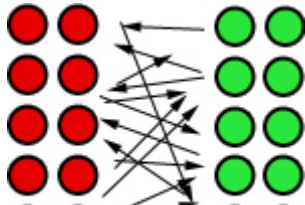


## Erasmus+ debate

- Debate format: Lagerhuisdebat (House of Commons debate) (8 vs. 8)
- 4 groups
- 4 debates on 4 propositions
- Debates (1-2 + 3-4 + 2-3 + 4-1)
- Winners: Group prize + speakers of the day (1st, 2nd, 3rd)



### The Lagerhuisdebat (The House of Commons Debate)

The House of Commons Debate is a well-known form of debate. Place two rows of chairs opposite each other. One side is in favour of the proposition; the other side is against. Whoever wants to speak, stands up. But you may only speak when the debate leader gives you the floor. An independent jury appoints the winner. The jury looks at the content and substantiation, the attitude and the way in which the participants elaborate on each other's arguments.

### TRUTH SPRINGS FROM DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

In a pure debate there are always three parties: one party in favour of the proposition or solution, one party against, and a third, independent party who decides on the outcome of the debate. The proponent and opponent do not try to convince each other, but the third party. This obliges them to listen carefully to each other and to clearly explain to the third party why the other party's arguments are wrong.

The basic idea of a pure debate is that the truth emerges from differences of opinion. The idea behind this is that the proponent presents all the arguments in favour and the opponent all the arguments against as sharply as possible, so that the third party can form a picture of the truth. In this context, truth is that which stands up to the most critical light.

### COURTESY AS A STARTING AND END POINT

Regardless of the course and outcome of a debate, the debater will adopt a courteous and respectful attitude towards his opponents and the audience.

### WHO ASSERTS, MUST PROVE

In a debate, it is not just about positions, opinions or rhetoric. The assertion must be substantiated with arguments.

### FIND THE HEART OF THE DEBATE

It is the responsibility of debaters to always look for the heart of the debate and not to avoid it. To this end, a debater must listen carefully to his opponent, weigh his arguments critically and, where possible, refute them.

## Propositions

### Environment

- Aircraft flights (less than 1000 km) within Europe should be banned.
- More nuclear power plants should be built in the EU.

### Culture

- The teaching of history in the European Union should be a shared and compulsory curriculum up to and including the final examination.
- Young people should be obliged to do a year's social work placement (in another member state) after their secondary schooling.
- Art treasures in museums within the EU should be returned to their countries of origin.

### Political

- All countries in the EU should introduce compulsory voting from the age of 16 (14).
- There should be a European army to replace the national army units within 30 years.
- The European Union must guarantee membership to regions that want to break away from member states.

## Monday

- Make group divisions
- Announcing propositions
- Drafting arguments in groups

### Theory of argumentation

- Brainstorming
  - Postpone judgment. Do not criticise. Not at the ideas of others, but also not at your own ideas. All ideas are accepted and noted down.
  - Aim for quantity (at this moment). And variety. So come up with as many ideas as possible. This increases the chance of getting a top idea. Do not give up too quickly.
  - Freewheel. Wild ideas are allowed and you can jump from one idea to another. Is it going a bit chaotic? That's fine.
  - Write down as many arguments as possible.
- Put the different arguments together under a few (3-4) *main* arguments
  - Overkill in main arguments is harmful. Use other arguments to illustrate or deepen the main arguments.
  - It is not the number of arguments that counts, but the strength of the arguments. (Cicero)
  - Make the three arguments as different as possible.
- Label the arguments
  - The labelling of arguments is an important step. See how the main arguments can be named (labelled). There are several options for naming. For example, you can use categories (e.g. economic argument, moral argument, legal argument, etc.). The disadvantage of this is that the concrete core of the argument is not mentioned. A better way to label the arguments is therefore to search for a keyword. It can

be helpful to choose a keyword that sticks, because it is funny or sharp. This is especially useful in debates.

- Formulate each argument in one sentence. Very important!
- Think of a (catchy) example for each argument.
- Briefly elaborate on each argument - what is the necessary explanation? What are important facts?

## **Tuesday**

Rhetoric training

- Balloon debate
- State, explain, illustrate
- Rebuttal

*State, explain, illustrate*

Speakers train the structure of (1) argument in one sentence (2) short explanation (3) example

*Rebuttal*

Speakers train to respond directly to an argument. Response in the form of questions, rhetorical questions, counterexamples.

*The Balloon Debate*

The balloon debate is a form of debate that originated in Oxford. At the Oxford Debating Union, this form is known as one of the first exercises for a debater. Yet it is a fully-fledged form of debating: it contains all the elements that characterize a good debate. How do you convince the jury, how do you present your own argument well and how do you react to your opponent. Ultimately, the balloon debate is also about convincing the jury that you should stay in the balloon. You learn to remain creative under pressure when coming up with arguments and to respond to the reactions of the audience.

The setting

The situation is as follows. Five people (debaters) are seated in an imaginary basket of a balloon. This balloon is slowly deflating and all five will crash, unless they throw weight out of the basket. Since they are civilized people, they decide that the one who can best explain why he or she is so important will stay in the balloon the longest.

Two rounds

Beforehand, the participants get 10 minutes to prepare for their character. In the first round, each of the five participants has one minute to explain why they should stay in the balloon. During the speech, the balloonist may only talk about himself, not about the other occupants. After all debaters have spoken, the audience decides which two balloonists will be removed from the basket.

The remaining three participants then have one minute to explain why the other two should be removed from the balloon and not them. As a balloonist, you have to make a strategic choice here: do I say something about both other participants or do I limit myself to the biggest competitor. Ideally, you should be able to refute what the other person has said in their own speech. At the end of this second round, the audience

decides which two balloonists should jump next. The one who remains is the winner of the balloon debate.

The characters

In any case, in this form of debate the emphasis is more on eloquence (eloquentia). So tell a nice and original story about the unknown side of that person, which may not be entirely correct but is nicely told. This will certainly do better with the audience than all kinds of arguments found on the Internet.

The Jury

In addition to choosing the winner, the jury will also give feedback on the speaking skills. The following aspects will be taken into account:

- eye contact (jury)
- address (jury, audience, opponent)
- speaking style: clarity / beauty (imagery)
- use of voice
- posture
- persuasiveness

**Wednesday**

Debate