

Balloon Debate

Skills focus: Persuasion | Justification | Prioritisation | Active Listening
Useful for: ESU Schools' Mace | Public Speaking Competition

 Purpose and Impact	 Resources
Objectives: - To justify ideas using clear reasoning. - To persuade others using evidence and examples. - To prioritise arguments and respond to challenge. Impact: Develops persuasion, reasoning and decision-making. Students learn to justify opinions and evaluate competing arguments.	Resources Needed - Timer - A List of characters/job roles Additional resources

TASK

Setup

- Assign each student in a group a character/job role.
Group size of 6
- Explain that the balloon is losing height and only one character can remain.
- Allow 2-3 minutes to prepare.

Activity

- Each student delivers a 30-60 second speech explaining why they should stay in the balloon.
- Students may challenge or question one another.
- The group votes for the most convincing argument.

Evaluate

-  Which arguments were most persuasive?
-  Which evidence was strongest?
-  What made the winning speech effective?

Character Bank

KS3

- Doctor
- Firefighter
- Teacher
- Scientist
- Farmer

KS4

- Environmental activist
- Journalist
- Engineer
- Judge
- Charity worker

KS5 / Sixth Form

- Prime Minister
- Human rights lawyer
- Medical researcher
- Economist
- Climate scientist



Differentiation and Progression

KS3	KS4	KS5/Sixth form
Use familiar professions and encourage one clear reason with an example.	Require students to consider the wider impact of saving their character.	Introduce ethical dilemmas and require students to rebut competing arguments.