

Supporting an Opinion through Research and Debate CARC Social Studies

Grade Level	6	General Outcome	6.S.7 Research for Deliberative Inquiry: students will apply the research process and 6.S.8 Communication: students will demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy.
Time Frame	~ 3 – 35 minute periods	Enduring Understanding (purpose of the lesson)	Students debate the topic of smoking in public areas. In preparing they must research the issue, drawing conclusions, and support their positions. Students must also communicate effectively.
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Critical Challenge/Big Idea	Effectively argue one side of a debate topic.		
Value and Attitude Outcomes	Knowledge and Understanding Outcomes	Skills and Process Outcomes	
		<p>apply the research process 6.S.7.1 determine reliability of information filtering for point of view and bias 6.S.7.2 formulate questions to be answered through the research process 6.S.7.4 draw and support conclusions based on information gathered to answer a research question</p> <p>demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy 6.S.8.1 express opinions and present perspectives and information through debate. 6.S.8.1 use skills of informal debate to persuasively express differing viewpoints regarding an issue.</p>	

		6.S.8.4 respond appropriately to comments and questions 6.S.8.5 listen to others in order to understand their perspectives
Summative Assessment Strategies	This activity is intended to be a formative activity designed to give students feedback on their support of a position and is not intended to be summatively assessed. Once students have practiced debates and supporting their positions, the teacher may want to summatively assess a later debate or opinion paper on a debate.	
Introductory Activity/ The Hook	Activity 1: Introduction to Debate <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present students with the statement, "Smoking should be allowed in all public places." I state it this way because it generates lots of discussions and opinions right way. When I actually start to organize and begin our research for the debate I will change it. 2. Explain to students that they are going to be researching and preparing evidence to support the statement through a debating format. 	
Teaching/ Learning Strategies and Activities	Activity2: Structure of a Debate <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Use the structure found at http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson304b.shtml as a guide for teaching students about the process of debate. There are also a number of suggested topics for debate as well. Teachers may wish have different groups of students researching other topics for debate at the same time for use in debates that can follow this topic. 4. Once students have practiced the structure of debate, I introduce the statement again but worded differently – "Smoking should not be allowed in public places." Teams will be researching the affirmative and the negative viewpoints. I like this topic because the research is easily accessible and the contrast between the two sides is very blatant. It offers the health issue side and the big tobacco company perspective. Activity 3: Gathering Information <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Once students are in their teams, review fact and opinion, and bias. There are some excellent lessons on the Media Awareness Network site for distinguishing fact and opinion as well as bias. See the resources section below for the links. There is also a multitude of websites available that deal with these topics. 	

6. In their groups, have students brainstorm the questions for which they will need to find answers to support their position.
7. Students then have time to gather information for their arguments. Give students the following criteria for effective information for a debate:
 - Relevant (information is on topic)
 - Accurate (information must correct and not made up)
 - Consistent (support the side they are agreeing with)
 - Comprehensive (enough to persuade someone that your side is correct)

Activity 4: Debate

8. Once students have gathered their information, give them time to confer as a team to choose the information that will best fit their side of the debate. They will also choose the order in which they will be presenting their arguments. Have all students ensure they take notes on each side's arguments as they will have to counter the arguments presented if they are involved in the debate or will have to decide who had the stronger arguments if they are members of the audience.

NOTE: We extend this throughout the year to issues directly related to our government studies.

Resources

Websites Referred to in the Lesson:

Education World. (2011). *More resources for classroom debates*. Retrieved June 20, 2011 from http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson304b.shtml

Media Awareness Network. (2010). *Fact vs. opinion*. Retrieved June 20, 2011 from http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/secondary/broadcast_news/bw_fact_vs_opinion_lesson.cfm

Media Awareness Network. (2010). *Detecting bias in the news*. Retrieved June 20, 2011 from http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/handouts/crime/detecting_bias_news.cfm

Site Suggestions for tobacco research:

Do you believe this camel?
<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/elementary/tobacco/camel.cfm>

Gender and Tobacco
http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/elementary/tobacco/gender_and_tobacco.cfm

	<p>Mirror Image http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/elementary/tobacco/mirror_image.cfm</p> <p>Smoke Screen http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/teachable_moments/smoke_screen.cfm</p> <p>The True Story http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/elementary/tobacco/the_true_story.cfm</p> <p>Think like a tobacco company http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/elementary/tobacco/think_like_tobacco_ele.cfm</p> <p>Think like a tobacco company – gr. 7-9 http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/elementary/tobacco/think_like_tobacco_sec.cfm</p>
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Adapted from: Wiggins, Grant and J. Mc Tighe. (1998). *Understanding by Design*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
ISBN # 0-87120-313-8 (ppk)