

Win the argument

by Elena Filimonova, Aislyu Ryukova & Dina Valieva

Activity type: Speaking activity

Student grouping: Small groups of 2–4 students

Time needed: 15 minutes approx.

Skills practiced: Making arguments, review of academic grammar and vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the Opinions worksheet, cut up (this is enough for ten groups), writing paper for each group

Summary: This speaking game helps students practise making arguments for and against statements and opinions, which is an IELTS essay writing task.

Teaching notes

- You may wish to award extra bonus points for vocabulary and grammar accuracy.
- For a more fast-paced game, you could ask students to swap opinion cards every minute, so that they end up with arguments for five different opinions rather than concentrating on one.
- After the game, you could ask the students to share their arguments *against* the given opinion, and then discuss the issues as a whole class.

Preparation

Explain to students that you are going to give them a card with an opinion on it. The aim of the game is to come up with as many arguments *supporting* the opinion as possible in a five-minute period.

Put students into small groups. Give each group one of the sentences from the Opinions worksheet, along with a sheet of writing paper. Explain to students that each group should choose a writer, who will take brief notes of all the ideas while the other students in the group brainstorm.

How to play the game

Students read and discuss the opinion in their groups. They should try to come up with as many convincing arguments that support the opinion as they can.

When the time is up, students take turns to read aloud their opinion statement and present their arguments to the class. If the argument is logical and appropriate, they get a point. (You could hold a class vote on whether each argument deserves a point, if time permits, or award points yourself.)

The group who gets the most points wins.

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<p>Learning foreign languages is a waste of time and money.</p>
<p>You can have only one true friend.</p>
<p>To get a good education you should go abroad.</p>
<p>Extreme sports help to build character.</p>
<p>Young people should follow in their parents' footsteps when choosing a profession.</p>
<p>We no longer need to have animals kept in zoos, so zoos should be closed.</p>
<p>Driving a car is a valuable skill and should therefore be taught in schools.</p>
<p>Traffic problems are increasing in most cities.</p>
<p>People who start a university course but do not complete it should be fined.</p>
<p>We have become a disposable society, preferring to buy new products rather than repair existing items.</p>