



Smart School Councils

DEBATE PACK

Are you passionate about sharpening your critical thinking and speaking skills?

IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO LIVE FOREVER, WOULD YOU WANT TO?



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How to Use this Debate Pack

Whether you have just a few minutes or a full lesson, this Debate Pack has got you covered. Check out the Certificates at the end too.

How to find the debate video and send to teachers

1. Log in to the [Smart School Councils platform](#) using your school details.
2. Click on the blue Class Meeting Tool button in the dashboard.
3. Click on 'Next Meeting' at the top of the page.
4. To get started, click on 'click here' to browse existing questions and options.
5. If the debate topic is part of this week's question, it will appear there. Otherwise, click 'Search All' and type in the debate topic you're looking for.

Got five minutes?

Play the debate video straight through and dive right into the debate. No need to pause at the prompts. It's a quick, engaging way to get your students thinking.

Got 10/15 minutes?

Pause at the prompts in the video to explore additional ideas your class might have. Use the additional points or Power Facts if you'd like.

Want to extend to 30 minutes or a full lesson?

Check out the lesson plan and writing tasks below. There is also a full Fact Sheet with amazing further reading if your students want to go deeper on the topic.

What do the icons in the pack mean?



This is what the presenter says on the video



This is a Power Fact to explain or prompt debate that's not in the video



This is an additional debate point that's not in the video

Introduction and Brain Gym Question

Introduction



Welcome to Big Debate Club!

My name is Becky and today we are debating the question...

If it were possible to live forever, would you want to?

Being able to live forever or being immortal is usually stuck in superhero films, but in reality for centuries, humans have searched for ways to extend life. Today, scientists are exploring ways to slow ageing, but would living for a very long time, or even forever, be a good thing?

Immortality could be incredible, experiencing everything the world has to offer and learn endlessly. Living forever could become boring, however, with all your loved ones leaving you, and life isn't as special because it lasts forever. You decide.

Brain Gym Question

Before we get started, I have a question for you...

Which animal is known for its ability to biologically "live forever" by reversing its ageing process?

- a) The Galápagos tortoise
- b) The immortal jellyfish
- c) The axolotl
- d) The Greenland shark

Immortality advocates like futurist Ray Kurzweil suggest that rapid medical advancements could lead to "longevity escape velocity," where life expectancy increases faster than the time around them passes, potentially enabling indefinite lifespans. (Source: *New York Post*, [LINK](#))



FOR: We would want to live forever if it were possible

We're going to share reasons for both sides of the debate, then it's up to you to think of the rest!


Endless life means endless opportunities



You might be thinking that an endless life would mean endless opportunities. You could travel the world, learn every language, master every hobby, make friends from every century and never run out of time to achieve your dreams.

Living life without fear

You could say that you would have to fear death or danger. You wouldn't have to worry about ageing or dangerous situations due to your immortality meaning you know nothing will ever end your life.

Can you think of another reason why you would want to live forever if it were possible? 

More people to contribute money and experience



Extended lifespans could allow individuals to contribute to the economy and society for longer periods meaning accumulated experience to come up with new ideas and more people contributing money to the economy, making it stronger.

Are we just convincing ourselves that death is important?



Dr Ariel Zeleznikow-Johnston says reasons that death is important as a deadline for our goals isn't real - 'Death is inevitable, we want convincing reasons as to why that's good, so we create them. Modern medicine is really the practice of trying to keep death at bay.' (Source: *The Guardian*, [LINK](#))



AGAINST: You would not want to live forever if it were possible

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue that you would not want to live forever if it were possible.




Living forever could mean boredom and lack of purpose

You might be thinking that living forever could mean boredom and lack of purpose. If life never ended, would it start to feel meaningless? Would achievements still feel special if you had unlimited time to reach them?

Living forever could cause emotional challenges

Or you could say that living forever could lead to emotional challenges. Outliving friends and family who were not to living forever would be painful. As well as constantly finding new people to grow close to in order to avoid loneliness. Would relationships still have the same meaning?

Can you think of another reason why you would not want to live forever if it were possible? 

A long life doesn't mean a good life

Some argue that extending life does not necessarily guarantee a good quality of life, and longer lifespans could lead to extended periods of poor health or diminished capacities as your body grows older.



Not many other people want the opportunity to live forever

Surveys reveal that a significant portion of the population is not interested in living forever. For instance, a New Scientist survey reported that only 21% of UK adults would choose immortality if given the option with reasons including a world of older people and how far your healthspan would last. (Source: New Scientist, [LINK](#))



FactSheet: If it were possible to live forever, would you want to?



Here's six key facts - three on each side - if you'd like to go a little deeper.

Yes

More people with acquired knowledge means movements

A longer life allows individuals to experience and contribute to societal advancements, technological innovations, and cultural shifts meaning exciting lives with lots of new and exciting experiences that they can contribute through acquired knowledge through their long lives. (Source: *The Guardian*, [LINK](#))

Does death give life meaning?

Dr Ariel Zeleznikow-Johnston says reasons that death is important as a deadline for our goals isn't real - 'Death is inevitable, we want convincing reasons as to why that's good, so we create them. Modern medicine is really the practice of trying to keep death at bay.' (Source: *The Guardian*, [LINK](#))

Longer life means financial security and opportunity

Longer lifespans provide opportunities to work longer, leading to increased financial security, move higher through additional promotions and the ability to pursue multiple careers or passions. (Source: *The AARP*, [LINK](#))

NO

Wouldn't a long life be boring?

