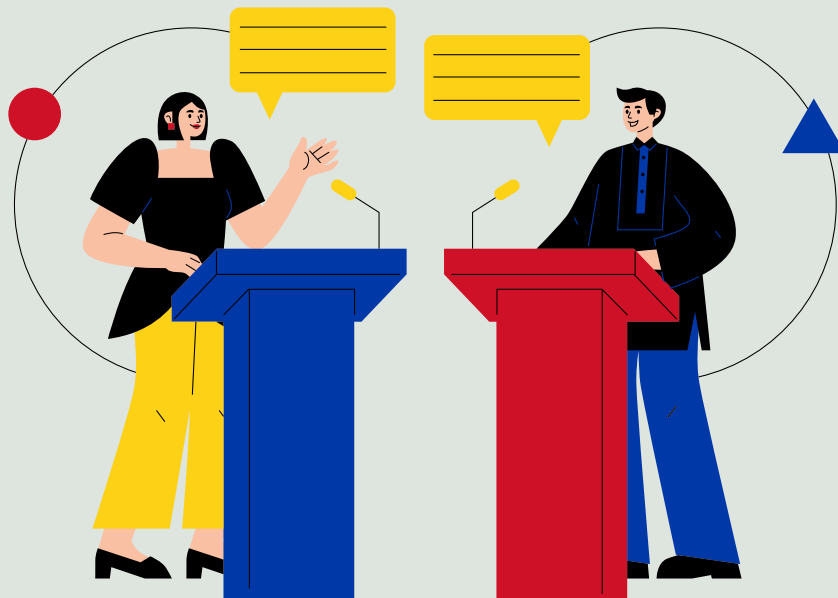


EXERCISE 6 - CRITICAL THINKING AND COMMUNICATION - ABILITY TO ARGUE AND DEFEND ONE'S OWN VIEWS



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Developing the ability to effectively argue and defend one's own views, which is crucial in debates on environmental issues and in negotiations related to green professions and technologies.




Educator, discuss why critical thinking and argumentation skills are important in the context of environmental protection, green technologies and green professions. Mention that these skills are crucial during negotiations, project presentations and debates on environmental issues.

Explain that effective argumentation is based on clear, logical and well-founded views. Outline the basic elements of argumentation: thesis, evidence, conclusion and anticipation of counter-arguments.






Divide participants into groups of 4-5 people. Each group will be given a scenario related to environmental challenges or green technologies to analyse, in which they will have to develop an argument to support their position.

- The educator acts as a moderator, keeping track of time, encouraging a substantive discussion and ensuring that each group has an equal opportunity to present their arguments and defend their position.
- The educator summarises the debate, drawing attention to the effectiveness of the arguments presented, the way in which positions are defended and the use of evidence in the discussion.
- Encourage participants to reflect on how critical thinking and effective argumentation skills can help them in their future careers, especially in the context of green technologies and environmental protection.
- Emphasise that the ability to communicate and argue effectively is crucial not only in negotiations, but also in spreading environmental awareness and convincing others to take action to protect the environment.

Structure of the debate

-  Each group has 5 minutes to present their arguments
-  After each group has presented its arguments, the other groups may ask questions or present counter-arguments (up to 3 minutes for questions/counter-arguments)
-  The group which presented its position has 3 minutes to defend its position and answer questions

Group tasks

-  Read the scenario and identify the main points to be included in the argumentation
-  Develop a clear thesis to be defended by the group
-  Prepare at least three strong arguments to support the thesis, using evidence, data and logical reasoning
-  Think about possible counter-arguments that may be presented by your opponents and prepare answers to them
-  Each group selects one or two representatives to present arguments during the debate

Scenarios for analysis and debate

SCENARIO I

Introduction of charges for plastic bags

The government is considering charging for plastic bags to reduce their use and pollution. Opponents say this will negatively affect consumers and small shops, while supporters believe it is a necessary step in the fight against plastic.

Task for the group

- ➔ Prepare arguments for or against the introduction of fees for plastic bags, taking into account economic, environmental and social aspects

SCENARIO II

Investment in nuclear power as a source of green energy

The country is considering building new nuclear power plants, arguing that it is one of the most efficient and low-carbon energy sources. Opponents are concerned about the risks associated with radioactive waste and potential disasters.

Task for the group

- Develop arguments on the case for investment in nuclear energy as part of a green energy policy.

SCENARIO III

Development of electric transport in cities

The city is planning a major investment in the development of electric transport, including electric buses and charging infrastructure. Critics say the costs are too high and the benefits may be limited by the current state of technology.

Task for the group

- ➔ Prepare arguments supporting or criticising the development of electric transport, taking into account ecological, economic and technological aspects.

SCENARIO IV

Ban on the use of pesticides in agriculture

A ban on pesticides in agriculture is proposed to protect biodiversity and human health. Farmers argue that without pesticides their yields will be lower, affecting food prices and the economic stability of farms.

Task for the group

- ➔ Prepare arguments for or against the banning of pesticides, taking into account ecological, health and economic aspects.

Materials

- Flipcharts or whiteboards to record the main points of the argument
- Examples of data and information that can be used in the argumentation (optional)



Instructions for the educator

- ➔ Prepare scenarios for analysis, adapting them to the level of knowledge and experience of participants
- ➔ Make sure participants have access to the materials needed for group work (flipcharts, markers)
- ➔ Introduce participants to the topics of critical thinking and effective argumentation
- ➔ While the groups are working, observe how participants develop their arguments and support them in formulating clear and logical positions
- ➔ During the debate, keep an eye on time and encourage a substantive discussion. Make sure that each participant has the chance to express his/her opinion and defend his/her arguments
- ➔ After the debate, summarise the main conclusions, noting the effectiveness of the arguments used and the way in which the groups defended their positions

