

Why the Debate? How the Study of Argumentation and Debate Increases Language Proficiency

FINAL PROJECT

Al Russell Schleicher, M.A.

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Overview & Purpose

Based on qualitative and quantitative research both in the U.S. and The Netherlands, argumentation and debate leads to higher levels of critical thinking and first/second language acquisition. But, debate and discourse are seen as extracurricular activities that are not looked at from the lens of pedagogical practices across the curriculum. The professional development workshops are for the use (with adaptations based on audience) with conferences, debate coaches, and secondary classroom teachers. This document is a living document to be adjusted for audience/professional development needs. This document further serves as a “map, script, framework, or teacher guide.”

Argumentation and Debate Across the Curriculum

Purpose: Professional Development Workshops

Audience: Adjustments for classroom teachers, grade-level appropriate instructors, debate coaches, speech coaches, instructional aides, ELD coordinators, Special Education coordinators

Design of Workshop: Prior to workshop, participants are emailed a link to the blog outspokenela.com with instructions to read the latest news from schools that practice debate in the classroom. The blog was created prior to departure on the Fulbright Distinguished Award in Teaching Program. Participants will further receive the documents for Common Core Speaking & Listening by grade level, and the list of English Language Development (ELD) standards. Teachers will be tasked at the beginning of the workshop to choose the Common Core standards that debate addresses in their content area, with corresponding ELD standards.

Common Core Standards for Speaking & Listening

For secondary school classrooms, the State of California adopted the Common Core standards for literacy instruction. Grades 6, 7, and 8 have their own variances with the standards. The standards are not different, but build upon each other at each grade level. Grades 9 and 10 form the basis of high school literacy, and then Grades 11 and 12 build upon those same standards. For all professional development purposes and audiences, we will review the literacy standards and the CA English Language Development Standards for English Language Learners.

For this document, we will use as a benchmark Grade 12 Speaking & Listening Standards:

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2

Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11-12 Language standards 1 and 3 [here](#) for specific expectations.)

CA ELD Standards

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/eldstndpublication14.pdf>

ELD Continuum

Native Language → Emerging → Expanding → Bridging → Lifelong Language

Activities

Part I.

Participants will have the standards they need at the beginning of the professional development session, with corresponding ELD standards. PowerPoint presentation that mirrors the presentation delivered to the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

Presentation demonstrates the semi-structured interviews, and the data from Dutch teachers, coaches, and students. Teachers are then asked to read portions of Abid el-Majidi's article on instructional decisions of debate in his classroom at Montfort School in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Based on purposes and results when using debate as a pedagogical tool for

learning English as a second language, teachers are asked to think of what debate format would fit their classroom style, content area, and grade level. Group discussions occur (grade level and across the curriculum) while brainstorming ideas on poster paper. Once finished, teachers share out and discuss ideas as a whole group. Workshop facilitator moderates discussion.

Part II.

Participants are offered on slides Debate in the Classroom Flowchart, Using Debate to Develop Education and Social Skills Flowchart, and the Moral Development, Social Interactions, and Debate Flowchart. These flowcharts give participants the reinforcement of debate in the classroom, but also the added understanding of the “other” attributes of debate in the classroom. Workshop facilitator moderates discussion on the “other” attributes of debate in the classroom.

Part III.

Participants will now have a draft lesson plan (based on school’s collective template or individual teacher preference for lesson plan template). Teachers are given in electronic form the graphic organizers for argument, argument skill sheet #1, and counterargument skill sheet #5. How do we differentiate instruction to learn how arguments and counterarguments work? It is imperative that time is given to participants to create differentiated learning opportunities/lesson plans for students based on the literacy standards and ELD standards. Workshop facilitator assists participants with lesson planning. Participants are further given on a slide the common European approach for argument:

Statement: why do I think something?

Explanation: Why is this logical?

Evidence: Why is that true in real life?

Impact: Why should that matter?

With a few minor changes, this is what is known as the Toulmin method of reasoning which is also used in U.S. debate leagues and AP English classrooms.

Part IV.

Participants are now given the Presentation Slides by DebatUnie, the Dutch debate organization that works with basic, proficient, and advanced English language learners. The presentation title is “Competitive Edge: Debating Strategies.” This presentation will go slower than other presentations, as participants are asked to create an additional lesson plan based on the format they have chosen for their classroom, and the presentation strategies. How do we differentiate the instruction of this presentation? Participants are asked to return to the blog outspokenela.com for additional strategies for differentiation purposes. While participants are in working groups, workshop facilitator will “coach” and assist participants with additional lesson plans. It is imperative that participants leave workshops with “take aways,” graphic organizers, and most importantly, lesson plans.

Final V.

Each workshop stands on the shoulders of other workshops. Participants need additional support when changing pedagogical approaches, and taking the risks when changing those new debate approaches. A Ning for professional growth, support, and participant interaction will be created for the workshops so that participants can assist each other in their continued professional development of offering argumentation and debate in the secondary school classroom.