

BIG DEBATE CLUB



Smart School Councils

# DEBATE PACK

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

IS SCHOOL PREPARING STUDENTS FOR REAL LIFE?



[WWW.SMARTSCHOOLCOUNCILS.ORG](http://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 school preparing students for real life?

School is a big part of growing up and becoming the person you want to be. Students learn subjects like maths, science, English, and history but they also learn how to work hard, routines, and how to work with others. School does a great job preparing students for real life by teaching important knowledge and skills.

It could be said that school focuses too much on tests and not enough on real-world skills like managing money, solving everyday problems, or dealing with challenges outside the classroom. So does school prepare you for real life? You decide.

## Brain Gym Question

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

According to the OECD, which skill is considered just as important as academic knowledge for success in adult life?

- a. Memorising facts
- b. Creativity and problem-solving
- c. Speed reading
- d. Handwriting neatly

Does school really prepare students for real life if in the UK, 12% of employers reported skills gaps in their workforce, affecting around 1.26 million employees? (Source: *Explore Education Statistics via Gov.uk*, [LINK](#))



## FOR: School is preparing students for real life

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


### Schools focus on '21st Century Skills' which helps future employment



You might be thinking that schools focus on "21st-century skills" which help for future employment. School teaches skills like teamwork, communication, and creativity, which employers value for real-world success. For example, over 90% of teachers believe schools develop key employability and life skills such as communication, presenting and problem-solving which helps blend classroom work with workplace expectations.

### Through the classroom, students learn social and emotional skills

You could say that through classroom interaction, students learn social and emotional skills. Studies show that learning programmes that focus on social-emotional learning can improve academic performance by about 11 percent - schools can develop empathy, cooperation, and emotional regulation - all learnt through working with different students from different backgrounds.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that school is preparing students for real life? 

### Education brings job opportunities



According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, employment rates rise with education: 79% of young adults with upper secondary education are employed compared to 61% without it. This shows school qualifications help people succeed in the workplace. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))

### People with higher qualifications are less likely to be unemployed



People with higher qualifications are less likely to be unemployed. Only 4.9% of educated young adults who have A Levels or similar level qualifications are unemployed, compared to higher rates for those with fewer qualifications. This shows school and further education improve life chances. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))



## AGAINST: School is not preparing students for real life

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue that school is not preparing students for real life.


### Many students do not feel prepared for real life



You might think that many students do not feel prepared for real life when they leave school. According to studies, nearly 1 in 3 recent high school graduates report feeling unprepared for real-life challenges like taxes, budgeting, or navigating healthcare, showing that a third of students feel unprepared after the school experience.

### Employers find that school leavers lack some skills

Or you could also say employers find that school leavers lack some skills. Employers often find that new graduates lack basic work skills they consider important such as critical thinking. In one survey, about 42% of employers rated high-school graduates as “deficient” in overall preparation for entry-level jobs.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that school is not preparing students for real life? 

### Not all people leave school with even the most essential skills



In England, 18% of adults have very low literacy skills, despite having attended school. This shows not everyone leaves school with essential life skills because school is not helping everyone with the tailored help that they need. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))

### Advantage can give you more success than school can give you

Students from advantaged backgrounds are over twice as likely to go to university than those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This suggests school does not prepare everyone equally for life, and things outside of what school is giving contributes just as much to whether people are able to take up opportunities like university. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))



# FactSheet: Is school preparing students for real life?



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

## School is preparing students for real life

### ***Education provides job opportunities***

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, employment rates rise with education: 79% of young adults with upper secondary education are employed compared to 61% without it. This shows school qualifications help people succeed in the workplace. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))

### ***It provides important skills like literacy***

In England, 82% of adults have literacy above the lowest level, meaning school provides basic reading and writing skills needed for everyday life. These are key skills for jobs, money management, and communication. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))

### ***People with higher qualifications are less likely to be unemployed***

People with higher qualifications are less likely to be unemployed. Only 4.9% of educated young adults who have A Levels or similar level qualifications are unemployed, compared to higher rates for those with fewer qualifications. This shows school and further education improve life chances. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))

## School is not preparing students for real life

### ***Advantage can give you more success than school can give you***

Students from advantaged backgrounds are over twice as likely to go to university than those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This suggests school does not prepare everyone equally for life, and things outside of what school is giving contributes just as much to whether people are able to take up opportunities like university. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))

### ***Not all people leave school with even the most essential skills***

In England, 18% of adults have very low literacy skills, despite having attended school. This shows not everyone leaves school with essential life skills because school is not helping everyone with the tailored help that they need. (Source: OECD, [LINK](#))

### ***Many people are too qualified for their job so school qualifications do not match up***

OECD data suggests around 37% of workers in England are overqualified, meaning their education does not match their job. This indicates a mismatch between school learning and real-life work, and even despite getting multiple qualifications, lower qualified jobs are best suited to their skills. (Source: OECD, [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...

