

BIG DEBATE CLUB



Smart School Councils

DEBATE PACK

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

DO GRADES REFLECT INTELLIGENCE?



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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...

Do grades reflect intelligence?

When was the last time you did a test? Did you remember how to answer all the questions or did it highlight where you need to practice? Either way tests can be helpful in checking your understanding of topics you have recently learnt.

But do the results or 'grades' received reflect a person's intelligence or grades only measure certain skills, like memorisation or test-taking, and not overall intelligence but also include problem-solving, creativity, emotional understanding, and practical skills. But which is it? You decide.

Brain Gym Question

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

In psychology, what does "IQ" stand for?

- a) Intelligence Quotient
- b) Individual Quickness
- c) Idea Quota
- d) Intelligent Questioning

International assessments are made in order to measure problem-solving and reasoning skills, a certain type of intelligence. In 2022, students with higher intelligence test scores consistently achieved higher grades in school subjects. (Source: *OECD*, [LINK](#))



FOR: Grades do reflect intelligence

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

Grades are a consistent way to measure academic knowledge



You might be thinking that grades are a consistent way to measure academic knowledge. Grades acquired in exams give a standard way to measure performance on what you've learned in school such as maths or science. So doing well in exams shows strong understanding, which is a sign of academic intelligence and shows high intellectual ability.

Grades can reflect problem solving and memory skills

You could say that grades can also reflect problem solving and memory skills. Exams and assignments test how well you can remember, organise, and use information under pressure. These are key parts of intelligence.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that grades do reflect intelligence? 

Grades reflect how a student will continue to academically perform



A study by UCAS, who look after university applications, found students' achieved A-level grades were strong reflectors for the student's university performance, accounting for around 65% of the variation in first-year university results. (Source: UCAS, [LINK](#))

Students with higher grades are more likely to be successful adults



According to research by the UK Department of Education, students with higher GCSE and A-level grades earn significantly more as adults. Individuals with 5+ good GCSEs earn on average around 20% more than those without. (Source: UK Department of Education, [LINK](#))



AGAINST: Grades do not reflect intelligence

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue grades do not reflect intelligence.

Grades don't measure all intelligences and skills

You might think that grades don't measure all intelligences and skills. Psychologists like Howard Gardner argue that people can be intelligent in many ways: artistic, musical, physical, or social. Grades mostly measure just reading, writing, and maths skills.

Exam anxiety can prevent intelligent students from gaining good grades

Or you could also say exam anxiety can prevent intelligent students from gaining good grades. Some very intelligent students perform badly in exams because they panic under pressure. That doesn't mean they aren't clever, it just means tests don't suit them.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that grades do not reflect intelligence? 



Not all intelligences are being assessed by exams and grades

Psychologist Howard Gardner proposed at least 8 different types of intelligence, many not measured by school exams, not all of which are being assessed when completing the average GCSE or A Level exam. (Source: *Harvard Graduate School of Education*, [LINK](#))



There can be external factors that can prevent academic success

Other external factors can also explain grades not necessarily matching with a students' intelligence. For instance, in England, disadvantaged pupils are on average 18.8 months behind their peers by the end of secondary school. This does not mean they are not as intelligent, but it may mean they do not have access to resources to help them succeed. (Source: *Education Policy Institute*, [LINK](#))



FactSheet: Do grades reflect intelligence?

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



Grades do reflect intelligence

Grades reflect how well a student will perform academically

A study by UCAS, who look after university applications, found students' achieved A-level grades were strong reflectors for the student's university performance, accounting for around 65% of the variation in first-year university results. (Source: UCAS, [LINK](#))

Grades tend to reflect how successful students will be in adulthood

According to research by the UK Department of Education, students with higher GCSE and A-level grades earn significantly more as adults. Individuals with 5+ good GCSEs earn on average around 20% more than those without. (Source: UK Department of Education, [LINK](#))

Intelligence points (IQ) and grades are closely linked

Research shows a student's intelligence (IQ) is closely linked with the school grades they received, meaning higher IQ is linked to higher academic achievement. (Source: Deary et al., [LINK](#))

Grades do not reflect intelligence

You need more than intelligence to be successful in your grades

While intelligence (IQ) is closely linked with grades, there are other traits that are needed to be successful in your grades and exams, personality traits like motivation and self-discipline also strongly influence results. (Source: Poropat, [LINK](#))

There can be external factors that prevent success in a student's grades

Other external factors can also explain grades not necessarily matching with a students' intelligence. For instance, in England, disadvantaged pupils are on average 18.8 months behind their peers by the end of secondary school. This does not mean they are not as intelligent, but it may mean they do not have access to resources to help them succeed. (Source: Education Policy Institute, [LINK](#))

There are many types of intelligences that can't all be assessed by exams

Psychologist Howard Gardner proposed at least 8 different types of intelligence, many not measured by school exams, not all of which are being assessed when completing the average GCSE or A Level exam. (Source: Harvard Graduate School of Education, [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

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DEBATER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

