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What are some good debate topics for middle school

A debate is a formal discussion about a topic where two sides present opposing viewpoints. Debates follow a specific structure: each side is given time to speak either for or against the topic at hand. Many students study debate in high school to improve their speaking skills. As a debater, you learn how to clearly structure and present an argument. The skills you develop as a debater will help you on everything from a college admissions interview to a job presentation. Selecting debate topics is one of the most important parts of debating. In this article, we'll explain how to select a good debate topic and give suggestions for debate topics you can use. How to Select Good Debate Topics A good debate topic is one that lets the participants and the audience learn about both sides of an issue. Consider the following factors when selecting a debate topic: Interest: Are you interested in the topic? Would the topic be interesting to your fellow classmates, as well as to the audience listening to the debate? Selecting a topic that you're interested in makes the preparation part of the debate more exciting, as well as the debate more lively. Argument Potential: You want to choose a debate topic that has solid argument potential. If one side is clearly right, or if there isn't a lot of available information, you'll have a hard time crafting a solid debate. Availability of Data: Data points make an argument more robust. You'll want to select a topic with lots of empirical data that you can pull from to bolster your argument. Now that we know how to select a debate topic, let's look at a list of good debate topics. Debate Topics Master List If you're searching for your next debate topic, here are some suggestions. Social and Political Issues Debate Topics All people should have the right to own guns. The death penalty should be abolished. Human cloning should be legalized. All drugs should be legalized. Animal testing should be banned. Juveniles should be tried and treated as adults. Climate change is the greatest threat facing humanity today. Violent video games should be banned. The minimum wage should be \$15 per hour. All people should have Universal Basic Income. Sex work should be legal. Countries should be isolationist. Abortion should be banned. Every citizen should be mandated to perform national public service. Bottled water should be banned. Plastic bags should be banned. Education Debate Topics Homework should be banned. Public prayer should not be allowed in schools. Schools should block sites like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram on their computers. School uniforms should be required. Standardized testing should be abolished. All students should have an after-school job or internship. School should be in session year-round. All high school athletes should be drug tested. Detention should be abolished. All student loan debt should be eliminated. Homeschooling is better than traditional schooling. All schools should have armed security guards. Religion should be taught in schools. All schools should be private schools. All students should go to boarding schools. Sexual education should be mandatory in schools. Public college should be tuition free. All teachers should get tenure. All school districts should offer school vouchers. Health Debate Topics Healthcare should be universal. Cosmetic procedures should be covered by health insurance. All people should be vegetarians. Euthanasia should be banned. The drinking age should be 18. Vaping should be banned. Smoking should be banned in all public places. People should be legally required to get vaccines. Obesity should be labeled a disease. Sexual orientation is determined at birth. The sale of human organs should be legalized. Birth control should be for sale over the counter. Technology Debate Topics Social media has improved human communication. The development of artificial intelligence will help humanity. Individuals should own their own DNA. Humans should invest in technology to explore and colonize other planets. Governments should invest in alternative energy sources. Net neutrality should be restored. Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies should be encouraged or banned. Alternative energy can effectively replace fossil fuels. Cell phone radiation is dangerous and should be limited. How to Prepare for a Debate Once you've selected your debate topic, the next step is to prepare for your debate. Follow these steps as you get ready to take the podium. Read Your Evidence The most important step to building your debate confidence is to familiarize yourself with the evidence available. You'll want to select reputable sources and use empirical data effectively. The more well read on your topic you are, the better you'll be able to defend your position and anticipate the other side's arguments. Anticipate the Other Side's Arguments As part of your debate, you'll need to rebut the other side's arguments. It's important to prepare ahead of time to guess what they'll be talking about. You'll bolster your own side's argument if you're able to effectively dismantle what the other side is saying. Plan to Fill Your Speech Time Each speaker at a debate is limited to a certain amount of time. You should plan to use every second of the time that you're allotted. Make sure you practice your talking points so that you know you're within the time frame. If you're short, add in more evidence. Practice to Build Confidence It can be scary to take the stage for a debate! Practicing ahead of time will help you build confidence. Remember to speak slowly and clearly. Even if your argument is great, it won't matter if no one can understand it. Final Thoughts Debate is a great way to hone your public speaking skills and get practice crafting and defending an argument. Use these debate topics if you're searching for a focus for your next debate. What's Next? Looking for ways to keep the debate going in non-academic life? Then you'll love our list of 101 "this or that" questions to argue over with your friends. Thinking about how you can use your argumentative skills in a future career? Read up on the five steps to becoming a lawyer to see if that's a path you want to pursue. Getting ready to take an AP test? Here's a list of practice tests for every AP exam, including the AP literature exam. It can be hard to schedule time to study for an AP test on top of your extracurriculars and normal classwork. Check out this article on when you need to start studying for your AP tests to make sure you're staying on track. Debates tend to instantly engage students, but they can also sharpen their research and public speaking skills. No matter your reasons for using them, having debates in your classroom is a sure way to get your students thinking and talking. You may require your students to research topics before debating them or even prepare speeches to state their point of view. Learning how to productively debate will improve your students' communication skills as they practice speaking and listening. These skills will serve them in college and the diverse career world beyond. The following 50 debate topics can be used in high school or advanced middle school classrooms. They are organized by genre and some can be modified for use in different subjects. Each item is listed in the form of a question to propose to your students that has at least two points of view. Should human cloning be banned? Should renewable forms of energy be subsidized by the government? Should the U.S. government fund a space mission to Mars? Should social media comments be protected by free speech? Should parents be allowed to choose their baby's gender? Should animal testing be banned? Should the U.S. government provide internet service to every citizen? Are video games too violent for children? Should the manufacturing of nuclear weapons be permitted? Is it ever appropriate for the government to restrict freedom of speech? Is democracy the best form of government? Should citizens who do not vote be fined? Is the right to bear arms a necessary constitutional amendment today? Should the legal voting/driving/drinking age be lowered or raised? Should a border fence be constructed between the U.S. and Mexico? Should America give foreign aid to other countries? Should drone attacks against specific targets be used for modern warfare? Should affirmative action be abolished? Should the death penalty be abolished? Should microaggressions be punishable by law? Should the cruel treatment of animals be illegal? Should partial-birth abortion be illegal? Should all parents be required to attend parenting classes before having a child? Should parents be required to vaccinate their children? Should mixed martial arts be banned? Should celebrities be required to be positive role models? Should people be fined for not recycling? Are progressive tax rates just? Should performance-enhancing drugs be allowed in sports? Should marijuana use be considered a crime? Should every student be required to take a performing arts course? Should homework be banned? Should school uniforms be required? Is year-round education a good idea? Should physical education be required of all high school students? Should all students be required to perform community service? Should schools block YouTube? Should students be able to leave school grounds for lunch? Are single-sex schools better for student learning and mental health? Should schools punish cyberbullying that occurs outside of school? Should teachers not be allowed to contact students through social media? Should public prayer be allowed in schools? Should high-stakes state testing be abolished? Should poetry units be removed from the curriculum? Is History (or another subject) actually an important subject in school? Should schools be allowed to track students by academic level? Should students be required to pass algebra to graduate? Should students be graded on their handwriting? Should all students be required to co-op? Should the theory of creation be taught in schools?

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