

CONNECTED EDUCATION
EVERY LEADER, EVERY
TEACHER, EVERY LEARNER



DEBATING IN SCHOOLS

The benefits of
debating in the
classroom

A BRIDGE Knowledge Product



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LINKING INNOVATORS IN EDUCATION

The following document details 1 of 7 innovative ideas as shared by Vashti Nepal, a participant of the Axis Education Forum 2016. Here, you will find: information on the benefits of debate in schools and resources to help you introduce debate in your classroom.

Vashti Nepal introduced the idea of **debate in schools** as a way to engage learners and liven up classroom curriculum and extracurriculars.

What is debate?

- A structured argument between opponents around an evenly weighted topic
- The topic is revealed to both sides simultaneously
- Both sides prepare
- The argument must occur in front of unbiased judges who listen and allocate marks
- A win must be awarded and a reason must be given for a win, so as to foster constructive criticism
- Debate formats: Policy, Parliamentary, Karl Popper, Lincoln Douglas, Oxford, World Schools Style

What matters?

- Factors that are relevant in a debate: a learner's logic, argument, knowledge, style, strategy and ability to work in a team
- Factors that are irrelevant in a debate: a learner's wealth, school, accent, vocabulary, age, race, gender and sexual orientation
- Debate can be adapted to any classroom, even those in resource constrained environments (doesn't require special equipment)

What are the benefits?

Using debate in the classroom can help learners grasp essential critical thinking and presentation skills. Some additional core competencies fostered by classroom debate include:

- Abstract thinking, analysis and problem solving
- Research and organisation
- Active listening and comprehension
- Language, ability to express oneself and public speaking
- Teamwork and cooperation
- Research indicates that learners who participate in debate have better test scores in English and reading specifically, and in general standardised tests more broadly
- Additionally, research suggests that learners who debate in school are more 'college ready' than their peers

To access Vashti's presentation, click [here](#).

For resources that will help you introduce debate in your classroom, click [here](#) and [here](#).