

Debate Tournament after cooperative preparation

Aim: Appropriation of the various ideas developed throughout the study of the short-story *Genesis and Catastrophe*, by Roald Dahl

- 1- The class is divided into two teams = A and B
- 2- Within each team, the group is again subdivided into two groups of 5 or 6 students
 - a. The teacher writes on the board the question each group 1 or 2 will have to answer as convincingly as possible:
 - 1- Why was it **acceptable** for Roald Dahl to publish *Genesis and Catastrophe* in 1962?
 - 2- Why was it **unacceptable** for Roald Dahl to publish *Genesis and Catastrophe* in 1962?
 - b. **Round Robin Brainstorming**

Simultaneously, each team A and B and each group 1 and 2 start collecting their arguments creating mind-maps from elements studied in class: First, students are given time to think about answers. After the "think time," members of the team share responses with one another round robin style and create their own mind-maps with the answers/ arguments of all the group members. Each person in the group gives an argument until time is up. (10 minutes) → each member has to say something to help. The mind maps are then used for the next step which will consist in a confrontation of group 1 and 2 within each team A and B.
 - c. **Debating within the team and learning to select the relevant arguments from the list depending on the opponent's strategy**

Two debaters from group 1 together who have volunteered debate with two volunteer members from group 2. The other members are responsible for the scoring: 1 point for a relevant argument, 2 points for a relevant argument which really contradicts the other side's argument, 3 points if it is relevant and pushes the other group to reconsider their strategy... So everyone is involved in this step as well although in charge of different tasks.
 - d. **Each team debriefs and selects their best 3 debaters and three referees/ judges for the final debate.**
- 3- **Final debate between three members of team A and three members of team B**
 - a. random draw of the position each team will have to defend (acceptable or unacceptable)
 - b. the debaters prepare their arguments in a mind map together with their team (5 minutes) → Round Robin activity again. Everyone is involved again.
 - c. final debate with 6 judges responsible for the scoring with the same criteria as in step 2c.

Personal Feedback:

All the students got involved and most of them worked autonomously.

Even if they spoke French at some point, they were dealing with the topic. It was interesting to see that all their mind-maps were different and corresponded to the complexity of each brain.

I was sorry I could not follow the Round-Robin activity in the 4 groups at the same time but had to switch from one group to another.

I liked this activity because all the students fulfilled a task whether they were speaking or assessing the relevance of the arguments in the debates.

This work was a pleasant and efficient way for the students to prepare for the final written assessment.

It was frustrating though not to manage to encourage shy students to become more fluent and self-confident but it was difficult to deal with the various groups simultaneously.

I doubt everybody could hear everybody else, and I wish we could have language rooms with better-equipped facilities with insulation. It would be a way to promote these cooperative techniques that create disturbances which do annoy next door maths teachers at the moment.

Le billet du comité de relecture présidé par Silvana Turchino Diksa, IA-IPR

Points forts :

- Articulation cohérente et pertinente entre les diverses activités qui mènent au débat final. Une telle articulation est source de motivation chez l'élève.
- Implication de chaque élève dans toutes les activités de groupe.
- Élément d'inconnu lié au tirage au sort du sujet de réflexion dans la partie brainstorming et tirage au sort de la position à défendre dans le débat.
- Différenciation possible dans la partie débat (débatteurs/ secrétaires–marqueurs)

Perspectives pédagogiques envisageables :

- Alternative d'activité dans la partie débat pour les « élèves secrétaires » dans le but d'une écoute/implication plus active :
- Relever les arguments de l'équipe adverse en vue d'une trace écrite à poster sur l'ENT (après relecture et éventuelle correction du professeur). Cette trace écrite pourra être consultée par les élèves pour information, en préparation de l'activité d'expression écrite à venir.