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The Deliberative Classroom

GENERAL GUIDANCE

ACT
ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
discovering voices
Middlesex University London

CONTENTS

Deliberation *noun*

1. The action of deliberating; careful consideration, weighing up with a view to decision.
2. Consideration and discussion of a question by a legislative assembly, committee etc.; debate.
3. The quality of acting with careful thought; avoidance of precipitancy.

(Shorter Oxford English Dictionary)

Deliberative democracy

A school of thought in political theory that claims that political decisions should be the product of fair and reasonable discussion and debate among citizens. In deliberation, citizens exchange arguments and consider different claims that are designed to secure the public good. Through this conversation, citizens can come to an agreement about what procedure, action, or policy will best produce the public good. Deliberation is a necessary precondition for the legitimacy of democratic political decisions. Rather than thinking of political decisions as the aggregate of citizens' preferences, deliberative democracy claims that citizens should arrive at political decisions through reason and the collection of competing arguments and viewpoints. In other words, citizens' preferences should be shaped by deliberation in advance of decision making, rather than by self-interest. With respect to individual and collective citizen decision making, deliberative democracy shifts the emphasis from the outcome of the decision to the quality of the process.

(Encyclopaedia Britannica)

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1. Overview

The Deliberative Classroom

The *Deliberative Classroom* is a curriculum project supported by the Department for Education (DfE) to support teachers to lead knowledge based discussions and/or debates with students on topical issues relating to fundamental British values[1] (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs), citizenship and equality. These discussion-based activities build resilience through the development of a body of knowledge that helps students think critically and increasingly independently about the challenges facing the UK as a complex and diverse democracy.

The *Deliberative Classroom* project consists of this General guidance and a series of 18 debate and discussion resources. The General guidance introduces teachers to the rationale for the project and outlines some of the teaching approaches adopted in the activities. The debate and discussion resources are designed to be used in the classroom and are organised as six packs of resources, each containing three activities based around a conceptual theme. The concepts are drawn from the fundamental British values (FBV) and core additional principles required to understand democracy:

- Liberty
- Freedom of speech
- Religious freedom
- Democracy
- Equality
- Hatred and violence

These resources tackle controversial and sensitive topics to encourage an open and informed discussion of the challenges confronting our society.

Each of the six packs include the following resources:

1. Briefing notes and links to additional reading to build teachers' subject knowledge on the topic. This is written with an expert in the topic for an adult audience and is designed to help teachers engage with the serious conceptual knowledge that underpins the concepts listed above.
2. Teacher activity notes provide instructions and advice to teach the three activities in each pack. The activities in each pack are related to the same underpinning concept and each pack includes a competitive debate, a deliberative debate and additional structured discussion activities. Teachers may use all three in the order suggested, or dip into the resources to find activities suitable to their students and time constraints.
3. Student resources for the activities are ready to use and provide scaffolded activities to build towards debates and discussions.

These resources have been funded by the DfE and written and produced by the Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT), the English Speaking Union (ESU) and Middlesex University.

2. Policy context: Fundamental British Values, Prevent, Citizenship and Equalities Duty

Much of the training and guidance to schools has focussed on the safeguarding and child protection aspects of Prevent policy. However, the DfE Advice also urges that:

> "schools can build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making."[2]

And this is further clarified in relation to Citizenship[3] education, which is seen as providing a curriculum space where children can "explore political and social issues critically" and where children can learn about democracy and diversity. This sits alongside the promotion of

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-the-smsc-development-of-pupils-in-independent-schools
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-smsc

Fundamental British Values (FBV) as a new element of Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) development in schools. Among other recommendations this SMSC guidance includes the advice that schools should:

> "include in suitable parts of the curriculum, as appropriate for the age of pupils, material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain, in contrast to other forms of government in other countries."[4]

In interpreting these policies schools also have a responsibility under the Equalities Act (2010) to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations between different groups. This handbook and the debate resources to accompany it indicate some of the ways in which teachers and students can engage with this.

