



12.1 Debate Baseball

This activity reinforces basic debate concepts. It is a fun activity that allows you to get a sense of which debate concepts students understand well and which are not as clear to them. Students answer questions in the format of a mock baseball game.

Time Allotment

Approximately 40-60 minutes

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- review important debate terms and concepts.
- engage in collaborative learning, reinforcing material to which they have already been introduced.

Materials and Preparation

Write lists of questions that cover the debate concepts and terms for which your students are accountable. These lists might include concepts that have been introduced in the previous several weeks of class or concepts introduced in textbook readings. Break the questions into four categories: 1) Single (difficult); 2) Double (very difficult); 3) Triple (second most difficult); 4) Home Run (most difficult). The questions can be made harder or easier depending on the experience level of the students. Make sure that the lists are prepared in a manner that allows you to give a single question, from any category, to the "pitcher" at any given moment. Have the classroom arranged in a manner conducive to the game, with four bases.

Method

Divide the class into two teams. If you would like, have the students name their team. Explain the rules of Debate Baseball to the class. Debate Baseball simulates a baseball game, but is adapted for a classroom review session. Students from the "at bat" team actually step up to the plate. When a student is on the plate, she is given the choice of the category of question they want. For instance, she may say she is interested in a double. Once the student "at bat" has selected a category (difficulty level) for her question, the student the other team has designated as the "pitcher" reads the question from the card you give her.

As the teacher, you will function as an umpire. In this role, you decide whether each student gets the question right or not. If the student misses a question, her team gets an out. If she answers the question and thus gets a "hit", she moves to base that corresponds to the category she selected. In the example where she selects a double, she would move to second base. She would stay there until another member of her team got a hit. At that point, she would advance the same number of bases as does the batter.

As in baseball, when the student gets to home plate, her team receives one point. Record points on the board. After three outs it is the other team's turn to bat. Play as many innings as you have time for and as is pedagogically useful. Unlike baseball, there are no opportunities to tag another student out. Once a student has answered a question accurately, the only way to prevent her from scoring a point is make sure she does not get to the home plate before her team has gotten three outs. Adapt the rules as necessary depending on what is appropriate for your students.