



LESSONS 3 & 4

Respecting Beliefs and Opinions Unit Grade 4 • Ages 9-11

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 25 minutes
Instruction: Multi-day project

MATERIALS

Debate Research Sheet (p. 5), one for each student

Research materials (books, magazines, websites, etc.) for debate topics as determined by class

Printed article on chosen topic or computer lab for research

RAK Journals

[Kindness Concept Posters](#) for Integrity, Respect

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RI.4.1, 2, 3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1, 1a, 1b, 2, 3, 4, 6; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.1;

Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.1, EO.e; Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a,d; S.3, GLE.2, EO.a; S.3, GLE.3, EO.a,b; S.4, GLE.1, EO.a,b; Social Studies S.4, GLE.1, EO.a-c

[Learning standards key](#)

Debating An Issue

Students will respectfully state facts and opinions and listen to those of their peers.

Lesson Background for Teachers

This lesson builds on previous lessons in this unit.

This lesson takes a minimum of two class periods. One to prepare and one to do the debate.

Decide ahead of time what type of debate you would like to do. See Resources for descriptions of different types of debates.

Key Terms for Students

Consider writing key terms on the board before class to introduce vocabulary and increase understanding.

INTEGRITY Acting in a way you know to be right and kind in all situations.

RESPECT Treating people, places, and things with kindness.

FACT Information that is true and can be proven.

OPINION A belief, judgment or the way you see something.

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Focusing on one area of the project such as researching a resource and listing helpful facts or writing down facts they have researched.
- Being encouraged to participate even if they are uncomfortable speaking in front of people. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to share information that feels important to him or her.
- Writing the information for the debate on a chart or on note cards for their team to reference during the debate.

RAK lessons teach kindness skills through a step-by-step framework of **Inspire, Empower, Act** and **Share**.

However, each lesson starts with the **Share** step to reinforce learning from previous lessons.



The RAK paradigm is the framework for teaching and building kindness skills.



Resources

<http://www.debate.org/opinions/education/>

Some examples are: Fish Bowl, Four corners, Tag Team, Classic

Descriptions can be found at Education World: <http://www.educationworld.com/a/lesson/lesson/lesson304b.shtml>

Students may benefit from watching a sample debate. Search YouTube for sample classroom debate or show the following sample debate as an introduction: Almond Elementary - Fifth Grade Debate (6:28 min) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bsXj2tyPpQ>

Share (3 mins)

From the Kindness in Action in the Facts and Opinions lesson, did anyone learn something new when interviewing people at home? Alternatively ask, What do you think the difference is between a **fact** and an **opinion**? Can an **opinion** be a fact? Can a **fact** be an **opinion**?

Inspire

Debate Background (30 mins)

Have students determine a topic they would like to debate. Students could focus on something like:

- Should sugary drinks should be taxed? (<http://www.timeforkids.com/news/debate/192101>)
- Is homeschooling the best way to learn.? (<http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/school/homeschool.html>)
- Should polar tourism be allowed? (<http://www.timeforkids.com/news/debate/200506>)
- Should students wear uniforms? (<http://school-uniforms.procon.org>)
- Should soda pop be sold in cafeterias? (<http://elliewithers.weebly.com/the-pros-and-cons-of-drinking-soda-pop.html>)
- Should bicyclists be required to wear helmets? (<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/cyclesafety/article3495439.ece>)
- Should kids be allowed to have computers in their rooms.?(<http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/technology/cybersafety/computers-in-the-bedroom>)
- Should chewing gum be banned at school? (<http://www.chewinggumfacts.com/chewing-gum-facts/chewing-gum-in-school/>)
- Should kids get an allowance? (<http://www.raisesmartkid.com/6-to-10-years-old/5-articles/51-allowance-for-kids-the-pros-cons-and-some-useful-tips>)
- Should kids be allowed to eat junk food? (<http://www.today.com/parents/why-you-should-let-your-kids-eat-some-junk-food-1D79851272>)

If you feel your students are ready, you could have them debate a local, state or national public policy issue.

