

To the teacher

Here are some activities you can do with your students based on the readings in Big Ideas.

I. Have students design their own comprehension check

Preparation: Start by making sure everyone is familiar with a text. Read it two times and discuss any questions people may have about the information and ideas. Then do the activity.

1. Form groups of three or four. There should be a leader, a writer and one or two thinkers.
2. Each group gets one section or paragraph. The group helps the writer copy down one true sentence and one false sentence with information from its section. The writer should letter the sentence, **a** and **b**. The teacher can monitor the process and provide guidance. (See downloadable template below.)

While the students are working, the following chart can go up on the board or screen.

| | Round 1 | Round 2 | Round 3 | Round 4 | Round 5 | TOTAL CORRECT |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------------|
| Group 1 | | | | | | |
| Group 2 | | | | | | |
| Group 3 | | | | | | |
| Group 4 | | | | | | |
| Group 5 | | | | | | |

3. The class comes together for a competition. Group 1's leader reads the two sentences. He or she reads the sentences slowly and carefully. Then the leader repeats the information to make sure everyone has heard the sentences. (If pronunciation is a challenge, the teacher can read the sentences for the groups.)
4. The other groups have one minute to discuss and identify the true statement. When the time is up, each group's leader reads their answers. The letters are written in the chart below, and correct answers are circled.
5. The next group takes a turn.
6. When all groups have had a turn, the group with the highest number of circled letters wins.

(For other ideas, see student activities.)

Worksheet

Choose a group name. Then choose leader, a writer, and a thinker.

Fill in the chart. Write one true and one false statement for your section.

| Group name | | Paragraphs: |
|------------|--|-------------|
| a. | | T F |
| b. | | T F |

Worksheet

Choose a group name. Then choose leader, a writer, and a thinker.

Fill in the chart. Write one true and one false statement for your section.

| Group name | | Paragraphs: |
|------------|--|-------------|
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II. Debate the issues

After reading the text, identify a debate question and generate at least three points to scaffold the debate. Identifying points saves time, and keeps everyone on the same page. If they become proficient, then they can come up with their own points. The following is an example.

| | |
|--|--|
| Debate Topic: Agree or disagree Wingsuit flying is too dangerous. It should be illegal. | |
| Point 1: Safety You can talk about the design of the suits and whether they are safe. | |
| Point 2: Personal choice You can talk about the individual's freedom and responsibility. | |
| Point 3: Role of government you can talk about whether the government has the right or obligation to control the wingsuit makers or make laws for national parks. | |

Prepare:

1. Have the class work in three groups of three or four students. Depending on class size, you can set up one or two debates. For each debate, one group will be the pro team, one group will be the con team, and one group will be the moderators. The teams will develop arguments for each topic. The moderators write a question for each topic.
2. The teams will decide who will speak about each topic, and the moderators will decide who will introduce the debate and who will ask each question.

Debate

3. The moderators run the debate. One can introduce the topic and say the rules. In a simple version, each team has one chance to answer the question. (You can add a rebuttal session to up the level.) Each of the other moderators can ask one question. The person asking the question clarifies and manages the responses.
4. The other moderators (and remaining class members) watch and use the moderator scoring sheet (below) to evaluate the strength of the arguments.
5. The scoring sheets are gathered and counted, and one team is declared the winner.

(See printable forms below.)

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Debate Topic: Agree Team | |
| Point 1: | |
| Point 2: | |
| Point 3: | |

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Debate Topic: Disagree Team | |
| Point 1: | |
| Point 2: | |
| Point 3: | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Debate Topic: Moderators' Questions | |
| Point 1: | |
| Point 2: | |
| Point 3: | |

MODERATOR SCORING SHEET

| Give each team up to 3 points. | Agree Team | Disagree Team |
|--------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Argument 1 | | |
| Argument 2 | | |
| Argument 3 | | |
| Totals: | | |

MODERATOR SCORING SHEET

| Give each team up to 3 points. | Agree Team | Disagree Team |
|--------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Argument 1 | | |
| Argument 2 | | |
| Argument 3 | | |
| Totals: | | |

MODERATOR SCORING SHEET

| Give each team up to 3 points. | Agree Team | Disagree Team |
|--------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Argument 1 | | |
| Argument 2 | | |
| Argument 3 | | |
| Totals: | | |