

Silent Debate

The only way a debate can work is if you are prepared. Study your notes, the text, work and any articles to help you prepare to answer the questions below.

a. The businessmen of the industrial revolution should be considered *robber barons* not *captains of industry*. (Pro=yes, Con=no)

b. Is it fair for one person to acquire so much wealth and power? (Pro= yes, Con=no)

Directions

1. Students will be divided into pairs.
2. One student will argue the “Pro” for each question, and the other will argue the “Con” for each topic. *Each entry must be at least one paragraph.*
3. Each student has a pen/pencil and paper for individual use, and one paper to share in the pair.
4. Pairs begin debating silently. The “pro” student goes first, writing his or her name and then writing a statement in support of the discussion topic on the shared paper.
5. The “con” student then reads the statement, writes his or her name, and writes an argument against the topic.
6. Partners trade back the paper 3–4 times, silently debating with one another.
7. After you have finished debating both questions, turn in your group paper and begin the debrief worksheet.

Silent Debate Rules and Guidelines

On Friday, you will be having a silent debate. Please make sure to follow the rules below as they will impact your grade:

1. There can be no talking during the silent debate. All arguments must be written down on the paper supplied to you.
2. You may use the notes and articles (or any textual evidence) that you compiled for homework to support your answers.
3. The debate will begin with writing down your opening argument about the topic. You may have to argue and write about a side which you disagree with. That’s fine, you will have an opportunity in the summary to voice your opinion.

4. The paper will be passed back and forth a minimum of 3 times.
5. Directly respond to each argument, and do not get off topic.
6. Use such phrases as “I disagree with you because...”, or “I respectfully disagree because..”
7. ALL COMMENTS MUST BE RESPECTFUL
8. If a pair feels that they are done with the debate, and that both sides have fully argued their point, the pair shall silently raise their hands. Depending on the time, students can begin the debrief worksheet.
9. If there are an odd number of students, there will need to be instances of 2 vs. 1. If this is the case, there can still be no talking and the debate will still alternate back and forth between the three.

Assessment

When the debates are complete, students should hand in their debate papers. This functions as a form of accountability for being on-task during the silent debate, and it also allows the teacher to monitor the arguments that students are making. Points to look for:

- Students are making a sufficient effort to participate in the debate.
- Students are using evidence from the novel (or from text-to-world or text-to-self connections) to support their reasoning.
- Student’s arguments are sufficiently argued.
- Students respond to others’ comments in a respectful and considerate way.

Rubric

<i>Logistics:</i> You are silent throughout the debate, and respectful of your opponent	/10
<i>Content:</i> You use information from the class discussions, work, & text to support your argument.	/10
You fully address the arguments for your side of the debate	/30
You directly respond to the statements made by your opponent	/10

Name: _____

Debrief Worksheet

Answer each question below in complete sentences.

Part A

1. What side of the debate were you on?
2. Would you have chosen that side? Why?
3. What was the best argument your opponent made? Why?
4. Did your opponent change your mind at all based on what he/she wrote?
5. Do you think you changed your opponent's mind about based on what you wrote? How?
6. What did you learn from the silent debate?

Part B