



DO CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN? DISCUSSING A CONTEMPORARY CONTROVERSIAL TOPIC WITH DEBATE TECHNIQUE

Lesson plan for teachers

Created by:

RÓZSA MÓNIKA

1. Lesson content – Introduction of the topic; Topic and method relation:

Students often get into such situations in their everyday life when they have to communicate effectively. **Debate technique** does not only improve skills and competences in the first language but it can also be a useful technique in the second language education. The aims and objectives of this debate lesson are to develop **communication and cooperative skills**, to **think** logically and **critically**, to **gain, select and arrange information** properly, to **practice vocabulary** in connection with clothing, fashion and human values. The importance of clothing, looks, wealth and its connection to our lifestyle and personality is a very actual topic especially in the life of the target group, the teenagers.

2. Competences to improve:

Personal competences	Social competences	Cognitive competences
accepting ideas, being open minded and sensible, problem solving attitude, building self-confidence and reliability	communicating, cooperating, being flexible	applying, giving reason, constructing arguments, making decisions, describing, presenting, being creative

3. Target group:

14-18-year-old second language (L2) learners, pre-intermediate or intermediate level

4. Preliminaries:

Vocabulary of the topic of clothing, fashion, media; expressing ideas and giving opinion, asking questions, ability of forming sentences, preparation to well-built speeches; making decisions and reacting quickly, knowing the roles and tasks of the debaters and judges

5. Teaching materials and equipment:

sheets of paper, markers, blue-tack or magnet, record sheets for judges, a clock to check time limits





6. Comments and remarks:

Having a debate lesson requires a lot of **preparation** (reading, selecting information, constructing arguments) and time both from the teacher and the students. The video shows **one part** of a debate process, **the speeches and the decision of the judges**, but it is the result, the presentation of the ideas and arguments collected on the previous lessons.

Participants: three students supporting the thesis statement and three students opposing it, three judges, a person to check the time, a moderator, audience.

Arrangement of the class: desks and chairs in **semi-circle**, the six debaters should sit on the two sides of the classroom opposite each other in order to see and hear one another well, judges should sit at the back of the class, the audience should sit behind the judges, the person responsible for checking the time should sit in the front so that everybody can see him, the moderator goes around to monitor the students. On the board everybody can see the sheets of paper with the arguments already collected.

7. Lesson plan:

The teacher's tasks before the debate lesson: Make a list of possible debate topics.

Consider the students' age, interests and gender. Transfer the ideas into **thesis statements**. These statements should be brief and they should have two sides so that students have the chance to support or to oppose it. Collect some possible aspects of the topics to make them interesting for the students and to motivate them. Choose that thesis statement what most students have preferred. Give reasons and discuss why they liked the topic Ask them to think about the main points what they should collect arguments about. **This lesson is the basis of the whole debate process** because it sets up the frame which you are going to work with during the debate sessions. (Our chosen thesis statement was "Clothes make the man". The main points were fashion, the relationship between clothing and money, taste, mood, trends, clothing of subcultures, how we make the first impression about someone, etc.) You or the students should collect texts, pictures and other materials about the chosen points: use books, magazines, the internet, etc. Ask questions in connection with the topics to help students. Ask the students to form groups then distribute the previously prepared materials. In groups take notes about the texts and discuss them. Pass around the texts, articles or ask the groups to present their notes to the other groups. After the first discussion session ask students to search for further information at home to have more arguments. The teacher should monitor students' work and provide the necessary **vocabulary**. Using the given material students create and compose arguments in groups using their notes from previous lessons. Check the arguments together then put them on sheets of papers. Each group has to pick members to make a short speech about the side they support. Listen to the speeches carefully and reflect on them. This is the final step before the actual debate session, so the teacher and the students have to make sure that everybody is prepared to the debate.





E (evocation)



Task 1

Put the thesis sentence onto the board and make a **PRO** (supporting the thesis) and a **CON** (opposing the thesis) **column**. Stick the sheets with the basic arguments onto the board under the thesis statement and decide which arguments go to the pro and con column. This **visual arrangement** helps students to see both sides clearly, which is essential for a successful debate. Ask Ss to create speeches in groups using the collected arguments. The teacher as the moderator of the debate introduces the participants of the debate and briefly summarizes their tasks. The **supporters and the opponents have to tell their speeches in turns**. Judges have to listen carefully and evaluate the speakers so the teacher gives them a **record sheet** where they can put their opinions, comments and the points they want to give.

