

Program Title: The Great Debates

Category: Jewish Learning

Author(s): Arielle Gingold NFTY-STR PVP 2002-2004

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Goals

- To introduce PPs to the weekend's theme, Where Do You Stand, Understanding Judaism from All Sides
- To get PPs thinking about an issue from all sides
- To explore both Jewish issues and contemporary issues from a Jewish perspective

Objectives

- PPs will engage in debates on various conflicts by teaching their debate representatives the sides of the issues with packets of information given to them.

Time

0:00 - 0:15 Spectrum

0:15 - 0:35 Break into groups by months, team name, mixer

0:35 - 0:45 Explanation

0:45 - 2:55 Debates

0:00 - 0:15 Briefing

0:15 - 0:20 In group debate

0:20 - 0:25 Draw

0:25 - 0:30 Debate for whole group

0:30 - 0:32 Opinion Meter

Procedure

Overview: Participants will first be asked to consider how they feel about assorted topics both serious and humorous through a human spectrum. Then, they will break into 12 groups (6 in each universe) that will enable them to examine specific conflicts and form their own opinions. Each universe will be lead by Regional Board Members and each individual group will be lead by an advisor. Each group will select two of its members to be its spokespeople (they can select new speakers each time if they wish). These two speakers will carry out a debate in front of their group on topics in which they will have to choose either an affirmative or negative side. The rest of the group members (excluding the speakers) will receive information on the question at hand. They will have to read the information and as a group convey it to the speakers so that they can then carry out an informed debate. (PPs should feel free to insert their own ideas and opinions into the discussion/debate). After each group has seen their own debate, two numbers will be "drawn out of a hat" and an affirmative speaker from the first group drawn, and negative speaker from the second group drawn will have a debate on the topic in front of the entire group. Repeat this process with as many of the topics as time allows.

0:00 - 0:10 Spectrum

PPs engage in a spectrum program on various topics (serious and funny) where they stand @ different corners of the room depending on their opinions on each (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, not sure).

*How do you feel about this statements :

- Broccoli is great
- I always recycle
- Dave Mathews Band is amazing
- School vouchers is a great system
- The Torah should be followed verbatim
- I never get in arguments with my friends

-Toilet paper is best when folded

-Israel is right and justified in all their actions

-I participate in something Jewish during my summer

- I stay informed on current issues

- It's not important to go to Israel as long as you support it

-Abortion is a decision for an individual

- Prayer in public schools is a-ok

- It's good to keep Kosher
- It is important to learn Hebrew
- NFTY-STR is the best NFTY region of life
- Danny should really reconsider that shirt
- My bus ride up was amazing

0:15 - 0:35 Break into groups by months, team name, mixer

The final direction in the spectrum, sends PPs into groups based on their birth month. From there they'll be split into groups, 6 in each universe.

Once PPs are in their groups, they will do a short name-game like mixer and then choose a team name (just for fun☺)

0:35 - 0:45 Explanation

When PPs get into the groups they will be told they are going to be having debates on a variety of topics.

Each group must select two people who will be debating and the rest will be briefing the speakers based on the information packets they receive (the two debating *can* change throughout, but doesn't have to).

The group leader gives the groups their first topic and has the debaters each choose a side.

0:45 - 2:55 Debates

Each participant receives their information packet and has 10-15 min. to get their debaters prepared. They can structure this preparation any way they want but everyone should participate in the process. The reason they want their speakers prepared is because they never know when one of the speakers will have to go before the rest of the group to represent their "team"

Then, the debaters for each group carry out their debate, in front of just their group.

Next, the universe leader draws a to determine which group's debater will be speaking aff or neg in front of the whole group.

The two chosen speakers debate the topic for the whole group.

After the topic is finished, the group takes an impromptu vote/cheer to see how the entire group feels on the conflict overall.

Repeat the process with the next topic!

The topics are:

- Should physical force be permissible for interrogations in Israel?
 - Should use/display the 10 Commandments be allowed in government institutions?
 - Should the union continue to condemn school vouchers?
 - Should Israel unilaterally fulfill its responsibilities in the road map to peace?
 - Should the URJ actively respond to the Jews for Jesus?
 - Should Jews give money to homeless beggars?
 - Should Jews take the stories of the Torah literally?
 - Are the laws of Kashrut still applicable to our present lives as Jews?
- *NOTE choose the ones you like best first and you don't have to get to all*

The resources for these topics were pulled from CCAR Responsas, *Teaching Hot Topics*, and the Religious Action Center