

Name: Brian Colton  
 School: The Wheatley School  
 Total Time of Lesson: 75 min. (2 Parts)

Grade/Dept.: Fourth  
 Date: 4/24/19

**Standard 1: Planning and Preparation**

**Component 1.1: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content & Students**

Performance Indicators	Educator Evidence
<p>1.1a</p> <p><i>Knowledge of Content</i></p> <p>RIPTS 1,2,3,4,5</p> <p>INTASC 4,5</p>	<p><b>Rationale:</b> Debates are an important part of the election and Democratic process in the United States of America. To help students become strong citizens, they should be aware of how a debate works. Practicing debate helps to build skills such as writing, oral communication, collaboration and critical thinking.</p> <p>The origin of the lesson came out of a conversation during Morning Meeting in which two students discussed the idea of whether it was better to be taller than to be shorter. As the conversation continued I mentioned that it could be a good topic to debate, thus creating an opportunity for project-based learning. The students were excited about the prospect of learning about and learning how to debate.</p> <p>This lesson is a continuation of a previous lesson in which the students learned about the history of debate through the lens of the Lincoln-Douglas debates and they began to debate the topics of both, “It’s better to be tall than to be short,” and “Students should not have homework.”</p>
<p>1.1b</p> <p><i>Knowledge of Students</i></p> <p>RIPTS 1,2,3,4,5</p> <p>INTASC 1,2</p>	<p><b>Overview of Students:</b> The students are in the fourth grade at Alfred Lima Sr., Elementary School in Providence. The school is located in a low-income community. The majority of the students are of Hispanic descent. Skill level varies greatly between students in the class. There are some that are reading at an early second grade level, while others are reading at a fifth grade level. There is one child in the class, NP, that is in her first year in a general education class. Previously she had only been in bilingual classrooms. There is one student, XR, that has speech and occupational goals in his IEP. There is one student, JH, that has speech and reading goals in his IEP. There are two students, AR and JE, that have reading goals in their IEP’s. All of the students in the class have background knowledge of animal adaptations as it is the subject of their research project in writing.</p>

**Standard 1: Planning and Preparation**

**Component 1.2: Establishing Instructional Outcomes**

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Educator Evidence</b>
<i>RIPTS 1,2,3,4,5</i> <i>INTASC 1,2, 4,5,7</i>	<b>Instructional Outcomes</b>  <b>NSS-C.K-4.2 VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY</b> What are the most important values and principles of American democracy? How should conflicts about diversity be prevented or managed? How can people work together to promote the values and principles of American democracy?  <b>NSS-C.K-4.3 PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY</b> How Does the Government Established by the Constitution Embody the Purposes, Values, and Principles of American Democracy?  <b>NSS-C.K-4.5 ROLES OF THE CITIZEN</b> What does it mean to be a citizen of the United States? What dispositions or traits of character are important to the preservation and improvement of American democracy? How can Americans participate in their government?

**Standard 1: Planning and Preparation**

**Component 1.3: Designing Coherent Instruction**

<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Educator Evidence</b>
-------------------------------	--------------------------

