

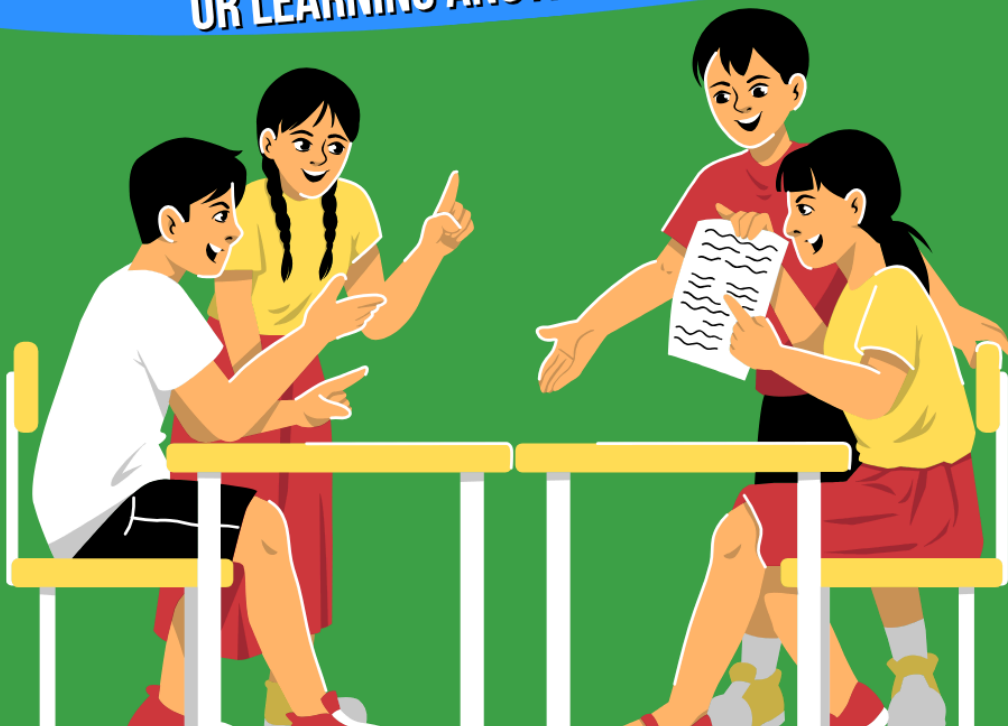


**Smart School Councils**

# DEBATE PACK

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

**WHICH IS MORE BENEFICIAL - LEARNING CODING  
OR LEARNING ANOTHER LANGUAGE?**



[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...

Which is more beneficial - learning coding or learning another language?

I love learning new things. And learning new skills is always a good way to expand your horizons, give yourself a new challenge and improve yourself. But which skill would bring you more benefit? For instance, Coding or learning a language?

Coding means writing instructions that tell computers what to do. Technology is growing fast, the UK tech sector was worth over £1 trillion in 2023, according to government reports. Learning another language means being able to speak, read or write in a different language, such as Spanish, Urdu or Welsh. Research shows that speaking more than one language can improve memory and problem-solving skills while also helping people communicate across communities. But which skill gives you the bigger benefit? You decide.

## Brain Gym Question

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

Approximately how many languages are spoken around the world today?

- a. 700
- b. 1,500
- c. 3,000
- d. 7,000

Being able to speak someone else's language can help build trust and frier more easily. There are over 7,000 languages spoken worldwide today. But a computer language that has a community and more job prospects. So, w more beneficial to learn? (*Source: Ethnologue, [LINK](#)*)



## FOR: Learning coding is a more beneficial skill


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

### Coding is an in demand skill

You might be thinking that coding is an in demand skill that would make a great career. The UK government says that digital jobs contributed over 1 trillion pounds to the UK in 2023. Jobs in technology are growing quickly, and many careers now require some coding or digital knowledge. With a knowledge of coding, you could secure a job easier or have a better paying job.

### Coding builds problem solving and thinking skills

You could say that coding builds problem solving and thinking skills. Coding teaches you how to break big problems into smaller steps and solve them logically. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation suggests that pupils who study computing and programming can improve their reasoning skills compared to those who do not. Learning to code doesn't just teach you how to use technology, it teaches you how to think in a structured and organised way.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that learning coding is a more beneficial skill? 

