

Refuting an Argument

Before you watch

A

This activity introduces the topic of refuting opposing arguments in debates.

Students discuss situations where they might formally or informally address opposing ideas or concerns in academic or work situations. If you have a large online class, you can have this discussion in the text chat, or use break rooms.

B

Have students test their ability to think of arguments for or against a topic by asking them to agree or disagree with one of the given topics. They can use the Likert scale to assess where they stand on the issue and explain their position.

Video

For online classes, before playing the video make sure that you're sharing both the screen and the sound. Alternatively, upload the video to a shared folder before class and ask students to download it to watch on their own devices.

A

This activity is designed to check students' comprehension of main ideas. Tell students to view the video and focus on the steps for refuting an argument during a debate. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to determine the order. Monitor and support. Check answers with the class. If you teach online or with an interactive whiteboard, use the interactive feature of the worksheet to check answers with your class.

Key:

- 3 Support your counterargument with key evidence.
- 1 State the specific argument that you disagree with.
- 4 Compare the two opposing views and prove your point.
- 2 State your opposing view.

B

Have students watch the video again and listen for details. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to select the correct option. Monitor and support. Check answers with the class.

Key:

1. oppose
2. simple
3. counterargument
4. key evidence
5. back up

C

This activity requires students to use the concepts and vocabulary from the video in the context of conversation. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to match the sentence beginnings and endings. If you're teaching online, set a timer for the pair or individual work so you do not disturb your students by asking if they've finished. Monitor and support. Check answers with the class.

Key:

1. c
2. a
3. d
4. e
5. b

Digital skills focus

A

This activity offers tips on managing virtual debates or meetings. Emphasize that setting and communicating guidelines helps debates and meetings go smoothly. This includes setting speaking time limits, following a defined order for speakers, allocating time for refuting arguments, and providing time for questions and answers. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to select the correct option. Monitor and support. Check answers with the class.

Key:

1. within
2. counterarguments
3. summary
4. relate
5. moderator

Language focus

A

The text in this activity has two purposes. It serves as a model for the student's own debate, and focuses students' attention on the language needed to complete the Digital Communicative Task.

Tell the students to fill in the gaps to complete the sentences while you monitor and support. Finally, check answers with the class. Encourage discussion if there is disagreement or if students are not sure which is the best word to fill each gap.

If you are teaching an online class, set a timer for the individual practice so you don't disturb students by asking them if they've finished.

Key:

1. I disagree with
2. You claim that
3. There are several reasons why
4. The evidence is clear
5. Studies show that
6. When we compare

B

This activity is designed to focus students' attention on collocations (words commonly used together). Encourage students to watch the video again or use a dictionary, as needed, to find the phrase.

Key:

1. back
2. refute
3. feel
4. prove
5. opposing
6. key

C

This activity gives students the opportunity to practice anticipating opposing arguments in a debate and preparing ways to refute them. In pairs or groups, have students prepare both sides of an argument about a topic. They should discuss what arguments each side might put forward, then think of ways to counter the opposing argument. Encourage students to list opposing arguments and write refutations next to them.

For online classes, use break rooms to have students work in pairs or groups. Set a timer so the students know when they have to go back to the whole class chat.

Key

Student's own answers

Digital communicative task

A

This activity is designed to give students the opportunity to apply the communication skill in an online situation.

Divide students into pairs or small groups. They should choose a topic for a debate. Ask the group to discuss their point of view on the topic. Divide the pair or group into two opposing sides. They should list their arguments for their position, list arguments they anticipate from the other side, and develop refutations. Students can use the model in this section for their own brainstorming. Allow time for students to do some research so they can gather evidence for their side.

If you teach online, students can do their planning in a breakout room and present their written document to you at the end of the breakout session.

B

Give each side about 5 minutes to present their point of view while the opposite side observes. Then, give the opposite side a chance to present. Allow 2-3 minutes for each side to refute the other. Encourage the observers to take notes about the effectiveness of the arguments and refutation. Allow time for the audience to give feedback to the presenters after the debate.

Record the debate (if you can do this with the video conferencing software you use) and analyse how well they refuted the opposing arguments.