TIPS FOR ANIMATING A DISCUSSION

The purpose of this document is to give you some ideas on different ways how to make your presentation, and how to animate a discussion with other students on the topic of your presentation to make it dynamic.

Group dynamics – one big group or small groups?

Presenting team:

- you can choose if you present *all together in front of all other students*, or that all students are split into groups and each member of your team presents your whole topic to one small group.

- If you choose to present all together in front of a whole group, you can take different roles: for exemple one or two persons can be 'experts' and others 'journalists' who interview the experts...

- Depending on your choice, on the one hand, each of you would have to speak more or less time, but on the other hand you can choose if you feel more confident and comfortable to speak in front of all students, or with smaller groups

The rest of the group:

- you can decide if you would like to animate a discussion with the whole group, or make smaller groups, so that small groups prepare answers or tasks and then present them in the whole group
**Animation: how to make a discussion dynamic?**

### 'For' and 'against' arguments

You can make two teams with the whole group, each group would have to give a maximum of arguments "for" or "against" certain ideas.

**Variation:** your presenting team is split into two "groups of experts". One group would give arguments "for", another group would give arguments "against" – the purpose of each group of experts is to convince the maximum of people to be on their side. The public can ask questions to the experts if they wish.

**Another variation:** you choose 5-7 statements based on your presentation. Then you put the statement in the middle of the class, and all people have to position themselves "for" (left side) or "against" (right side). The participants can also show the degree of their agreement/disagreement with the statement by standing closer or further from the statement. They you can invite participants to explain their opinions.

### Fish bowl discussion

This type of discussion is similar to "for" and "against" arguments discussion with small teams.

The difference is that not the whole team plays together.

There are 4 chairs in the middle: 2 for participants from one team, and 2 for participants from another team. All the other participants sit around. So, the 4 participants start to discuss and give arguments to defend their point of view. Their teams continue to think of other arguments. When a team sees that their representatives in the centre run out of arguments, a person from the team can go and take the place of one of their members in the centre – and continue the discussion. And it continues like this till there is one team who remains the most convincing (there can be also time limit for the discussion).

### Rounds of questions

You make several teams. Each team prepares questions to other teams based on you presentation. The team that answers most of the questions will win. You can make it for example with three teams: if team 2 can not answer the question of team 1, than team 3 gets the chance to answer the question and get a point.
Parliamentary debates

You can split the big group into smaller groups, who would represent different countries. The point of the debate might be about a certain policy. For example, you may ask these different groups to come to a universal definition of what a "family" is—so that you can base on that definition to make international policies towards families. The small groups should try to cooperate with others but at the same time defend their own interests.

Variation: small groups can also present different social actors: for example for one-child policy in China: one group would present the State or local institutions, another one would present an association of families, another one an international NGO on children rights protection, and one more - an association of preservation of traditional Chinese culture. So the participants are supposed to negotiate and come to a commonly accepted vision of this policy. (That might be interesting, but only if the group making the "exposé" gives enough elements and information to the others, so that they can be prepared for this role game)

Quiz

You can also make a quiz that you give to small groups at the end of your presentation. The first team to fill in the quiz wins some points. Then you can share and discuss the answers with other teams.

Using support materials

You can use some materials, like blackboard, post-its, pictures, etc.

Post-its

For example, you can give post-its to the students and ask them to write some ideas on them (ex: blue post-it for "for" arguments, green post-its for "against arguments..") - then you collect all post-its and comment them – or put them on the blackboard and discuss with the whole group on the basis of these ideas.
You can use a system of points for each idea, question, argument. To visualize the points you can use simple "point lines" on the blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team 1 ↑</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team 2 ↓</td>
<td>Team 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can also draw a table with columns for each group. When a group gives an argument they move one case up on the table. If they give an argument against the argument of another team, they can also make the other team move one case down.

**Pictures**

For example: photos of people from different cultures, ages..

You can ask the participants what impression they have from the picture, what does the picture makes them think about.. if they agree or disagree with certain ideas that might come from the picture... there can be several discussion ideas that can come from one picture. For example:

- how weather and climate conditions influence the style of life in different societies, and how do social norms and habits influence the ways of life: exemple of clothing, food, traditions, everyday practices
- what is the role of a woman in different societies
- international solidarity projects and actions and their impact on cultures
- picturing anthropology and ethnology? Does it create stereotypes?

Do you have other ideas for group dynamics or animation of discussions?

You are very WELCOME to SHARE them!

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