Divide the class into two teams, assigning one team to debate for the topic and one team to debate against it. Explain to students that if they are assigned to debate one side of the topic that they don't agree with, they can still debate that side. It is part of the learning process.

Have students discuss and develop the rules for the debate. Suggest the following rules if they are not mentioned: no personal insults, no put downs, no emotional appeals (such as "If you don't agree with me, I'm going to cry!"), everyone needs to do their fair share of research, everyone needs to try their best, students need to be kind even if they disagree.



Empower

A Friendly Debate (30 mins)

Set up the classroom for the debate. Each team should sit together on their respective side of the classroom or as appropriate for your debate style. Invite other teachers or parents to help judge and moderate the debate. A timekeeper will keep track of the time of the speeches.

Ask the student who will speak first to give a three-minute opening speech supporting the topic. Ask the opposing team to give a three-minute rebuttal speech opposing the topic. Then give other students from the team a chance to speak, following the speaking and rebuttal format.

Halfway through the debate, provide a break so students can work on their arguments within their teams. After everyone is finished, the moderators and judges may ask the students questions and decide on the winning team.

Optional Extension Discussion Activity

To extend this activity, have students discuss what it means to have freedom of speech. Ask the following questions:

- Does freedom of speech mean that people can always say whatever they want?
- Can stating **facts** or **opinions** infringe on someone else's rights and freedoms?
- What would it feel like if someone told you that you didn't have a right to speak?
- What does it mean to state **facts** and **opinions** fairly in a society and how does that enrich a community?

Wrap Up (5 mins)

To gauge understanding of the material, choose from the evaluation and reflection questions as discussion, or writing or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper evaluation and reflection as needed.

Evaluation Questions

- What are the important elements of a debate?
- What do **respect** and **integrity** have to do with a debate?
- Do we use **facts** or **opinions** in debates? Why?

Reflection Questions

- Was it difficult or easy for you to debate an issue?
- Did you feel **respected** during the debate?
- Which parts of learning to debate do you think you can use in your regular life?

Summary

Debating a topic happens in our everyday lives. To be able to state your opinion in a respectful way and hear other people's opinions in a respectful way is an act of kindness to self and kindness to others. It feels good to be heard and to stand up for what you believe in.





Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

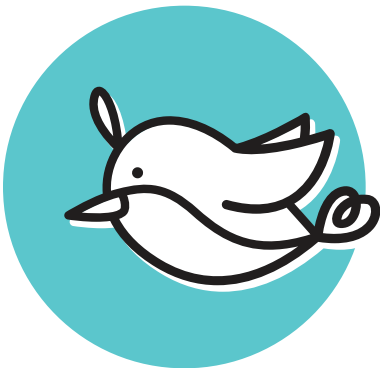
Day 1: Listening to others is an act of kindness. Ask the person next to you what they really feel about the topic you chose and listen to their answer without interrupting.

Day 2: Extend kindness to your community by exercising your integrity. Remember integrity is doing the right and kind thing in all situations. When you leave school today, find a way to perform an act of kindness no one will know about.

Kindness in Action

Day 1: Ask someone outside of class about what respect and integrity mean to them. Write their definition and write if you agree or not.

Day 2: Next time someone says something you disagree with, instead of arguing with them, ask them to tell you more about why they feel that way.



NAME _____

Debate Research Sheet

UNDERSTANDING BELIEFS AND VALUES INTERVIEW SHEET

Directions

Use the questions below to guide your research on the debate topic. Use the back or another sheet of paper if you need more space.

Debate Topic Statement:

What side are you debating (for or against)?

Research: Source of information (name of article, website, etc.)

Below write arguments in favor and against the topic. Below each argument, write a possible rebuttal and possible response to the rebuttal (you may need to use the back of this sheet for more space).

Create a T chart with one side saying pro and one con.

Opening Argument

