



Co-funded by
the European Union



Daugavpils Valsts ģimnāzija (Latvia)

Erasmus+ project “ESD: supervision 4.0”

A good praxis example (competence based learning)

Debates for developing of critical thinking

As part of history and social sciences, all students learn Karl Popper's debate program at the secondary level.

2 teams take part in the debate - affirmative and negative (three speakers each). Each speaker has his own duties (see attachment No. 1): the first speaker provides definitions for the concepts of the resolution, puts forward arguments. The second speaker refutes the arguments of the opposing team and renews (proves with new facts) the arguments of his team. A third speaker analyzes the debate and assesses the points of clash. The first two debaters are asked questions. S.example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0UQLNUPu60>

All speakers make arguments using the following scheme: assertion (argument formulation) + justification (structured and understandable presentation of the argument) + empirical evidence (information is relevant and reliable, sources are indicated).

The performance of all speakers is evaluated using the performance level description (see attachment No. 2).

All 10th grade students participate in the debates. Resolutions are related to some of the aspects of sustainable development (see attachment No. 3).

Debates are evaluated by subject teachers and classmates. At the end of the debate, each student is given feedback; each student evaluates his own performance.

Quantitative indicators:

The survey of students (n=30) shows that in debates they mostly learn the use of sources, reliability (27 out of 30), choose, adapt and create their own thinking strategies in complex situations (24 out of 30), create respectful communication to achieve group goals (24 out of 30), in complex situations analyse from the specific to the general, notice logical mistakes, make reasonable conclusions (22 out of 30), distinguish forms

of scientific knowledge from scientific alternatives, critically evaluate sources, interpret facts (20 out of 30).

A survey of students (n=30) shows that they learn by debating

- ask questions correctly;
- listen to the opinion of other students, as well as express your own;
- argue and understand the opposite side;
- discuss to work with facts;
- work in a team;
- collect the opinion of several people;
- stand up for your opinion, look for reliable facts;
- perform in front of the public;
- ask questions immediately after receiving information;
- express a clear, logical and fact-based opinion.

A survey of students (n=30) shows that they use the skills acquired in debates:

- by writing scientific research papers, giving a presentation;
- in further studies;
- in public speech;
- at school, at home, outside;
- creating questions with better quality;
- when entering a job;
- in real life;
- in disputes;
- talking with friends;
- arguing with parents, proving their point of view with verified facts;
- when talking to any person on a daily basis, I always argue my point of view and demand arguments from others;
- nowhere yet.

Qualitative indicators:

“Nowadays, we often participate in various conversations and discussions, and each communication has its own specific purpose - determination of changes, the desire to create a friendlier environment and improve our lives, as well as to express our belonging to national and world processes. Therefore, we do not stand still, we try to change many things for the better or to learn something important and new. We cannot

always be satisfied with the way things are at a certain moment, but we can discuss it and find a solution together thanks to one of the best things invented by man - debate. They are everywhere! Debates are held every day, not only in school and government, but also in the family and among friends. We read and watch debates in the media, listen to the radio and participate in them ourselves, and this is a really good gift for each of us, because debate means democracy, and democracy means freedom to express and express our ideas. It is also useful to remember that in all debates there is a clash of opinions, but not of people, which forces us to think more broadly and objectively.

Despite the long history of debates, their principle is one - to find the best way to solve the problem. However, the result is not always as important as the process itself (as well as any teaching process). Debate is a program that teaches ethics, language culture, leadership, psychology, the ability to correctly and appropriately apply facts, as well as the principles of logic. They help students, teachers, children and adults learn the ability to express themselves, to listen, to be patient, and to work actively in a team. When preparing for current and important debate topics, debaters learn about them in depth, realizing the importance of the topic, learning a lot of new and useful information, developing the ability to succinctly answer catchy questions. The purpose of debating is to convince the judges and the audience of the superiority of our arguments over those of our opponents, so we develop the strengths of our personality and our speech and actively work on eliminating the bad sides. Each team should be ready to defend both affirmative and negative opinions on the debated topic, which teaches us to always be ready to defend ourselves and our interests in real life.

The Karl Popper debate, named after the philosopher, is the most common format for discussion. It is based on a classic discussion between two points or two sides: one affirmative or agreeing and one disconfirming. Even if debates require advance preparation, this means that they are much more serious and interesting than simple conversations. Thanks to certain principles of debate - "learning is more important than winning"; "honesty is the basis of everything"; "in debates there is a clash of opinions, but not of people", we can control ourselves and observe how others around us behave.

Debates are important for us as students for communication within and outside of work, for identifying and developing our strengths, for the ability to work together and respect each other, despite the diversity of our opinions and interests."/student Diāna Agafonova/

Appendix No. 1. Responsibilities of Speakers

Speaker	Time	Tasks
A1	6 min	Name the resolution, define the concepts included in it. Name no less than 2 and no more than 3 arguments of your case and prove them with facts, testimonies, examples.
N3 questions A1, 3 minutes		
N1	6 min	Refutes the arguments made by A1 by pointing out the errors in A's case with examples. Name no less than one and no more than 2 arguments of your case, prove them with facts, testimonies, examples.
A3 questions N1, 3 minutes		
A2	5 min	Refute the arguments made by N1 by denying their evidence and citing your own more convincing evidence. Restate your case, citing new evidence, refuting what Team N has said about A's case. No new arguments may be raised.
N1 questions A2, 3 minutes		
N2	5 min	Restores Team N's position by rebutting the evidence presented by Team A. Cite new, stronger evidence for your arguments. No new arguments may be raised.
A1 questions N2, 3 minutes		
A3	5 min	Summarizes the debate. Indicates clash points. Mention the information obtained in the question and answer section. Points out weaknesses in N's case, emphasizing the superiority of his team's case. Compare the two cases and highlight the superiority of case A.
N3	5 min	Summarizes the impact of the arguments on the debate and points out points of conflict. Mention the information obtained in the question and answer section. Explain the mistakes of the A case, compare the two cases and summarize in which issues the N case was superior.

