument convinced you most in forming your opinion.
2. From your point of view, describe what effect the rules, in particular the one minute time limit, had on the debate.

The press reporter teams should not be given this task in addition to having to produce their news story. The teacher calls the six students to decide how the stories are to be disseminated – by displaying two or three copies on the wall, or by giving a handout to each student.