



Smart School Councils

DEBATE PACK

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

IS MODERN HALLOWEEN TOO SCARY?



WWW.SMARTSCHOOLCOUNCILS.ORG

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 modern Halloween too scary?

Halloween is one of my favourite times of the year. When I was younger, it was about having a party to bob for apples, or dressing up and going out with your guardians to get sweets. But in recent years, things have gotten a little... scarier.

With realistic horror costumes, haunted houses, and terrifying movies, some people think Halloween has gone too far - especially for younger people. It could be said that spooky fun is part of the tradition, and there's nothing wrong with being scared if it's all pretend, but which is it? You decide.

Brain Gym Question

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

What is the origin of Halloween?

- a) A Roman festival
- b) A Viking tradition
- c) A Celtic festival called Samhain
- d) An ancient Egyptian holiday

Halloween is one of the biggest spending holidays. In 2023, UK shoppers spent £1.1 billion on Halloween, boosting local economies through parties, shops, and events. (Source: *Statista*, [LINK](#))



FOR: Modern Halloween is too scary

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

There has been a growing focus on horror in modern Halloween

You might be thinking that there has become a focus on horror. Movies, haunted houses, and zombie makeup often focus on violence and gore, which can be overwhelming or disturbing.

The internet is making it harder to avoid scarier content

You could say that with the internet it is harder to avoid the scarier content. Social media and advertising often show frightening images and jump-scare videos, so even kids who don't want to take part can still get exposed to it.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that modern Halloween is too scary? 

Scary Marketing has frightened children

Research shows that exposure to frightening media can have lasting effects on children. A University of Michigan study found that 52% of children experienced sleep problems or anxiety after watching a scary movie or show. (Source: *University of Michigan*, [LINK](#))

Research suggests that parents are worried Halloween is too scary

Parents going to events with their young people are suggesting they are worried about how scary they are. A YouGov survey found that 46% of UK parents think Halloween events have become too frightening for young kids. (Source: *YouGov*, [LINK](#))



AGAINST: Modern Halloween is not too scary

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue that modern Halloween is not too scary.

Halloween is supposed to be spooky

You might think that Halloween is supposed to be spooky. Being a little scared is part of the fun, and much like riding a rollercoaster, you should expect to be a little scared but in a fun way.

Halloween can have levels and varieties of celebrations

Or you could also say Halloween can have levels and varieties of celebrations. Although there can be super spooky events like haunted houses and horror film showings, there can be family friendly events such as less scary and more fun parties.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that modern halloween is not too scary? 



People like to be thrilled by 'safe fear'

Halloween based attractions are often known as places to experience 'safe fear' where people can be thrilled but know that it isn't real and that they are safe. Psychologists say people like "safe fear", such as horror movies or haunted houses, because it gives a thrill without real danger. (Source: American Psychological Association, [LINK](#))



The younger generations seem to enjoy Halloween the most

When surveyed by YouGov, younger people had a positive opinion of Halloween. A majority of 18-24 year olds (54%) have a positive opinion of Halloween,



compared to only one in six (16%) who dislike it. If they were scared too much as children, would they have such a positive opinion of it? (Source: YouGov, [LINK](#))

FactSheet: Is modern Halloween too scary?

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



Yes

Research suggests that parents are worried that Halloween is too scary

Parents going to events with their young people are suggesting they are worried about how scary they are. A YouGov survey found that 46% of UK parents think Halloween events have become too frightening for young kids. (Source: YouGov, [LINK](#))

Gives everyone, including businesses, an opportunity to think about inclusivity

More and more older people want to go to fear-based entertainment to celebrate Halloween, so in order to draw people into their specific event, the hosts may aim to make it more and more scary. The scarier it is, the more money is made - in the US, the haunted attraction industry is worth over \$300 million annually, showing how popular fear has become and how they must make their entertainment space scary to draw in attendees. (Source: Hauntworld, [LINK](#))

Scary marketing has frightened children

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No

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People like to be thrilled by 'safe fear'

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Halloween still has a focus on fun for young children

Surveys show the most popular Halloween costumes for children to wear are not horror-based, but instead superheroes, witches, and princesses rank higher. In 2023, 53% of parents said their children chose "fun" costumes rather than scary ones, highlighting that children can still experience a fun and less scary Halloween celebration. (Source: National Retail Federation, [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

INSTAGRAM @SMARTSCHOOLCOUNCILS



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DEBATER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