### Coding language is universal

Programming languages like Python, C++, JavaScript and HTML are the same worldwide. People who speak different languages can understand each other's code without translation. Knowledge of this coding language gives you the ability to collaborate with people around the world and understand the processes used in different industries through the way they employ computer code. (Source: University of Phoenix, [LINK](#))

### Coding provides so many job opportunities

Data analysts are in high demand, with experts saying that this specialty has the biggest skill gap of all. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects a 34% increase in employment for data science specialists between 2024 and 2034. Overall employment of software developers, quality assurance analysts and testers is projected to grow by 15% from 2024 to 2034, according to BLS. This is projected to open 129,200 openings per year. (Source: University of Phoenix, [LINK](#))



## AGAINST: Learning a language is a more beneficial skill

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue that learning a language is a more beneficial skill.



### Learning a language boosts brain power

You might think that learning a language boosts brain power. Research from universities has shown that people who speak more than one language often do better in tasks involving memory and attention. Some studies suggest learning another language can also improve problem-solving and multitasking skills.

### Learning a language connects you to your whole community

Or you could also say learning a language connects you to your whole community and the world. Around 75% of the world's population does not speak English as a first language. Learning another language allows you to communicate with everyone in your community and globally, opening opportunities for travel, friendships and careers.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that learning another language is a more beneficial skill? 

## Human language doesn't largely change and is universal



While specific programming or coding languages can become obsolete (no longer relevant) over time or may not apply to certain professions, human language and the skills you use to communicate it are universally applicable anywhere in the world and very rarely change in a major way. (Source: *Business Wire*, [LINK](#))

## Learning a language is good for your mental ability

According to research from the MIT News, learning and processing how to use a different language specifically lights up the brain's language-processing centers, boosting memory and cognitive ability (how quickly your brain works). (Source: *MIT*, [LINK](#))



# FactSheet: Which is more beneficial - learning coding or learning another language?



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

## Learning coding is more beneficial

### ***Coding is an opportunity to encourage your creativity***

When working with existing computer languages, you need to use them to create a unique system designed to accomplish a specific process. This process often involves coming up with a one-of-a-kind solution, testing it, and making changes and improvements until it becomes fully functional. This creativity has applications beyond coding. Whether you work in manufacturing, HR, accounting or another department, the process of brainstorming, testing outside-the-box solutions and perfecting them can drive advances and innovations in your workplace. (Source: *University of Phoenix*, [LINK](#))

### ***Coding language is universal***

Programming languages like Python, C++, JavaScript and HTML are the same worldwide. People who speak different languages can understand each other's code without translation. Knowledge of this coding language gives you the ability to collaborate with people around the world and understand the processes used in different industries through the way they employ computer code. (Source: *University of Phoenix*, [LINK](#))

### ***Coding provides so many job opportunities***

Data analysts are in high demand, with experts saying that this specialty has the biggest skill gap of all. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects a 34% increase in employment for data science specialists between 2024 and 2034. Overall employment of software developers, quality assurance analysts and testers is projected to grow by 15% from 2024 to 2034, according to BLS. This is projected to open 129,200 openings per year. (Source: *University of Phoenix*, [LINK](#))

## Learning a language is more beneficial

### ***Learning a language is really good for your mental ability***

According to research from the MIT News, learning and processing how to use a different language specifically lights up the brain's language-processing centers, boosting memory and cognitive ability (how quickly your brain works). (Source: *MIT*, [LINK](#))

### ***Human languages don't largely change and universally applicable***

While specific programming or coding languages can become obsolete (no longer relevant) over time or may not apply to certain professions, human language and the skills you use to communicate it are universally applicable anywhere in the world and very rarely change in a major way. (Source: *Business Wire*, [LINK](#))

### ***Languages can help you travel and be embraced by other communities***

Speaking the local language reduces travel anxieties, provides an authentic understanding of new places, and grants confidence when navigating foreign countries. (Source: *Business Wire*, [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...

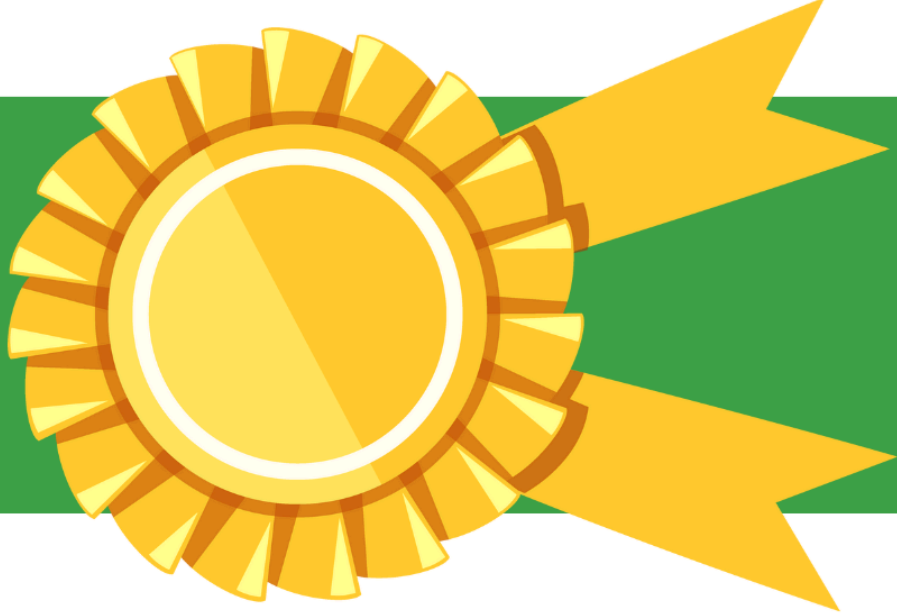
For debating fairly, respectfully and persuasively. Well done!

