

Trading up: one woman's quest to swap a hairpin for a house

Level: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

Article summary: Demi Skipper has become famous for her new goal: she started with a hairpin and is trying to get a house by trading items.

Time: 90 minutes+

Skills: using authentic materials such as articles for debates

Language focus: Speaking: participating in a debate

Learner training: predicting the meaning of a new authentic text, organising new knowledge, brainstorming arguments for and against a topic, participating in a debate

Materials needed: one copy of the worksheet per student

HOW TO: get students engaged with authentic texts

For authentic engagement with authentic materials, let students express their real opinions about the text. Ask if they agree or disagree with any of the ideas. This personal response will also motivate them to process the text more carefully and help them generate their own arguments.

3. Participating in a debate

- a. First, students check their global understanding of the article. Then they prepare for the debate by brainstorming arguments for and against trading things instead of using cash. Encourage students to look up useful vocabulary, and elicit and write these words or phrases on the board.

Key:

- 1. a
- b. Depending on the number of students in the class, you can set a whole class debate with two separate teams, or several teams that will debate simultaneously. Choosing several teams will allow students to have more individual speaking time. If you think students will benefit, you can assign a monitor or moderator for each pair of teams, who will run the debate and make sure that each team gets an equal amount of time for each round. Alternatively, you can run the structure of the debate in lockstep with the whole class. Agree with the class beforehand on the length of each turn and the number of turns for each team. Set a timer for each turn and do not allow interruptions. This could look like:

- 1. Team A presents main arguments
- 2. Team B presents main arguments
- 3. Team A presents more arguments and counters those presented by Team B
- 4. Team B presents arguments and counters those presented by Team A
- 5. (short break)
- 6. Team A counter arguments and clarifying
- 7. Team B counter arguments and clarifying
- 8. Team A conclusion
- 9. Team B conclusion

1. Warmer

- a. Divide students into pairs or groups. Then, ask students to read the headline of the article and predict its content. Follow the questions to elicit ideas and predictions. You can ask students to cover the text so they are not tempted to read it.

HOW TO: activate students' schemata when using authentic materials

When using an authentic text or source, it is important to keep in mind where students might encounter it. This text is a newspaper article students are likely to see on the internet or in their social media feed. Activate their knowledge about the topic of an article by having them read the title and subtitle.

2. Reading the article carefully

- a. Students read the article carefully. If they need more guidance, ask them to pick and underline a specific number of things they agree and disagree with e.g., three things that they think are true or good points, and one thing that they are unsure about or disagree with. This will also help scaffold Activity 3b.



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- c. Remind students to use the phrases when they participate in the debate. You could do this by asking students to include some of these in their notes or adding an incentive like a points system where teams can gain points for using more of these phrases.

HOW TO: use authentic materials to set up a debate

To use an authentic text for debates, you need to select a text that can spark debate and generate different points of view. Consider the following questions:

- 1. Will students find this text interesting? (e.g., is it something relevant to their lives or sufficiently foreign to be interesting? How have students reacted to this kind of text in the past?)*
- 2. Is it nuanced enough, or will everyone tend to be pro or against? (e.g., most students will probably be supportive of free public education)*
- 3. What information from the text could students use to help them come up with arguments? (e.g., what ideas are supported in the text, and what are the counter arguments to those ideas?)*
- 4. What other target language will be useful in the debate? (e.g., if the debate is about trading versus cash come up with a lexical set related to the topic: swap, second-hand, buy, consume, cash, value, etc.)*

4. Optional homework

- a. Students reflect on their opinions and summarise them in a short voice recording.