

# Oracy in Your Classroom Lesson Plan Template

## Talking Starter (5-10 mins):

Use a talking starter to encourage students to share any pre-existing knowledge they have about the lesson's topic, or to recap material they have already learnt.

## Suggestion one - For/against

Display a range of themed prompts on the board, e.g. "Hamlet should have killed Claudius when he was praying" "Hamlet is mad" etc. In pairs or threes, ask students to think of 2-3 arguments for and against each prompt. They should apply any existing debating skills to this exercise, e.g. structuring their arguments using PEEL.

### Suggestion two - Balloon Debate

Display a range of themed prompts on the board, e.g. "Coal", "Nuclear power", "Wind energy" etc. All of these prompts (which can be concepts, characters etc.) are in a balloon which is rapidly sinking. We need to decide which one to throw out of the balloon. Each student should choose a prompt and prepare a short speech explaining why they deserve to stay in the balloon. Choose one student for each prompt to take part in the debate. The rest of the class should vote for the winners/losers of each round.

#### **Body of Lesson:**

You don't need the whole of your lesson to be a debate in order to get your class talking. A mixed approach can offer students a variety of ways to engage with the lesson. However, here are two suggestions of longer debate activities that you can integrate, should you wish to.

#### Suggestion one - Where on the line...

This activity works well for lessons that synthesise knowledge. For example, you may use it to recap a scheme of work. Draw a line on the board. Label it 'best to worst' or 'most certain, least certain', or any other spectrum, as appropriate. Students should copy this line so that they have their own personal version (or in small groups). Introduce each new item - for example, different sources of energy (coal, nuclear power etc.), or difference sources of evidence in history (written, oral etc.). As you discuss them and recap their main features, students should place the item on their own personal line. In small groups or as a whole class, you should then discuss any disagreements (structuring the discussion as appropriate for your class) before placing the item on the collective class line on the board.

## Suggestion two - Island-hopping speeches

This activity helps students to distil their learning into key points. You may wish to use it to



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reinforce key words for a topic (e.g. that need to be used in an exam answer). Once students have learnt a topic (e.g. the process of osmosis), ask them to form pairs. Taking turns, each should explain the topic to the other, 'hopping' from one island to another (taking a big step, or, if possible, moving from one marked area in the classroom to another - hoops or large piece of paper can work well for this) every time they make a new point, or use a key word. E.g. a student's speech might go: "Osmosis is the movement of water molecules [takes a big step] from an area of low concentration [takes a big step] to an area of high concentration [takes a big step] across a selectively permeable membrane [takes a big step]."

## Debating plenary (10 mins):

## **Suggestion one - Top Trumps**

This activity helps students to consolidate learnt information by encouraging them to make appropriate connections between new pieces of knowledge. Display a set of themed prompts. In pairs, students must choose one prompt each, and defend which is best according to criteria you give. E.g. when studying Crime and Punishment, you might display a set of different punishments common across time. Students may then be asked to argue that the prompt they chose is the best at rehabilitating criminals, the best deterrent, the most humane etc.

## Suggestion two - Where Do You Stand?

This activity can be varied to help you to check for understanding, and to help students to use and consolidate their knowledge. Assign one end of the room "agree" and the other "disagree". When you give a statement, students should move to either end of the room depending on whether they agree or disagree. They can then discuss where they have chosen to stand with those standing near them, or you can facilitate that as a whole-class discussion. Using quick-fire, True/false questions allows you to swiftly assess understanding of the lesson content. Using more open questions with space for different points of view allows students to build on what they have learnt.