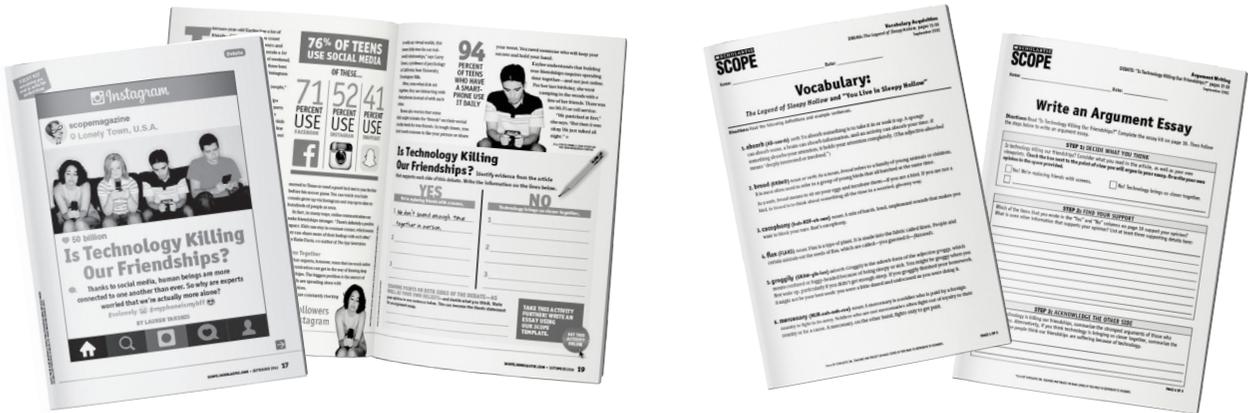


How to Use the Debate/Essay Kit

Bring this activity to life in your classroom



Preview: Your students read and analyze an essay that explores points on both sides of a debate. After a text-marking activity and a lively classroom debate, students use our Essay Kit to write an argument essay.

Learning Objective: to identify central ideas and supporting details; to evaluate arguments; to participate in a class debate; to write a well-crafted argument essay

Key Skills: identifying central ideas and details, speaking and listening, argument writing

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Text Marking, Debate, Argument Writing

1 Preparing to Read

(5 minutes, activity sheet online)

- Give students a minute or so to preview the text features—the headline, illustrations or photos, any charts or graphs, etc. Ask them what they think the article is going to be about.
- Project the list of **Vocabulary Definitions** (if provided) for students to refer to as they read. The reinforcement activity can be completed after reading or it can be assigned as homework.

2 Reading and Text Marking

(30 minutes)

- Read the essay once through as a class.
- Project the article. Complete the following steps as a class, modeling text marking on your whiteboard while students mark their magazines:
 - 1) Using a red colored pencil, draw a star next to a sentence that expresses the main argument (central idea) on one side of the debate.

2) Still using a red colored pencil, underline all of the details that support that main point.

- Split students up into groups and have them repeat steps 1 and 2, but for the other side of the debate and this time using a blue colored pencil.

- Next, ask students to discuss the following in their groups: Do you think the writer shows *bias*—that is, a preference for one side of the debate or the other? Explain and support your answer with text evidence.

- Have students fill in the “Yes/No” chart in their magazines using details that they underlined in the text.

3 Debate

(15 minutes)

Have students divide themselves into two groups according to which side of the debate they agree with more, the “Yes” side or the “No” side. Have the groups stand on opposite sides of the room. Students can then debate the issue: One

student offers a reason (support) for his or her opinion; a student from the other group then offers a counterargument.

Students should quietly walk to the other side of the room if at any point during the debate they change their position on the issue; be sure to ask any student who does this why he or

she did so. Encourage students to use text evidence to support their opinions.

Find all activity sheets online at SCOPE.SCHOLASTIC.COM

4 Writing

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students work individually to complete the **Essay Kit** guided-writing activity to write an argument essay supporting their point of view. Students can use the **Argument Essay Checklist** (available in *Scope's* online Activity Library) to evaluate and edit their essays.

Common Core State Standards:

R.1, R.2, R.6, R.8, W.1, W.4, W.5, W.7, SL.1, L.1, L.2, L.3

Differentiation

For Struggling Readers

Instead of assigning the Essay Kit, ask students to write one paragraph in which they give their opinion and three reasons that support it.

For Advanced Readers

Before holding the classroom debate, ask students to find and read two other articles on the topic. Students should come to class prepared with a list of their sources plus at least one item of support for each side of the debate.