

ESU TEACHING RESOURCE



BALLOON DEBATE

OVERVIEW

This activity introduces students to concepts they will use in more formal debates, such as making initial speeches, giving responses to questions, and addressing other people's arguments.

There is lots of scope to adjust the game for different groups or goals, and you can see these variants in the tips.

TASK

Select five or six people to take part in the debate.

They should think of a character (or you can assign them, if you prefer). You should set a theme for the character, e.g. "a historical figure", "a modern celebrity", "someone you admire", etc.

Now explain the scenario: these five people are in a hot air balloon. It is sinking because it is too heavy. The only way for us to survive is for one person to be thrown out of the balloon.

In the first round each person now has to give a short speech (no more than 2 minutes, although it could be as short as 30 seconds, depending on the group) explaining why they should not be thrown out of the balloon.

The second round deals with questions and answers. Ask each student one of the questions from a list like this:

Why is your character special?

What is the best thing about your character?

Can you tell us about your character's job?

Can you tell us a story that shows why your character is special?

Can you give more detail about a point in your speech?



OBJECTIVES

- To gain experience speaking in an informal debate setting.
- To think creatively to generate relevant arguments.
- To develop persuasive responses to simple questions.



