



## 2.3 Topic Pre-Reading

*This activity introduces critical reading skills using literature on the current debate topic. Students will be given a newspaper or journal article that relates to a particular aspect of the debate topic. Working individually and in small groups, students will prepare to read by first writing what they already know about the topic and then what they hope to learn from the article. Student will read the article and identify the main ideas.*

### Objectives

By the end of this activity students will:

- be introduced to reading periodical literature on the debate topic.
- be introduced to identifying the main ideas of texts.
- be able to identify details from a text that may be useful in discussions of broader issues.

### Time Allotment

One class period (optional take-home assignment)

### Materials and Preparation

Select several articles for students to read relevant to the current debate topic. Each group of 3-4 students will work with a different article, and each member of each group will need a copy of the article. For a short, introductory assignment, you can use articles from the newspaper. For a more in-depth assignment intended to help students generate ideas for a research subject, use journal articles.

### Method

Ask each student to divide a blank sheet of paper into three columns. Students should title the first column "What I Know," the second column "What I Want to Know," and the third column "What I Have Learned."

Divide the class into groups of 3-4. Assign each group a topic and tell each group the title of the article they will be reading. All of the groups can work on the same broad issue on the resolution, or each group may work on a different aspect of the resolution or possible case. Explain to students that the columns will help them direct the reading they will do about the topic and to record the useful things they will learn.

Each students should individually write as many things that they can think of under the "What I Know" section. After students have had a few minutes to think, give them a few moments to share what they know with their group members. Together the group members should fill out the second column by generating 4-5 general things they hope to learn from the article they are about to read.

Pass out the articles to the students. Depending on the length of the articles, you may wish to assign the reading as a homework assignment. After the assigned readings have been completed, each student should fill out the "What I Learned" column in her notebook.

To conclude this activity, give students time to talk with the other members of their group about what they found most useful about the article. Call on one member from each group to give a synopsis to the class.