



Smart School Councils

DEBATE PACK

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

IS IT FAIR TO PLAY COMPETITIVE SPORTS DURING P.E. LESSONS?



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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...

Is it fair to play competitive sports during P.E. lessons?

P.E. lessons are meant to keep us active, teach us teamwork, and help us develop important physical skills. But not everyone enjoys the competitive side of sports.

Although competitive sports like football, rugby or hockey can be fun to play, with the competition pushing us to improve, teaches us resilience, and we get better the more we play, is playing competitively fair and off putting if people with different skill levels and abilities are pitted against each other?

You decide.

Brain Gym Question

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

Which of these sports was invented first?

- a) Basketball
- b) Football
- c) Volleyball
- d) Tennis

A study published in *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living* found that adolescents who engaged in competitive sports reported better mental health. Participation in competitive sports during adolescence is associated with a 33% higher likelihood of improved mental wellbeing. (Source: PubMed Central, [LINK](#))



FOR: It is fair to play competitive sports during PE Lessons


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

Playing competitively builds resilience and teamwork skills

You might be thinking that playing competitively builds resilience and teamwork skills. Having fun competitions against each other teaches important life skills like handling wins graciously and dealing with losses without being a sore loser while also working as a team, and pushing yourself to improve, benefiting us all.

It prepares you for competition as an adult

You could say that you can prepare for competition as an adult while at school. Life is full of competition, whether in academics, jobs, or other activities. Learning to compete in a healthy way helps students develop a strong mindset.

Can you think of another reason why it is fair to play competitive sports during PE lessons? 

It has a proven track record of improving physical health

In recent research, 96% of schools reported improvements in pupils' physical fitness due to increased participation in sports activities. This shows that participating in organised can increase fitness for all of the young people involved.

It can improve behaviour and lifestyle in school

93% of schools observed better behaviour among pupils, and 96% believed that sports contributed to a healthier lifestyle showing all the benefits of taking part in sports activities. (Source: GOV.UK, [LINK](#))



AGAINST: It is not fair to play competitive sports during PE Lessons

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue that it is not fair to play competitive sports during PE lessons.




It is not fair to play competitive sports in an uneven environment

You might think that it is not fair to play competitive sports in an uneven environment. Some students may be naturally more athletic than others or some students may have limitations, making it harder for everyone to enjoy the game on an equal level and discouraging or embarrassing those who cannot engage as well.

Is PE not about being active rather than competition?

Or you could also ask is PE not about being active rather than competition? P.E. should focus on ways to be active and healthy rather than making students feel like they have to win to take part in sport, surely this is the wrong message.

Can you think of another reason why it is not fair to play competitive sports during PE lessons? 



It has a proven track record of improving physical health

Specialising in sports so early in life is often associated with increased physical injuries, mental health problems, and psychosocial harm to young athletes. Therefore, focusing on health and fitness rather than pushing specialised sports may be better.

Competitive sports have a negative mental impact



64% of 8 to 16-year-olds said they would be “relieved, not bothered or happier” if winning or losing were not a factor in sports showing the negative impact on the mental health of young people when competitive sports are involved. (Source: *The Guardian*, [LINK](#))

FactSheet: Is it fair to play competitive sports during PE Lessons?



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

Yes

It has a proven track record for improving physical health

In recent research, 96% of schools reported improvements in pupils' physical fitness due to increased participation in sports activities. This shows that participating in organised can increase fitness for all of the young people involved. (Source: GOV.UK, [LINK](#))

It can improve behaviour and lifestyle

93% of schools observed better behaviour among pupils, and 96% believed that sports contributed to a healthier lifestyle showing all the benefits of taking part of sports activities. (Source: GOV.UK, [LINK](#))

Competitive sports can provide confidence

80% of young girls felt more confident by participating in team sports, with nearly half feeling more confident than their peers showing that competitive sports can be beneficial for the mental and physical health for young women. (Source: *The Guardian*, [LINK](#))

NO

Competitive sports can have a negative mental impact

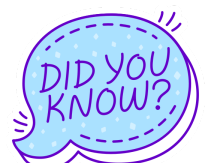
64% of 8 to 16-year-olds said they would be "relieved, not bothered or happier" if winning or losing were not a factor in sports showing the negative impact on the mental health of young people when competitive sports are involved. (Source: *The Guardian*, [LINK](#))

Playing and specialising in sports early can cause issues

Specialising in sports so early in life is often associated with increased physical injuries, mental health problems, and psychosocial harm to young athletes. (Source: *Wikipedia*, [LINK](#))

Potential alienation from sports in the future

Students who consistently face defeat or feel inadequate in competitive settings may develop a negative attitude towards physical activity, affecting long-term health habits. (Source: *The Guardian*, [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 @SSCCTV

INSTAGRAM @SMARTSCHOOLCOUNCILS



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DEBATER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

