

5. Following the rotation order (see Figure 5) groups pass their handout to the next group.

Figure #
Long Version Rotation Order



Short Version (45 to 50 minutes)

The class is divided into nine groups (group size may vary depending on class size). Each group receives a copy of the handout with a different discussion topic (see Figure A). For the short version use only three different topics.

1. Students talk in their groups and decide on what opinion and argument to write in the given space.
2. Following the rotation order (see Figure 4) groups pass their handout to the next group. Now students focus on the topic and argument written by the original group. They analyze the topic and the original group's argument. Then they discuss and write if they agree or disagree with the previous group's opinion.
3. After two rotations each handout is returned to the original group. Now each group reads the other groups' arguments and come up with rebuttals (if they disagree) or new ideas (if they agree) to further the discussion. The original group focuses on what the other groups wrote and replies directly to them in the given space (such as "Group 5 that's a good idea but you forgot about...")
4. Passing the handout around again groups can now read what the original groups wrote in response to their arguments and can choose to keep the discussion going (as long as there is enough language space on the handout or time).
5. Once the paper returns to the original group (after two more rotations) they can evaluate if their opinion has changed or if it remains the same and what top three arguments were given by the other groups.

Figure \$
Short Version Silent Debate Handout for Students

Group N°: _____ Silent debate

Group topic: _____

Opinion: _____ Reason: _____

Step 1

Reason: _____ Group N°: _____ Opinion: _____

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Best argument: _____

Figure %
Short Version Rotation Order



Conclusion

Since this activity requires students to read and write, it can take more time than expected. However, because it does not require them to speak without much time to think, it is very helpful for quieter students to have a chance to share their opinions. Depending on the students' level, discussions within each group can be carried out in either English or the HL, as long as the writing is done in English.

This activity can be carried out in one or two lessons, also depending on the level of students. It can work as a stepping stone to prepare students for a more formal oral debate. (I have not been able to try the long version properly, but the short version worked very well. Students were engaged and enjoyed reading.)