<p>1.3.a</p> <p><i>Learning Activities , Lesson Structure &amp; Content-Related Pedagogy</i></p> <p>RIPTS 1,2,3,4,5</p> <p>INTASC 1,2, 4,5,7</p>	<p><b>Description of the Lesson:</b></p> <p>Students will learn about some history of debates and participate in practice debates in class. They will know how to research for a debate, present their ideas and evaluate others in presenting their arguments.</p> <p>At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define what a debate is.</li> <li>2. Research arguments and present a side for a debate.</li> <li>3. Follow the rules and procedures of a debate.</li> <li>4. Judge their peers' debate performances.</li> </ol> <p>Key Terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debate</li> <li>• Affirmative (Pro) Position</li> <li>• Negative (Con) Position</li> </ul>
<p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Educator Evidence</b></p>
<p>1.3.a</p> <p><i>Learning Activities , Lesson Structure &amp; Content-Related Pedagogy</i></p> <p>RIPTS 1,2,3,4,5</p> <p>INTASC 1,2, 4,5,7</p>	<p><b>Summarize the Learning Activities in this Lesson</b></p> <p><b>DAY I:</b></p> <p><b>Step 1:</b> Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students will be on the rug following Morning Meeting.</li> <li>• T: We've spent some time discussing debates. First the history of debates, then we participated in two debates. One debate focused on the idea of "It is better to be tall than short" and another on "Students should not have homework."</li> <li>• T: What is a debate?</li> <li>• It is anticipated that the students will give answers such as, "It is a discussion that people have on stage." Or "It is different than an argument or a fight, because people don't talk over each other or use their hands."</li> <li>• T: Yes. A debate is a formal <i>discussion</i> on a particular topic in a public meeting or legislative assembly, in which opposing arguments are put forward.</li> <li>• T: The results of the last two debates were inconclusive. Inconclusive means "not leading to a firm conclusion; not ending doubt or dispute." I believe this means we need to have another debate.</li> <li>• The expectation is that the students will show excitement about the idea of having a new debate.</li> <li>• T: Debates can happen for almost any topic that there may be</li> </ul>

opposing viewpoints. I would like you to spend a few seconds thinking (not talking) alone about different debate topics. Then, when I say so, I would like you to talk to your neighbor and come up with a short list of some possible debate topics. At the end of two minutes, I will take quiet hands to give some examples.

- Take 7 minutes (Total) for the Think/Pair/Share. Create a list of debate topics with the students (Examples may include: PS4 is better than X-Box, Students should have to wear uniforms in school, Marvel Comics is better than DC Comics, etc.)
- After the debate topics list is complete (4-5 min.), ask the students to vote on the debate topic. Highest vote total wins.
- Next, ask the students who would like to be on the Affirmative (Pro) or Negative (Con) side of the debate topic.
- If the total number of students that want to participate is more than five, pick popsicle sticks (with Students' names on them) out of the bucket to select the team.
- T: If you are not chosen for a debate team, you will have a very important role in determining who the winner of the debate is. You will have a rubric that will be used to score the debate. The team that scores the highest total points will be the winners.
- T: I will give each of the teams some time during Small Group to work on planning out your Pro or Con side argument with your teammates. You will also have additional time tomorrow to work on debate preparation following Morning Meeting.

## **DAY II:**

### **Step 2:** Debate Planning

- Students will be on the rug following Morning Meeting. They will be directed to stay on the rug to discuss the rubric for the upcoming debate.
- T: I would like everyone to look towards the SMART Board. We are going to take a look at the rubric so that the debate voters will know all the categories that they are expected to vote on and the debate sides will know what they will be graded on.
- Show the students each of the 5 categories (Planning & Organization, Arguments (Reasons), Statements, Rebuttal (Response) and Presentation Style). Give examples of what a score of 4 and 1 look like. Explain that the 2 and 3 are in-between.
- T: I would like to remind everyone of the kind of debate we are having. I'll take a quiet hand that can tell me the name of the debate type and what the rules are.
- It is expected that the students will be able to remember that it is a Tag Team Debate and something of the rules.
- NOTE: In a tag team debate, each team of five members represents one side of a debatable question. Each team has a set amount of

time (5 minutes) to present its point of view. When it's time for the team to state its point of view, one speaker from the team takes the floor. That speaker can speak for no more than 1 minute, and must "tag" another member of the team to pick up the argument before the minute is up. Team members who are eager to pick up on or add to the team's argument, can put out a hand to be tagged. That way, the current speaker knows who might be ready to pick up the argument.

