

English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening » Grade 8

Comprehension and Collaboration

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1a** Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1b** Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1c** Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1d** Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2** Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.3** Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.5** Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest. (Not met by debate)
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Debate meets 5/6 of the Speaking and Listening standards for middle school. Debate can be taught as an elective or a mini unit at the start of school. Once the students understand the process, they can use it to enhance their persuasive writing during the year. It can be used in every class to enhance classroom discussions. Teaching debate empowers students and improves research, critical thinking, speaking and listening skills. (Research to back up)

Yet, finding time to address these standards often is impossible. If it can't be written down and graded, some school policies don't allow time for it. Often teachers just assign an oral book report or power point project and consider their job done.

The skills are needed by every student to succeed in school and life. Every business owner will agree that these are the skills desired by managers.

Debate can be taught in the start of the year in just two short weeks. During the school year, teachers can refer back to the skills and improve upon them. Working with subject area teachers, students can research the need for a new water plant in town, dress code concerns, improvements in school lunches, or the feasibility of solar panels being added to city buildings. Both sides are researched, investigated, and debated. The connection to real life issues is valid. The ability to change the world is just starting with these skills. Adding visuals to presentations in the real world would meet the 5th standard.