

Structured Academic Controversy

Prompt:

Teachers should not share their political views with their students.

Instructions:

1. Divide the table into two groups of four. In each group, the pair whose names come earliest in the alphabet will agree with the prompt, and the pair whose names come later in the alphabet will disagree.

You don't have to agree personally with the position you are assigned. Your goal is just to determine the best arguments or evidence for your side.

2. Assign a timekeeper (person who went to bed the latest last night).

3. Identify the best 3 arguments in support of your assigned position. Prepare a short presentation to make the case for your side of the issue. **(5 mins)**

4. The "Agree" side presents their arguments while the "Disagree" side listens and takes notes. No interruption is allowed. **(3 mins)**

5. The "Disagree" side restates the "Agree" side's positions and asks clarifying questions. These questions should seek to build understanding of the position. **(2 min)**

6. The "Disagree" side presents their arguments while the "Agree" side listens and takes notes. No interruption is allowed. **(3 mins)**

7. The "Agree" side restates the "Disagree" side's positions and asks clarifying questions. These questions should seek to build understanding of the position. **(2 min)**

8. Come together to see if you can find common ground. You no longer have to argue the position you were assigned. **(5 mins)**

- Identify the strongest and weakest arguments of both sides.
- If you are unable to come to any agreement, explain the fundamental differences between the positions.