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



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils



Smart  
School  
Councils  
Community



# CLASS MEETING LEADER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

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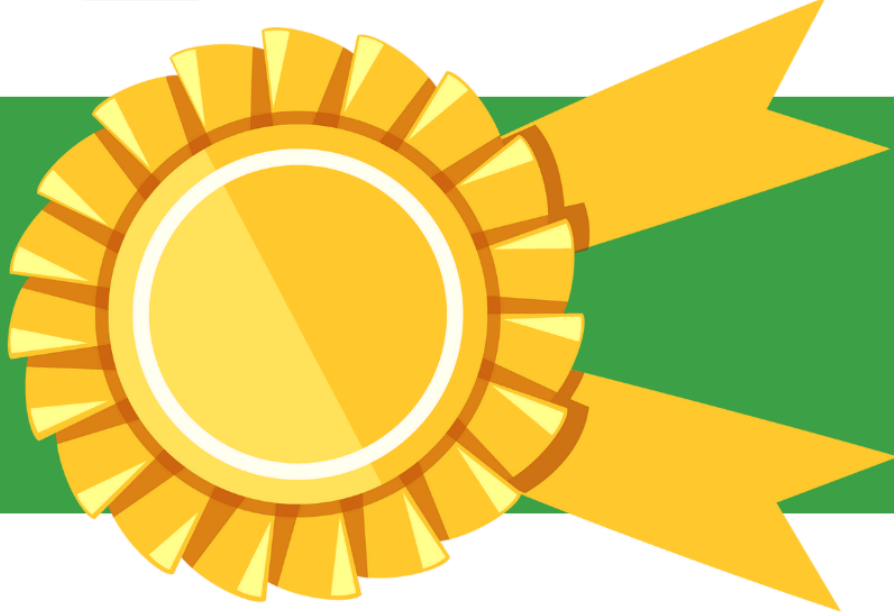
For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

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



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils



Smart  
School  
Councils  
Community



# BEST IDEA OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

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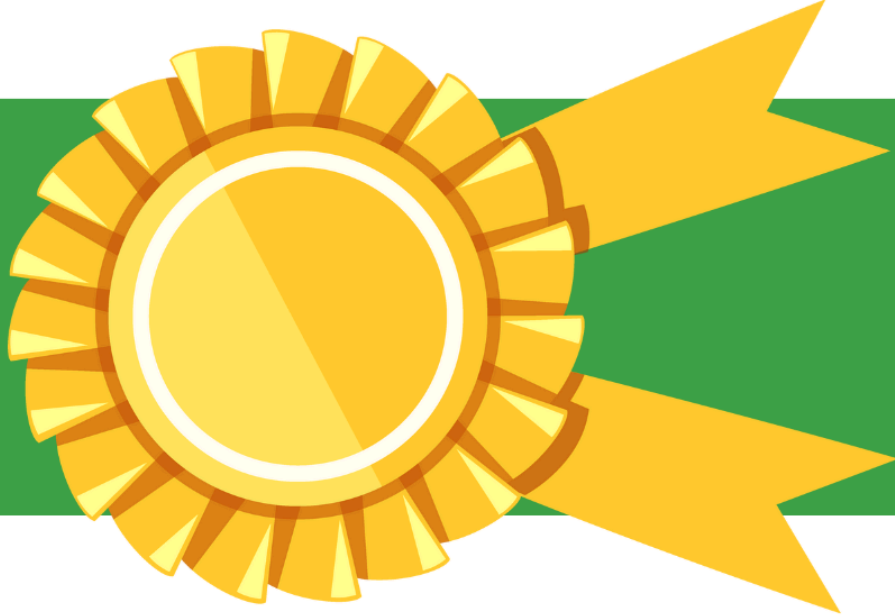
For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

**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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Councils  
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