- T: Now that each of the teams know how they are going to be scored, the Pro Team and the Con Team will each have about 10 minutes to get some additional prep done before the debate. NOTE: If there are any questions about what a debate looks like, use the video link (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6zuLlii2jQ>)
- T: Feel free to continue to do research on Google as that has been a useful tool for all of you throughout these debates. When I call your team, you can go to the back of the room to get your Chrome Books. The Pro Team can prepare on the back table. The Con Team can prepare in the second library area (closest to the back of the rooms). Our Moderators will also have an opportunity to prepare in the first library area (closest to the front of the room).
- T: The Pro Team can now go get their Chrome Books and head to the back table. The Moderators can go to the first library.
- Wait a few moments for the Pro Team to relocate then send the Con Team.
- T: The Con Team can now head to the back to get their Chrome Books...then go to the second library.
- Place the signs, "Affirmative (PRO)" and "Negative (CON)" on either side of the SMART Board. Place the debate sign under the ELMO to project onto the SMART Board.
- T: While they are preparing, I wanted to go over a few things. First, you all have a tough job. It is important that you be objective. You should not grade the debate based upon whether you feel strongly about one side or the other...or your personal feelings about the people participating. It's the same way where if I was giving you a grade on a test or a report card, I would need to give it based upon what you know...not how much I like you. The second thing is that I need your help setting up for the debate. When I say "Go", I would like everyone to take a chair from the last two rows of the class. You can each bring it and place it under the signs for "Affirmative (PRO)" or "Negative (CON)." We will need 12 chairs total. 6 on each side.
- When all the chairs are brought up front, take a moment to explain where the students will sit and what will be on their tables.
- T: Everyone will need to sit up front with just the rubric and a pencil. Make sure that the tables up front are completely clear. It is

important that you don't have any distractions when watching the debate. I will now split up all of the judges into two sides. Everyone on this side (motions to the PRO side) will judge the Affirmative team. Everyone on this side (motions to the CON side) will judge the Negative team.

- Make sure there are an equal number of students judging each side.
- T: Please make sure to write your name at the top of the rubric and circle the team you are judging. Also, write in the names of the students on the team. Wait to judge the teams on these categories until AFTER the debate...BUT, feel free to write notes on this sheet if you feel as though the teams are doing what is expected.

### **Step 3:** The Debate

- Alert the students on the two debate teams and the Moderators that the debate will be starting. Ask everyone to come up to the front and take their seats. Tell all of the students judging that they need to start judging once the Moderators begin the debate.
- T: I would like to turn the debate over to our two Moderators.
- The Moderators will introduce the debate topic, the members of each team and explain the format. They will then explain that the Affirmative Team will have 5 minutes. They will be expected to have an Opening Statement, present their argument and then have a closing statement. They will explain the same for the Negative Team. They will then tell the Affirmative Team to begin.
- Make sure to keep the time on the SMART Board behind the debate students.

### **Step 4:** Conclusion

- Bring all the students back to their desks and ask them to answer the following questions to the students involved in the debate: "How did you feel about your argument in the debate? How did standing and debating make you feel? If you could debate your topic again, what would you do differently?"
- Ask the Moderators the following questions: "Did you feel prepared for your job as Moderator? How did you feel working with someone else? How did you feel about being in front of the class? What would you potentially do differently next time?"
- Ask the students that were judging the debate the following questions: "What did you find most difficult? Without giving away your score, what do you feel made the biggest difference for you during the debate? Who would you like to recognize for the job they did in the debate and why?"
- Ask the students as a whole, "If you could change your role, which one would you want next time?"
- Tell the students that we will be going to Phys. Ed. and that we will

	<p>announce the scores of the debate when they return to class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the students to go to the back of the room to line up when their role in the debate is announced. Ask the Moderators to go to the back first, followed by the judges, followed by the Con Team, then the Pro Team.</li> </ul>
<p><i>1.3.b</i></p> <p><i>Instructional Materials and Resources</i></p> <p><i>RIPTS 1,2,3,4,5</i></p> <p><i>INTASC 1,2,7</i></p> <p><i>CEC 1,2,5</i></p>	<p><b>Instructional Materials/Resources/Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debate Scoring Sheet</li> <li>• Paper</li> <li>• Pencil</li> <li>• SMART Board</li> <li>• Debate Signs</li> <li>• Chrome Books</li> </ul> <p>The Debate Scoring Sheet is for the students to score other students about the debate. The paper is where the students will fill in the research for their debate side. Pencils will be used as tools for the students to complete tasks. The SMART board will be used to display the Debate Scoring Sheet, the title for the debate and the timer for the debate. The Debate Signs will be used to show the judges which side is which. The Chrome Books will be used for research for each of the debate teams.</p>
<p><i>1.3.c</i></p> <p><i>Instructional Groups</i></p> <p><i>RIPTS 1,2,3,4,5,9</i></p> <p><i>INTASC 1,2,7</i></p>	<p><b>PREREQUISITE SKILLS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have the ability to read and write.</li> <li>• Students have some background knowledge of debate.</li> </ul>