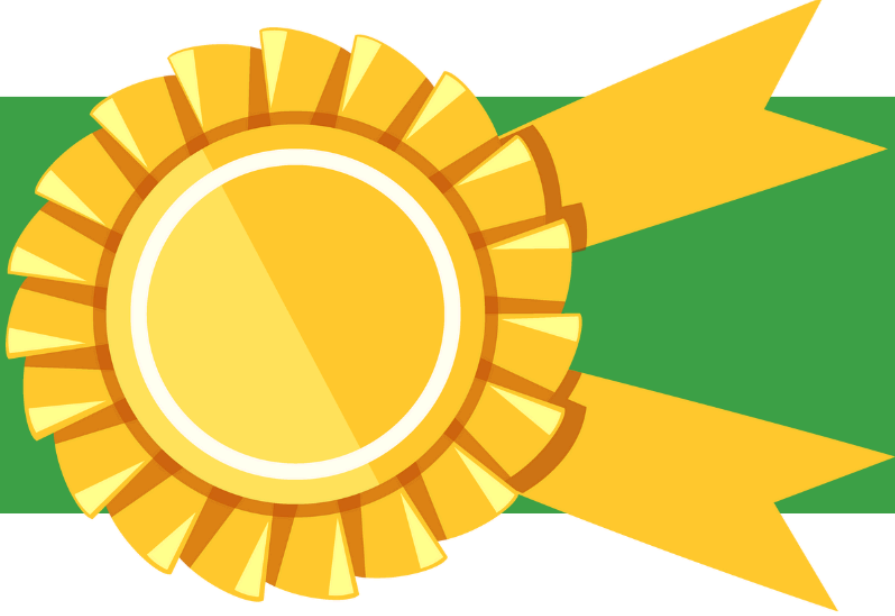
For debating fairly, respectfully and persuasively. Well done!

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...

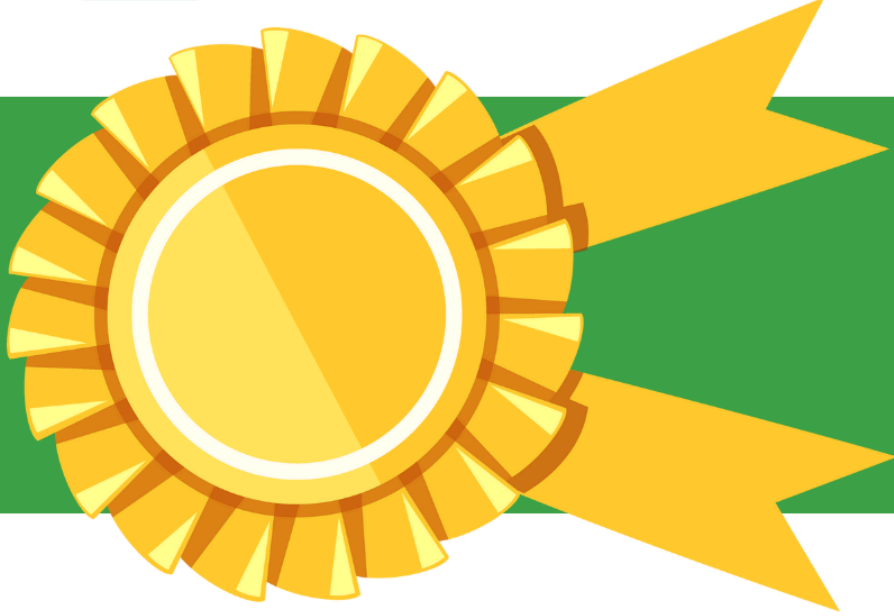
For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

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...

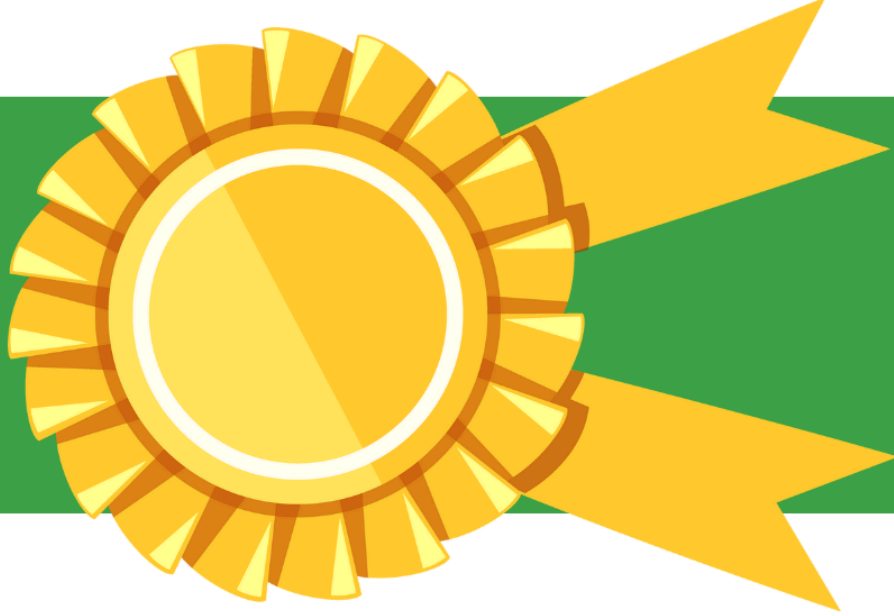
For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

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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