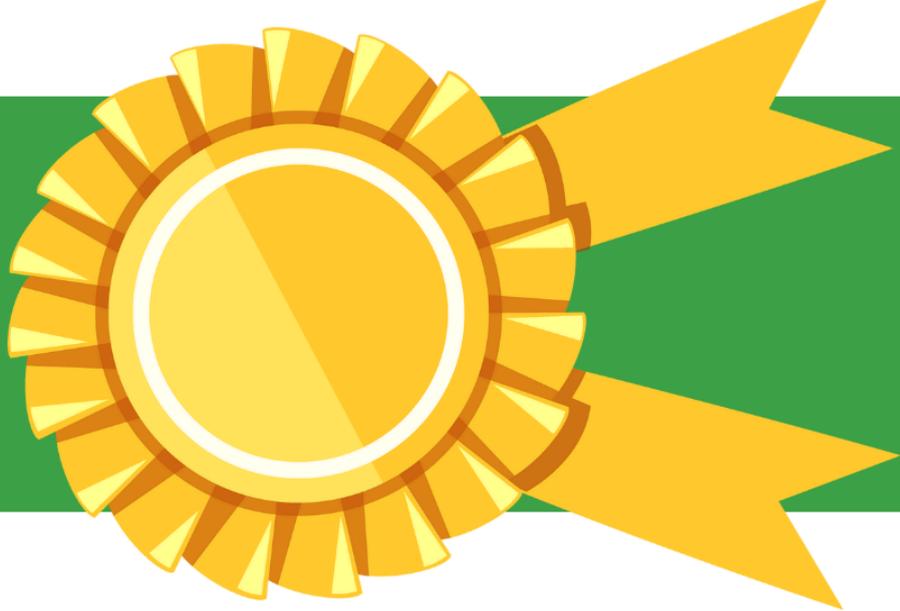
For debating fairly, respectfully and persuasively. Well done!

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...

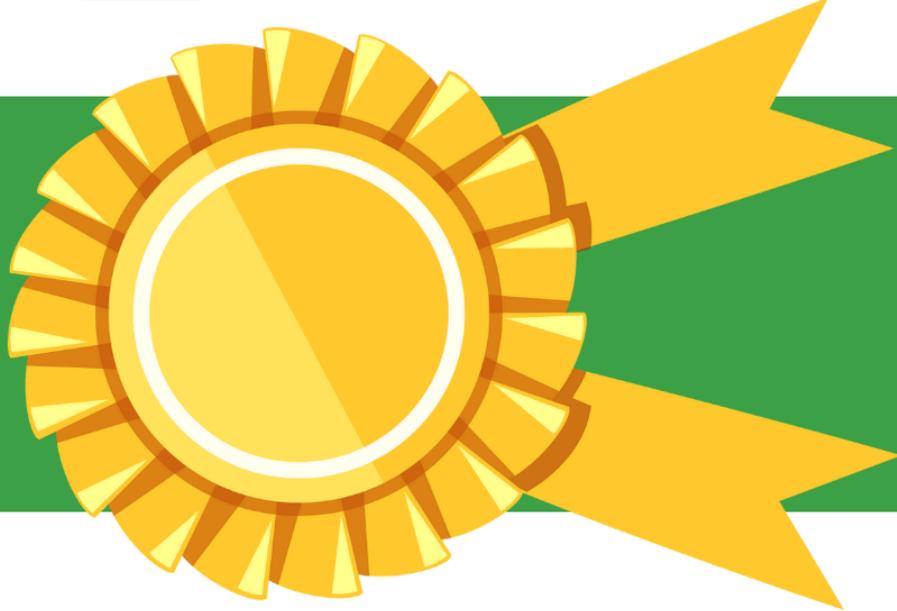
For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

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...

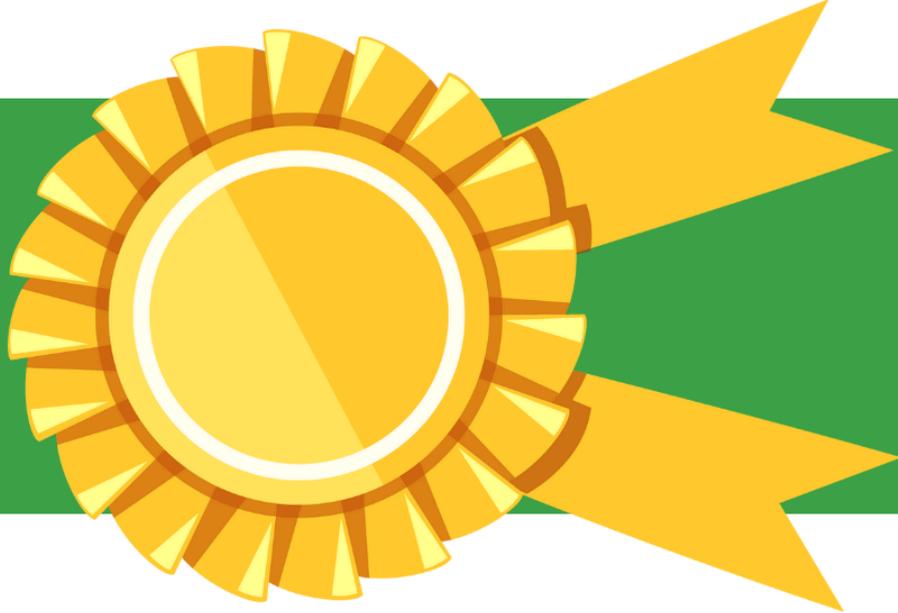
For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

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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