**Standard 1: Planning and Preparation**  
**Component 1.4: Designing Student Assessment**

<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Educator Evidence</b>
<p>1.4 <i>Designing Student Assessment</i></p> <p>RIPTS 4,5,9 INTASC 2,8,6</p>	<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>Students will be assessed by their participation in class discussion, their ability to research positional arguments, their ability to follow rules and procedures and their ability to judge their peers' debate performance.</p> <p>Students will participate in one debate on either the Affirmative side, the Negative side, as a Moderator or as a judge.</p> <p>At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Define what a debate is</b> - Oral responses during lesson (Anecdotal records)</li> <li>2. <b>Research arguments and present a side for a debate</b> - Oral responses during lesson (Anecdotal records); written notes for debate argument</li> <li>3. <b>Follow the rules and procedures of a debate</b> - Through oral responses during lesson (Anecdotal records)</li> <li>4. <b>Judge their peers' debate performance</b> – Through Debate Scoring Sheet responses</li> </ol>

**Standard 4: Professional Growth and Responsibilities**  
**Component 4.1: Reflecting on Practice**

<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Educator Evidence</b>
-------------------------------	--------------------------

4.1  
*Reflecting on  
Practice*

*RIPTS 3,9,10*

*INTASC 9*

*CEC 6*

## **Reflection on Lesson**

### **WHAT?**

*What happened? What went well? What was an area of weakness?*

As explained previously, this lesson began from an idea that came out of a Morning Meeting. The original lesson featured two debates. The students were engaged, but there were problems with the lesson. There was something of a lack of structure and the students did not have a clearly defined definition of a debate. This lesson ended up being a revision of that original lesson. It gave me an opportunity to do additional work on planning and it gave the students an opportunity to do some additional work in debate.

For this lesson, I began with a review of the previous debates. I spoke with the students about possible debate topics for a new debate. They came up with a number of debate topics and ultimately chose (through a class vote) to do the debate of “Dogs are better than cats.” The students then raised their hands for the debate side that they would like to be on and I selected popsicle sticks for a fair method of placing students on teams.

There were two issues with this. The first one was that not every student had a popsicle stick. There were three that did not (the newest members of the class – that came in during the middle of the year). I ultimately turned the teams into 6 students (instead of 5). That solved that problem.

The other issue was that one of the students was really upset that she didn’t get chosen for the debate. The positive that came out of this moment was that another student, JH, spoke up and said that he would prefer to give up his spot in the debate so that, MRC would be able to participate. It was a sweet gesture that happened because of the classroom climate that had been built by my CT. The students genuinely care about and look out for each other. It is a pleasure to watch.

After the topic was chosen and the sides were set, I gave the students an opportunity to begin prepping for the debate as they would be having the debate the following day. The students worked well in teams. There was communication, collaboration and team building happening in each of the groups.

When we began Day II of the lesson, the students were excited with anticipation for the lesson. I spent time with them discussing the scoring rubric and setting expectations. After everything was clear for the students (or at least they said so), they were sent to go work in groups to finish debate prep. I took this time to have the students that would be scoring the debate move the chairs to the front of the room for the debate and clear off the front tables. I also explained to them the idea about being un-biased in regards to both the topic and the students participating in the debate. I told them about how important

their job was as no one else would be determining the winning team for the debate. It was just them.