Philosopher Bernard Williams argues that an immortal life could become oppressively boring, as individuals might eventually exhaust all sources of interest and meaning. (Source: *Philosophy Stack Exchange*, [LINK](#))

Most of the population is not interested in living forever

Surveys reveal that a significant portion of the population is not interested in living forever. For instance, a New Scientist survey reported that only 21% of UK adults would choose immortality if given the option with reasons including a world of older people and how far your healthspan would last. (Source: *New Scientist*, [LINK](#))

Does death give life meaning?

The finite nature of life (it ends at death) often gives experiences and achievements their value; removing this may mean we do not appreciate life's moments anymore or push ourselves towards our goals quickly. (Source: *The New Yorker*, [LINK](#))



Sentence Starters

POINT

LEMON & HERB: One reason why I (agree/disagree) with this debate is because...

MEDIUM: One point I have for this debate is...

HOT: You could say that...

EVIDENCE

LEMON & HERB: One way I can prove my point is through this example...

MEDIUM: I can show this works through the fact that...

HOT: I know this because...

EXPLANATION

LEMON & HERB: The evidence I have discussed above proves my point as...

MEDIUM: This example proves my point because...

HOT: Therefore, this proves my point as...

LINK

LEMON & HERB: All together, this answers the debate question asked by...

MEDIUM: This point answers the overall question because...

HOT: These ideas answer the debate as...





**Post your debate on
social media!**

SHARE YOUR VOICE

We shout out the best opinions each week

#BIGDEBATECUB

TWITTER @SSCCTY

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DEBATER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

For debating fairly, respectfully and persuasively. Well done!

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils

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CLASS MEETING LEADER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

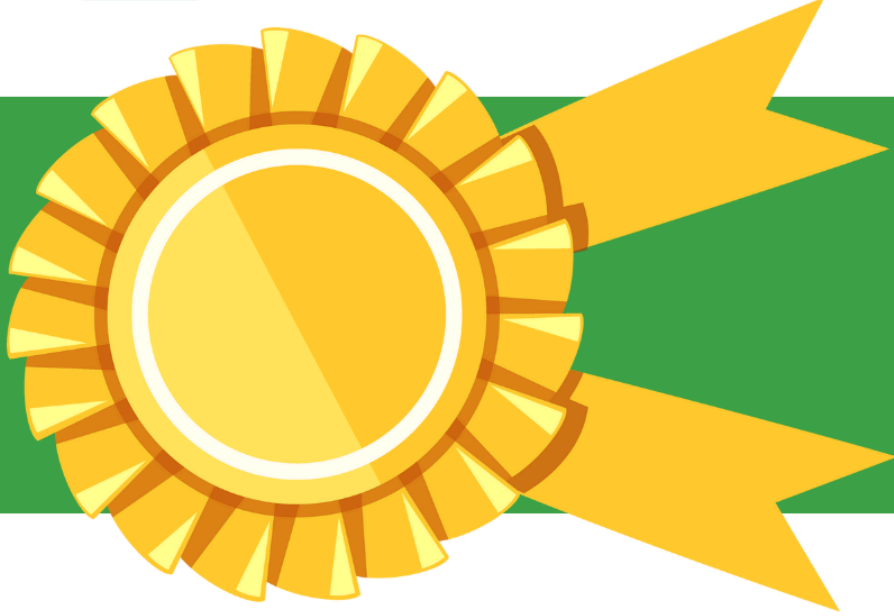
For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils



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BEST IDEA OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

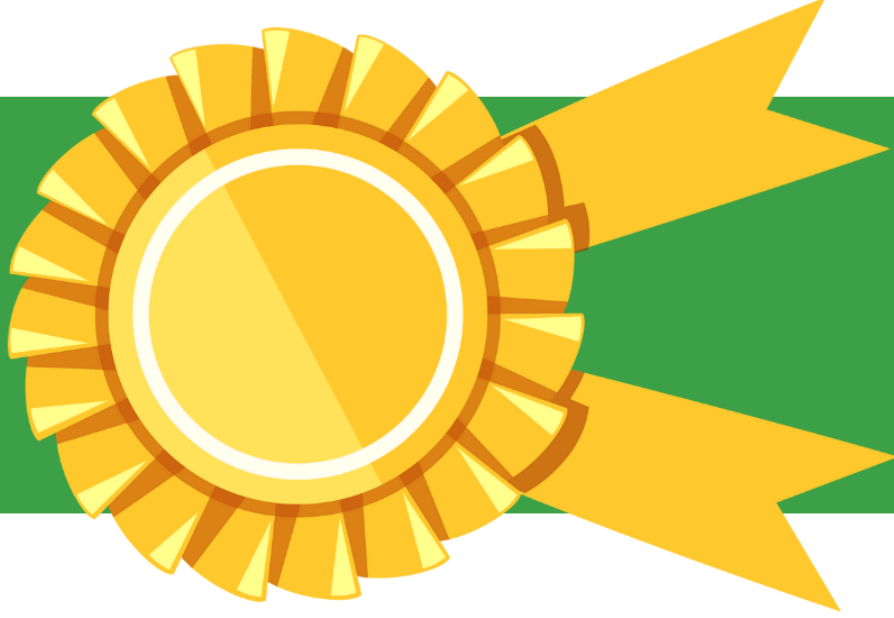
For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils



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