Appendix No. 2. Description of performance level

Affirmative case	Beginner	Fair performance	Good performance	Master
1st speaker	1 p.	2 p.	3 p.	4 p.
Name the definitions of the concepts included in the resolution.	The definitions are general. Definition sources are inappropriate.	The definitions are partially relevant. Sources of definitions are reliable.	The definitions are precise and to the point. Sources of definitions are reliable.	Definitions are precise and relevant; the speaker uses them in the presentation of the case (arguments, part of questions). Sources of definitions are reliable.
Arguments (content)	The arguments are partially consistent with the resolution. They are not explained or supported by evidence. The case is not structured.	The arguments are partially consistent with the resolution. They are not explained, but testimonies (sources) are mentioned. The evidence does little to strengthen the case. The case is semi-structured.	All arguments are consistent with the resolution. They are partially explained and supported by evidence (sources). The case is mostly structured.	All arguments are consistent with the resolution. They are explained, interrelated and supported by evidence (sources). The case is structured.
Evidence (sources)	Sources are unreliable; data is not current. Few sources.	The sources are in accordance with the resolution, the data are not current. Few sources.	The sources are current and relevant to the resolution.	Diverse, current and relevant sources are used.
Question-answer part	Answers to questions are incomplete. Asks some questions about the topic.	There are answers to the questions, but they are not substantiated. Asks some questions about the topic.	The answers to the questions are briefly justified. Ask questions that point to the substantive weaknesses of the opponent's case.	The answers to the questions are convincing, detailed and justified. Asks questions that demonstrate a deep understanding of the content and point to the substantive shortcomings of the opponent's case.
Ethics	Interrupts the opponent, does not listen, talks during the debate.	Does not disturb the debaters, but does not listen.	Treats teammates and opponents with respect.	Treats teammates and opponents with respect.
Oratory skills	Reads his case with interruptions. It is difficult to understand the meaning, questions and answers are short.	Reads his case with interruptions. It is possible to understand the meaning, questions and answers are short.	Speaks clearly, but without conviction.	Speaks freely, convincingly, using materials only for reading evidence.
Time	Does not use all the time allotted for speaking. Do not use the time allotted for the question part.	Uses almost all the time allotted for speaking. Do not use the time allotted for the question part.	Uses almost all the time allotted for speaking. Do not use the time allotted for the question part.	The time and part of the questions and answers are precisely observed.

Negative case	Beginner	Fair performance	Good performance	Master
1st speaker, 2nd speaker	1 p.	2 p.	3 p.	4 p.
+ Rebuttal (content)	The arguments of the A case are named, but not refuted. The case is not structured. The opponents' answers to the questions are not used in rebuttal.	Attempts to refute the arguments of the A case without extensive explanation and evidence. The case is semi-structured. The opponents' answers to the questions are not used in rebuttal.	Rebut all of the arguments in Case A by explaining them but not supporting them with evidence. The case is mostly structured. In refutation, opponents' answers to questions are partially used.	Refutes all the arguments of case A by explaining them, linking them together and supporting them with evidence (sources). The case is structured. The opponents' answers to the questions are used in refutation.

Affirmative case Negative case	Beginner	Fair performance	Good performance	Master
3rd speaker	1 p.	2 p.	3 p.	4 p.
Clash points	Names the clash points of the debate without explanation. Does not use opponents' answers to questions The case is semi-structured.	Names clash points in the debate. They are briefly justified without further explanation. Does not use opponents' answers to questions The case is semi-structured.	Names the clash points in the debate. They are partially explained and justified. Partially uses opponents' answers to questions. The case is mostly structured.	Names precisely the clash points in the debate. They are explained, interconnected and justified. Uses opponents' answers to questions. The case is structured. Holds the position.

Appendix No. 3 Debate resolutions

Human is/is not the crown of creation.

Religious affiliation is/is not an important component of human identity.

Nationality is/is not an important component of human identity.

The fight for gender equality is/is not relevant in the European Union.

The value of freedom is/is not feasible in today's society.

Women are/are not equal in the labor market.

Poverty is/is not an actual phenomenon in Latvian society.

Latvian society is/is not inclusive of people with functional disabilities.

Family is/is not a value of modern society.

Latvian youth are/are not patriots of their country.

Education is/isn't a value in today's society.

Ethnic stereotypes are/are not relevant in Latvian society.

In Latvia, all students have/don't have the opportunity to play sports in a quality way.

Mass media positively/negatively influence the quality of the Latvian language.

Daugavpils has/does not need an airport.

The Baltic Sea ecosystem is/is not threatened.

Daugavpils is/is not a family-friendly municipality.

Environmentally friendly business in Latvia is/is not competitive.

Daugavpils is/is not a family-friendly municipality.

High-quality cultural content created in Latvia is/is not available to Latvian residents.

The Latvian meadow ecosystem is/is not threatened.

Mass media positively/negatively influence the quality of the Latvian language.

The re-emigration policy in Latvia is/is not effective.

Environmentally friendly methods of energy production are used in full/incomplete form in Latvia.

Charity actions in Latvia are/are not sustainable.

Daugavpils will/will not become the European Capital of Culture in 2027.