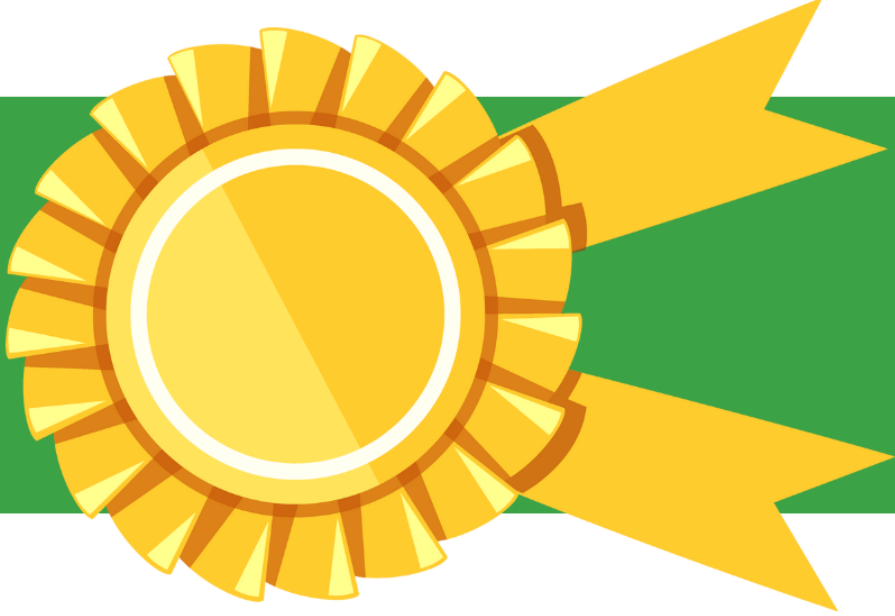
For debating fairly, respectfully and persuasively. Well done!

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...

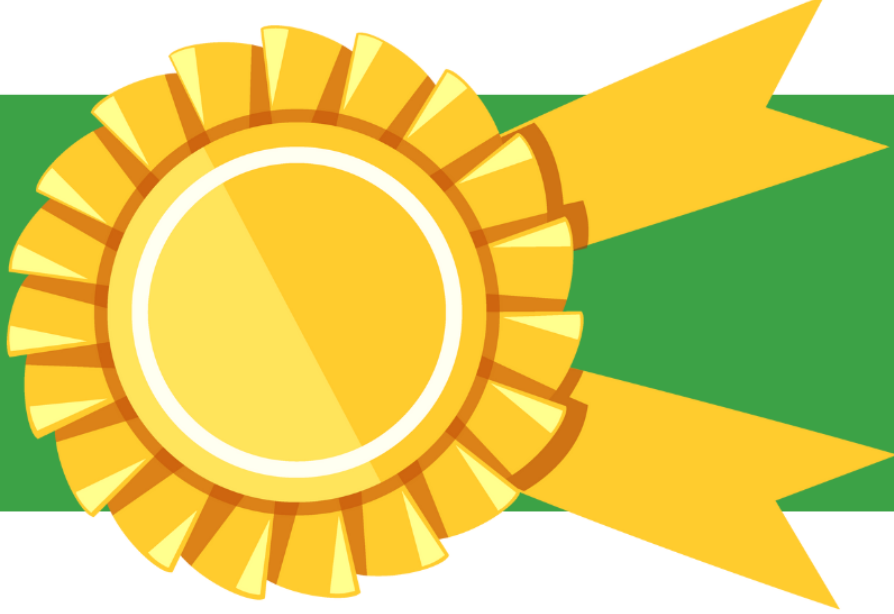
For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

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...

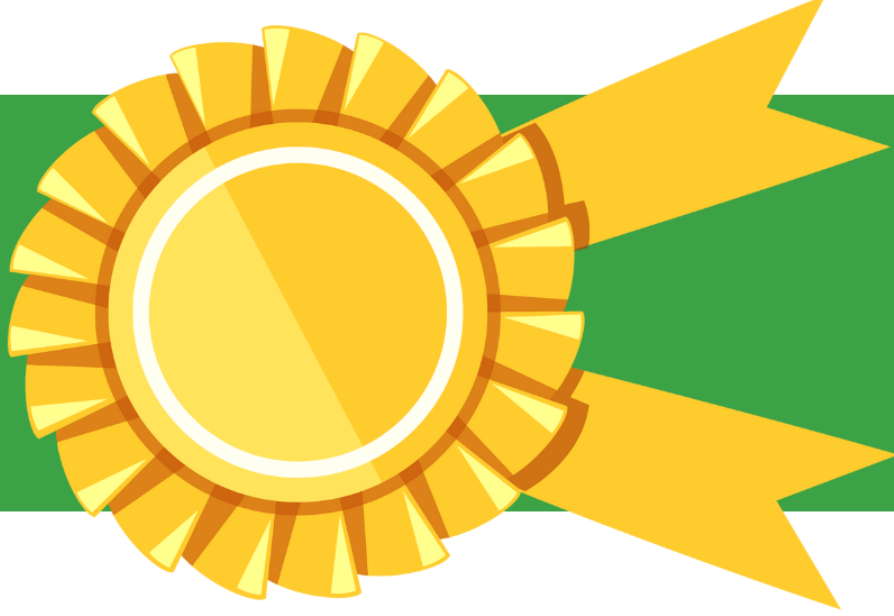
For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

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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