After everyone was set and had their prep, I directed the students to come to the front of the room to begin the debate. The two moderators, JH (who was given the job because of his kindness the day before) and RP (who filled in for JE – who was absent) introduced the debate and directed the happenings (based off of scripts that I provided them with).

The debate was well structured and timed. The teams did 5 minutes each, then each had a 1 minute rebuttal.

Time was ticking away, so I asked some quick questions of the group regarding their feelings about the debate and how it went. The responses were very interesting with a few students, JH and AR discussing their nerves. AR even spoke about how his “heart was beating so fast it felt as though it was beating out of my (his) chest.” Following the discussion, the students transitioned to Phys. Ed. and the lesson was complete.

The things that went well... I was clearly more prepared. It wasn't an instance of having an idea of what was going to happen. I knew what was going to happen. I was more confident and more excited about the lesson. I think those things came through to the students and they fed off of that energy.

By planning everything out the way I did, it gave me a chance to spend less time working on classroom management and more time watching the students work and discussing with them what they were doing. I had the opportunity to watch learning happening in a group setting and see those 21<sup>st</sup> century skills shine through.

An area of weakness for me was that I did not clearly explain the idea of the Opening and Closing Statements. The evidence of this was that none of the students were able to successfully do an Opening or Closing Statement. If I was to do this lesson again, I would make sure to show and/or explain an example of each so that it was modeled properly for the students.

*Which objectives were met? What is the evidence? Which students did not meet objectives? Which students exceeded objectives? Why?*

All of the students met the objective of being able to define a debate. They all successfully spoke about it anecdotally at times during the lesson and during class discussion. Additionally, they lived the concept while actually debating in class.

As for the research objective, that was met by all of the students researching the debate. Those students used their Chrome Books to do Google searches to get enough information to be able to keep a 5 minute debate going (which they did

successfully. I was able to see this objective through the collection of notes from the lesson, anecdotally through watching debate prep and by watching the students perform the actual debate.

Following the rules and procedures for the debate was done properly (in a lot of ways), but neither team was able to properly speak an Opening or Closing argument. That (as previously mentioned) needed to be done through modeling, but I was not successful in doing so.

Finally, the students responsible for scoring the debate did a strong job of doing so. There were conversations amongst the group where students told other students to stop talking and focus on the debate. There were also students that circled scores originally then changed them. This shows an ability to change and to adapt. The evidence from these students was in the scoring sheets.

### **SO WHAT?**

*What was learned from this experience? Evidence of teacher candidate learning*

I learned that preparedness reduces some of the issues as far as classroom management goes. If the students know what they are supposed to be doing, are engaged and made to feel empowered...there is less of a need for classroom management techniques.

I also learned that choice is important. It is important with debate topics. It is important with debate teams. If the students are invested in the task and were empowered to make the choice to be there, they will work harder.

I learned that when you ask questions that are intended to provide a deeper understanding of the learner, you can get answers that can help to provide meaning.

I learned that it is ok to look at notes. I was so hung up on the idea of looking carefree and conversational when teaching, that I forgot what I forgot...which is a lot. Notes can help me remember, but they also help me to stay on track, which in turn keeps the students on track.

### **NOW WHAT?**

*How will this experience influence my professional identity?*

Everything about this lesson and all the previous lessons before will influence my professional identity. It is ok to be friendly, but you have to set guidelines

with students first before becoming friendly...so that they can understand there is an order to things.

I will also make it a point to really get a sense for transitions when dealing with a classroom of 20+ students. The more that students have to do and know where they need to do it, the less issues there will be in the classroom.

*How will this experience influence how I plan/teach/assess in the future?*

This experience will help me to become a better planner. The feeling of having a lesson that was really working on all cylinders was amazing. To have students collaborating, communicating, engaged and polite was a wonder to see.

I want to see more of it, so I will make it a point to plan as much as possible and really envision the classroom and everything in it.

Additionally, if I plan more efficiently in the future it will give me more opportunities to see the thinking working in small groups.