

Is Healthcare a Right or a Privilege? - Silent Debate

Lesson Overview:

It's important for students to recognize there can be excellent points on both sides of an issue. In order to access higher order thinking, have students practice adopting a particular perspective and produce an argument from that point of view. The beauty of a silent debate is that all students in the room are participating simultaneously in a way that oral debates cannot support. Writing persuasively from a particular role and then identifying strong points from the other side can be a way to show understanding of material and a flexible mindset. This lesson focuses on health care.

Duration of the Lesson:

60 - 90 minutes

Materials List:

- Lined paper or Silent Debate Worksheet
- OPTIONAL: Timer

Oregon 2024 Social Science Standards

4.C.PI.1 Investigate the creation of the Oregon constitution and identify its key components.

5.C.CE.6 Explain specific protections provided in the Bill of Rights to individuals and the importance of these amendments to the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

6/7.C.PI.5 Examine the origins, purposes, and effects of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements, including the treatment of historically underrepresented groups and individuals.

8.C.DP.10 Analyze important political and ethical values for individual rights and their lasting effect on the status, rights, and liberties of historically underrepresented individuals and groups embodied in documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the United States and Oregon Constitutions, and the Bill of Rights.

8.C.DP.11 Analyze issues involving liberty in conflict with equality or authority, individual rights in conflict with the common good, or majority rule in conflict with minority rights.

HS.C.PI.3 Examine and compare institutions, functions, and processes of government.

HS.C.PI.5 Explore and explain the historical evolution of the debate over the role, function, and size of the federal branches of government.

HS.C.IR.8 Using primary sources from multiple perspectives, discuss and debate the central ideas of the government of the United States and Oregon.

HS.C.DP.13 Argue and defend positions on contemporary issues in which foundational ideas or values are in tension.

HS.C.DP.14 Identify and analyze the existence and perpetuation of discrimination and inequity in the local, state, national, or context.

HS.C.CE.19 Compare the debate over a public policy issue from the past with a contemporary issue and evaluate the role of political parties, interest groups, social movements, and media in influencing public opinion.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to... (SWBAT)

- Construct an argument from a specific point of view
- Answer a question with a position, supported with evidence and reasoning
- Articulate multiple perspectives on a position
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in arguments

Essential Question:

What are the salient points both sides of an issue might have?

Procedure:

Time	Activity
30 min	<p>For silent debate, always provide a stimulus that has controversy, then write out a question to be answered. Craft a question worth debating... something reasonable and informed people can disagree over.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NOTE: For best results, model the process with a volunteer on the board using an easy topic like Best Pet: Cat vs. Dog before jumping into something more challenging or nuanced. <p>For this lesson use: <i>Should access to health care be a right or a privilege?</i></p> <p>To prepare for the silent debate, students can examine CLP's current event on Oregon Health Plan here LINK.</p> <p>After students have a firm grasp of the general issue, direct them to the Ballotpedia page on Oregon's ballot measure 110 from 2022 here LINK. Point them to the arguments for and against to help them see major ideas on either side of the debate.</p>
3 minutes	<p>Pair Work: Instruction students to pair up sitting side by side with one sheet of paper between them. Either use the worksheet provided or have the students fold a piece of paper in half lengthwise and copy the debatable question at the top like the example below.</p>
10 minutes	<p>Review the instructions with the class:</p> <p>The student sitting on the left will argue that healthcare is a right. The student sitting on the right side will argue that healthcare is a privilege. <u>Where they sit determines their position on the issue, not their own views for this activity.</u></p> <p>They will pass the paper back and forth in a silent debate, writing only in their respective columns of the paper.</p> <p>The instructor can use a timer to publicly keep the time, or if there is an odd number of students, assign a student timekeeper. The teacher may give the students on the left 2 minutes to write their answer to the question in the left hand column, give a 15 second</p>

	<p>warning, then say STOP. Students on the right now get to respond in writing on their side of the paper when the teacher says BEGIN. This repeats with students writing back and forth, but with decreasing length of intervals.</p> <p>- NOTE: Choose the length of time based on student ability level.</p>
10 minutes	Evaluate the analysis: After the debate, ask students to underline or highlight their partner's best argument. Students can then popcorn read these lines to the whole class.
10 minutes	Debrief: Now invite students to provide <u>their own views</u> and reflect on how these views may have shifted during or after the exercise. Do they agree with what the majority of voters passed into law? What challenges face the implementation of this law?

Assessment(s):

- The "Silent Debate" worksheet
- The 'Evaluate the Analysis' debrief
- The whole group debrief on the activity

Modifications/Variations:

- Adjust the scope to either a world view (the World Health Organization's take on this issue), a national one, or zoom in on something more specific like mental health care.
- Assign a character to each side so they are writing from a particular person's perspective
- Include more than one student for each side – a team of writers especially if students are limited in language proficiency or writing fluency
- Rotate pairs and have people have to argue the opposite side after the first round

Lesson Recommendations:

- Model this for students on the board or with a document camera before the class does it.
- Practice with an easy topic before taking on heavy issues.
- Forbid name calling in the debate as this is a sign of a weak argument!
- Maintain silence during the debate and keep the pace up.
- Allow students to use notes so if they get stuck they can find some material and restart.
- Know your students – this approach may not be well suited for all students and make adjustments to accommodate.
- Teachers have a choice to assess the debate paper as a formative assessment or just use it as a means to an end to a summative activity afterwards.
- Teachers can give questions out ahead of time for students to be able to prepare to have bullet points and evidence prepared for the activity.

Lesson Plan adapted from South Coast Writing Project, Teacher Education Program, UC Santa Barbara



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Silent Debate Worksheet

Should access to healthcare be a right or a privilege?

Student Name:

Student Name:

Right

Privilege

