

Adjustment Level:	Lower Intermediate-Advance
Target Skill to be improved:	Speaking and Reasoning
Title:	Debate is Fun (Free conversation)
Topic for Debate:	Is it dangerous to teach History to school pupils?

Introduction: This lesson gives the student more speaking opportunities in expressing his thoughts that would improve his/her speaking and reasoning skills. The student would also learn various expressions for agreeing and disagreeing.



Resolved: **Is it dangerous to teach History to school pupils?**



IDEA GENERATOR

Pros

- Even if no historical events are invented, this will lead to an unbalanced account, in which events that support modern political/social ends are highlighted and others receive less attention. The principle that such tainted information can be taught to children is dangerous.
- History taught in schools sometimes involves flagrant distortion of historical evidence either by the State or by individual teachers.
- Even if no agenda is being consciously or subconsciously pursued, school pupils are presented with oversimplified information in History.
- History encourages people to become obsessed with past conflicts and alleged wrongs inflicted upon them; it is more productive to forget the past and to seek friendship in the present.

Cons

- It isn't possible to teach children everything about all historical periods, so there must be some criteria for making choices about what would be most valuable to study.
- Coming up with instances in which History teaching is used for propagandist purposes does not prove that it is necessarily dangerous to teach History in schools. A cap would raise the cost of capital and so slow the economy.
- It is useful to learn "historical facts": one cannot engage in historical debates without knowledge of what happened when.

See for example:

Person A: "In my opinion, I believe that History encourages people to become obsessed with past conflicts and alleged wrongs inflicted upon them".

Person B: "I strongly disagree with the proposition since I believe that It is useful to learn "historical facts": one cannot engage in historical debates without knowledge of what happened when".

Expressions for Agreeing and Disagreeing

Stating an opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In my opinion...• The way I see it...• If you want my honest opinion....• According to Lisa...• As far as I'm concerned...• If you ask me...
Asking for an opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What's your idea?• What are your thoughts on all of this?• How do you feel about that?• Do you have anything to say about this?• What do you think?• Do you agree?• Wouldn't you say?
Expressing agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I agree with you 100 percent.• I couldn't agree with you more.• That's so true.• That's for sure.• (slang) Tell me about it!• You're absolutely right.• Absolutely.• That's exactly how I feel.• Exactly.• I'm afraid I agree with James.• I have to side with Dad on this one.• No doubt about it.• (agree with negative statement) Me neither.• (weak) I suppose so./I guess so.• You have a point there.• I was just going to say that.
Expressing disagreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I don't think so.• (strong) No way.• I'm afraid I disagree.• (strong) I totally disagree.• I beg to differ.• (strong) I'd say the exact opposite.• Not necessarily.• That's not always true.• That's not always the case.• No, I'm not so sure about that.

Interruptions

- Can I add something here?
- Is it okay if I jump in for a second?
- If I might add something...
- Can I throw my two cents in?
- Sorry to interrupt, but...
- **(after accidentally interrupting someone)** Sorry, go ahead. **OR** Sorry, you were saying...
- **(after being interrupted)** You didn't let me finish.

Settling an argument

- Let's just move on, shall we?
- Let's drop it.
- I think we're going to have to agree to disagree.
- **(sarcastic)** Whatever you say./If you say so.