

Objective

By the end of this lesson, the student will understand the basics of presidential debates, including their purpose, structure, and some key strategies used by candidates. The student will also participate in a mini-debate, allowing them to practice speaking and arguing their point of view.

Materials and Prep

- Paper and pencil for note-taking
- A timer (can be a phone or clock)
- Space to sit comfortably for discussions
- List of simple debate topics (prepared in advance)
- Knowledge of what a debate is and its purpose

Activities

- **Introduction to Debates:** Start with a fun discussion about what a debate is. Explain that it's a way for people to share their ideas and opinions on different topics. Ask the student if they have seen any debates on TV or online.
- **Watch a Short Clip:** Find a short clip of a presidential debate online (or describe one if no internet is available). Discuss what they observed, such as how candidates speak, their body language, and how they respond to each other.
- **Mini-Debate Preparation:** Choose a fun topic for the mini-debate, such as "Should kids have more playtime?" Give the student a few minutes to think about their argument and write down key points they want to make.
- **Conduct the Mini-Debate:** Set a timer for each speaker (e.g., 2 minutes each) and let the student present their arguments. Encourage them to listen and respond to the other side's points. Afterward, discuss how it felt to speak and listen.

Talking Points

- "A debate is like a friendly argument where people share their ideas!"
- "In a debate, candidates take turns speaking. This is called 'taking the floor'!"
- "It's important to listen carefully when someone else is speaking. You can learn a lot!"
- "Using facts and examples makes your argument stronger. Can you think of an example to use?"
- "Body language is important too! Standing tall and making eye contact shows confidence!"
- "Debates help people decide who they want to vote for by learning about different ideas."
- "Even if you don't agree with someone, it's important to be respectful when debating!"
- "Practicing debating can help you become a better speaker and thinker!"