

Refuting an Argument

Before you watch

A

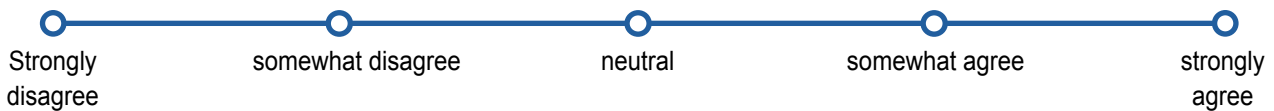
Discuss the questions with a partner and then share your answers with the class.

- How often do you debate ideas in work or academic situations, either formally or informally?
- Do you enjoy debating ideas with others?

B

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements? Think of reasons for your choice.

- Children need to wear seatbelts on school buses.
- Cooking should be part of the high school curriculum.
- Trade schools* are as important as colleges and universities.



*Trade schools is where students learn skills for professions that involve working with their hands (electrician, plumber, carpenter, hair stylist, etc.).

Video

A

Watch the video and put the steps for refuting an argument in order.

- ___ Support your counterargument with key evidence.
- ___ State the specific argument that you disagree with.
- ___ Compare the two opposing views and prove your point.
- ___ State your opposing view.

B

Choose the correct option.

1. When you refute an argument, you **oppose** / **support** someone else's point of view.
2. You should begin with a **detailed** / **simple** summary of the opposing argument.
3. A **counterargument** / **opposing argument** gives your point of view.
4. To prove your point, you should provide **key evidence** / **counterarguments** to support your ideas.
5. You need evidence and facts to **back up** / **oppose** your point of view.

C

Match the sentence beginnings (1-5) with the endings (a-e).

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. You need to present evidence | a presented a convincing counterargument. |
| 2. The opposing side | b prove his point. |
| 3. Summarize your refutation | c to back up your claim. |
| 4. Feel free | d by comparing your view and your opponent's view. |
| 5. Key evidence helped him | e to disagree if you have the facts to support your claim. |

Digital skills focus**A**

Complete the tips for managing virtual debates or meetings.

1. Explain the time limits that each person has during the virtual meeting. Ask speakers to make their arguments **within / beyond** the time limits.
2. Allow time to refute arguments. Each side should have a chance to address the opposing view with **counterarguments / disagreements**.
3. If a speaker is over time, politely ask the speaker to conclude with a **claim / summary** of the point.
4. If a speaker begins to speak about an issue that is not relevant to the debate, ask the speaker to **prove / relate** the point to the topic.
5. Allow time for audience questions and answers after the debate or meeting. Gather questions from the chat and have the **moderator / speakers** ask the most relevant ones.

Language focus

A

Complete the talk with the words in the box.

I disagree with Studies show that The evidence is clear
 There are several reasons why When we compare You claim that

I agree that food production affects climate change and that meat production has more negative impact than plant production. However, **1** _____ the proposal to place a higher tax on meat products. **2** _____ higher meat prices will discourage the purchase of meat and animal products, and production will decrease. If we want to make lasting changes to food consumption, we need more education about food sourcing and preparation. **3** _____ I don't think such a tax is fair or reasonable. **4** _____ that higher prices will affect people with the lowest income who buy the lowest percentage of meat products. People with higher incomes, who also purchase the highest percentage of meat products, will continue to do so. Higher prices will not affect their buying decisions. **5** _____ education about the effect of food production does influence the purchase of sustainable foods. The more people of all income levels understand about effect of food production on the planet's climate, the more likely they are to buy lower-impact foods. **6** _____ the two approaches, we see that the tax on meat products is a temporary alternative, and one that harms people with the lowest incomes. Educating consumers to prepare meals that include fewer meat products and more plant-based foods will create changes that last a lifetime.

B

Complete the collocations.

back feel key opposing prove refute

1. _____ it up
2. _____ an argument
3. _____ free to
4. _____ a point
5. _____ point of view
6. _____ evidence

C

In pairs or groups, discuss one of the following topics or choose your own. Select your position, either for or against. List arguments from the opposite side that you anticipate might be brought up and decide how you would refute those.

- Life skills, such as cooking and finance management, should be taught in high school.
- Free parenting classes should be required for all new parents.
- Tax credits should be given for the purchase of electric cars.

Life skills, such as cooking and finance management, should NOT be mandatory in high school.	
Opposing Argument (Pro)	Refutation
Not all parents teach their children these skills, so classes are needed children will live better lives.	It is not the job of schools to make up for parents who don't teach this. Schools should provide academic subjects.
Some parents can't teach things like finance management. Teachers are needed.	These subjects can offered, but they shouldn't be mandatory.
Putting these subjects into the curriculum shows they are valuable skills.	Life skills should be offered after the regular school day.

Digital communicative task

A

Prepare debate arguments for a topic of your choice.

- Select a topic for a debate and choose a side.
- Research information relevant to the topic and your point of view.
- Write one sentence that clearly states your point of view.
- List arguments you think the opposing side will make and find evidence to refute the arguments.
- Practise giving the talk out loud, either by yourself or with a friend or classmate.
- Decide if you have sufficient evidence to refute what the other side might say. Adjust your talk as needed.

B

Debate the topic with another person or group using the arguments have prepared and the evidence you have gathered. Get feedback on the debate from your audience and reflect on how well you were able to refute arguments from the opposing side.