R (realization of meaning)



Task 2

Ask the **first debater from the supporting group** to stand up and tell her speech. (Nobody can disturb or ask questions during the speeches.) She has to give a short definition of or to reflect to the thesis statement. Because this is the first speech, she has to **include all the argumentative points** that her group is going to elaborate on during the debate. These points will be the basis of the whole debate, other speakers will not have the chance to come up with any new ideas. The third debater from the opposing group can **ask questions** based on the speech.



Task 3

Before the **first opposing debater** tells her speech the group has got a **chance to discuss or rearrange the arguments** because the speaker has to react to the previous debater's ideas. They have got a maximum of two minutes to prepare.



Task 4

If they are ready, call the **first opposing debater** to tell her speech. She also has to include all the argumentative points that her group is going to elaborate on during the debate but in the light of the previous speech. She has to start with the negative form of the thesis sentence.



Task 5

Before the second supporting debater tells her speech the supporter group has got a chance to discuss or rearrange the arguments because the speaker has to react to the previous debater's ideas. They have got a maximum of two minutes to prepare.





Task 6

Ask the **second supporting debater** to tell her speech. The second speaker cannot come up with new ideas, she only has to extend the arguments listed by the previous speaker. **She does not have to talk about all the mentioned argumentative points**, her task is to pick some interesting or persuading parts of the first speeches and explicate it in **more details**.



Task 7

Before the second opposing debater tells her speech the opponents have got a chance to discuss or rearrange the arguments because the speaker has to react to the previous debater's ideas. They have got a maximum of two minutes to prepare.



Task 8

Ask the **second opposing debater** to stand up and tell her speech. She does not have to talk about all the mentioned argumentative points, her task is again to pick some interesting or persuading parts of the first speeches and clarify it in more details.



Task 9

Tell the **last supporting debater** that she can discuss her thoughts first with the group just like the previous speakers. Inform the first opposing debater that she has got an opportunity to **ask questions** from the last speaker after the speech. Raise your hand or stand up if you are ready. You have a maximum of 2 minutes.



Task 10

Ask the **last supporting debater** to **summarize** the group's arguments, to **emphasize** the most convincing ideas and data. She cannot introduce a new point just highlight the told ones. Answer the questions asked by the first opposing debater.



Task 11

Inform the last opposing debater that if she wants, she can discuss her thoughts first with the group just like the previous speakers. Tell the first supporting debater that she has got an opportunity to **ask questions** from the last speaker.



Task 12

Ask the **last opposing debater** to **summarize** the group's arguments, to **emphasize** the most convincing ideas and data. She cannot introduce a new point just highlight the ones that have already been told. Answer the questions asked by the first supporting debater.





R (reflection)



Task 13

We are ready with the speeches of the debate. Now it is the time of the judges: you have to **finalize your record sheets**, **reconsider** the given **points** and **evaluate** the debaters' **performances**. You have to **assess** the debaters along the following **categories: content, role, form** (maximum 10 points each) then rank the speakers. You can discuss your opinions between each other and at the end you (or one chosen judge) have to **reflect** on the process of the debate, tell who the winning group was and **give a reason**. You also have to choose the **best debater** who is not necessarily the member of the better group. After you are ready with the evaluation, the people from the audience have to make their decision. So at the very end: members of the audience, please, stand next to the group you found more persuading. This does not have to be the same as the judges' verdict.

8. Visuals:



9. Evaluation and assessment:

The judges assessed and reflected the lesson, the speeches, but the teacher can also do it at the end of the debate as a moderator. The most important interdisciplinary aim of debating is to show the students that all the things they experience in their lives have got a lot of aspects. If they want to be able to argue for or against something, it requires a deeper understanding, a critical attitude and careful preparation. The debate technique helps improving communicative competence, creates an atmosphere where students can tell their thoughts in a proper way.

10. Bibliography:

1. Hunya Mária: A disputa program, Soros Oktatási Füzetek, Budapest, 1998.