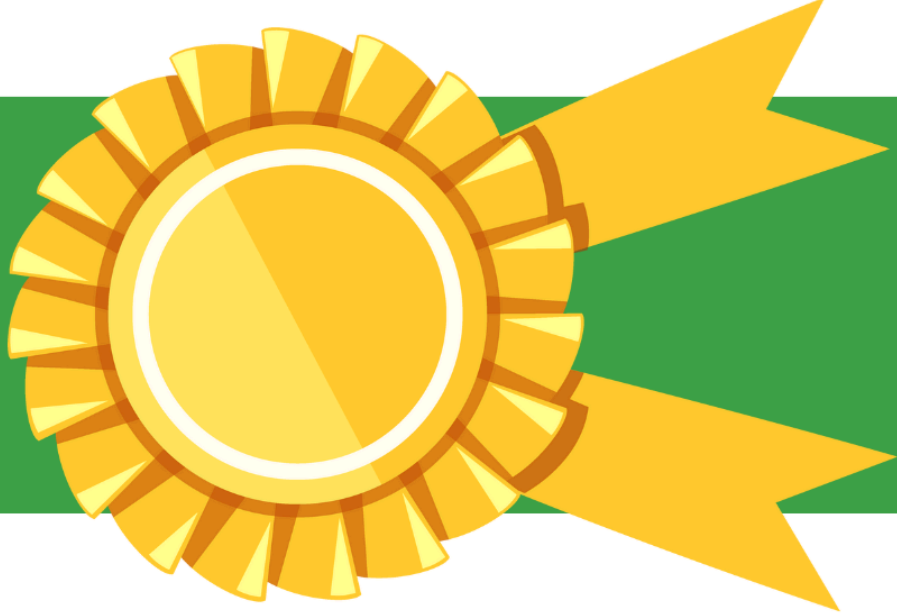
For debating fairly, respectfully and persuasively. Well done!

*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...

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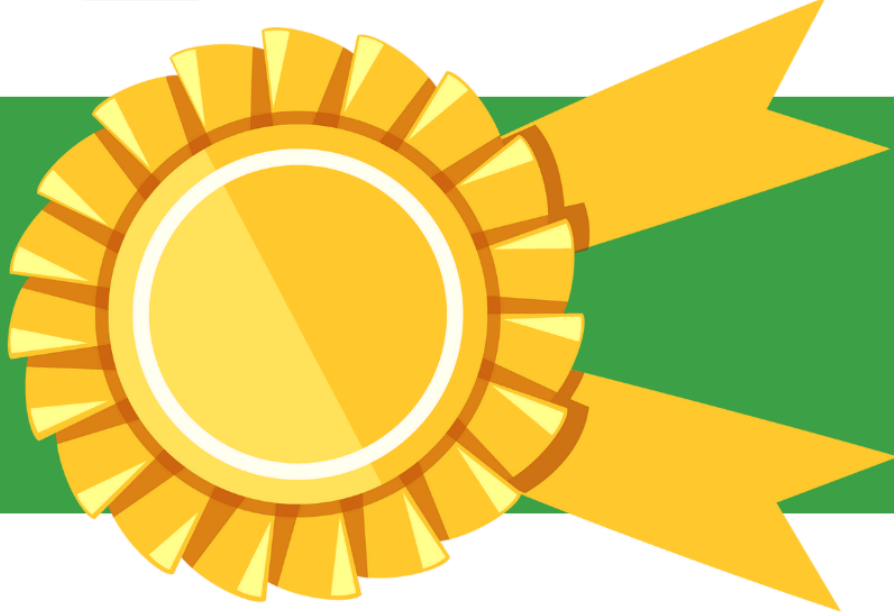
For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

*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...

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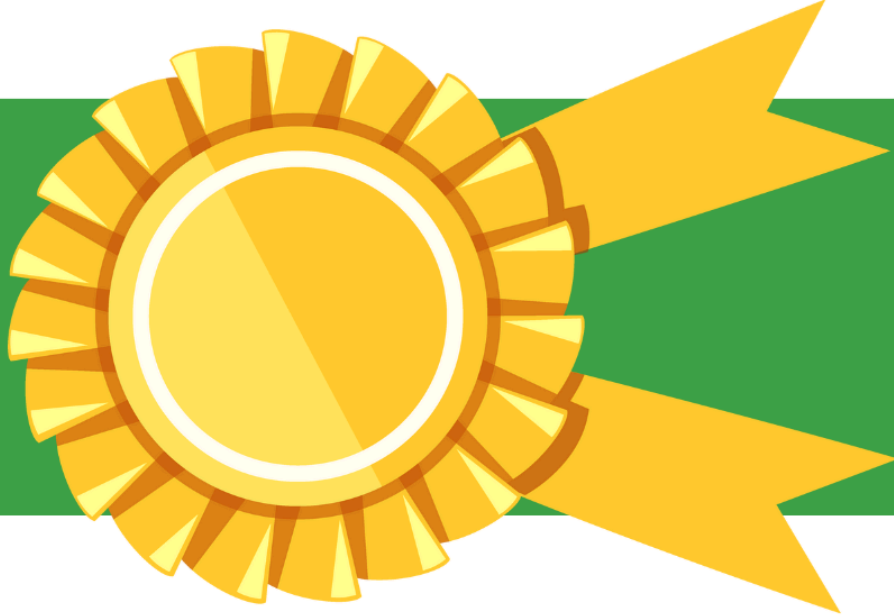
For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

**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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