3. What counts as a controversial issue?

Michael Hand[5] argues that any matter should be taught as controversial when contrary views can be held on it, without those views being contrary to reason. The important issue here is to focus on the role of 'reason' – the idea that controversial issues are genuinely open to debate does not mean that any position is equally justifiable. Similarly, if there is a dispute over the underlying facts, that does not mean any 'facts' can be believed. This commitment to rational engagement in the light of the facts, as far as we can determine them, is important, especially because 'fake news' and conspiracy theories are rife on the Internet. Despite the lack of hard evidence, people question the moon landings, believe there was a government cover up over 9/11, that the world is ruled by a reptilian elite called the Illuminati, and that the holocaust never happened. Each of these conspiracy theories is believed by millions of people and a quick Internet search on any of these conspiracies or hoaxes will quickly turn up websites offering documentaries, a list of supposedly insightful questions, and some speculative arguments in favour of the theory. Teachers have to be alert to these unfounded ideas being brought into the classroom and focus on the available evidence, and provide students with opportunities to engage with the evidence. For educationalists, the positive dimension to conspiracy theories is that a student has to have been sufficiently alert to an issue, and sufficiently interested in finding an answer, to have looked in the first place. Building on that same impulse, we can help students find a more plausible (and possibly more complicated) answer, which will help them develop their understanding of how the world works.

In reality many political 'issues' are controversial to someone and may therefore be taught as such, however Diana Hess[6] has pointed out that this is not always as clear as it may seem, because the situation may well change over time and by location. She calls this 'tipping' as issues may well move from being settled (uncontroversial), to un-settled (controversial) and then re-settled (back to being uncontroversial). An example or two will illustrate this, and we will first take the issue of whether people have the right to engage in homosexual acts. Eighty years ago, most teachers would not have perceived it as controversial, because the answer was no, and the law was clear on this matter. From the 1960s into the 1990s the matter was intensely controversial because social attitudes were changing and Clause 28 of the Local Government Act (1988) prohibited local authorities from promoting homosexuality. Now it is probably not seen as particularly controversial in most schools, but the settled answer would be 'yes' people do have the right to be gay.

[2] DfE (2015) *The Prevent Duty. Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers.* London: Department for Education.
[3] Citizenship is a National Curriculum subject with statutory programmes of study at key stages 3 and 4 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study
[4] DfE (2014) *Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools.* Departmental advice for maintained schools. London: Department for Education.
[5] Michael Hand (2008) 'What should we teach as controversial? A defense of the epistemic criterion', *Educational Theory*, 58 (2):213-228

Hilary Claire[7] advises teachers might to consider the following aspects of a topic:

- What values (and conflicting interpretations of them) are important here?
- Is this a debate about means and ends?
- Is this debate characterised by competing ethical positions, i.e. competing priorities?
- Do rights and responsibilities have a bearing on this debate?
- Are there positions marked by prejudice or stereotyping?

4. The role of the teacher

Schools are uniquely placed to address the issues discussed here – to provide young people with a space to engage in a sustained manner with these difficult issues and to come to an informed understanding for themselves, and in doing so to experience the benefits of a democratic society, where free enquiry, serious discussion and critical judgement help us to work towards solutions to complex problems.

ACT's *Building Resilience*[8] project found a number of key reasons why schools should tackle these sensitive and controversial issues:

1. Students should have the opportunity to learn about this and develop their own opinions. If discussions about these issues are not organised in schools, students may not have other opportunities to discuss them.
2. Students generally trust teachers to handle these discussions sensitively and not close down opinions dogmatically.
3. There is some specialist knowledge about the concepts (extremism, radicalisation and terrorism) and some important contextual information relating to acts of terror, which are essential to understand what is happening. This knowledge helps to build resilience among young people, who are able to come to a political understanding of terrorism and potentially therefore be less susceptible to over-simplified narratives (for example the 'clash of civilizations' hypothesis[9]).
4. Tackling the issue makes it less of a taboo and starts to demystify it for children. This is helpful for those who experience fear in the face of the widespread coverage of what are still relatively infrequent terrorist attacks in the West.

Children could engage in these debates anywhere but the value of having them in school is that teachers can draw on their skills and professional expertise to plan for learning. This means:

1. Teachers must ensure dialogue is supported by the development of adequate subject knowledge. The debate resource packs will include teacher briefings so teachers can manage these discussions effectively and engage with students' questions and misconceptions.
2. Teachers should plan clear learning intentions to underpin a sequence of activities and to assess students' learning.
3. Teachers should make clear links between the specific issues being discussed and the broader concepts that are most relevant. For example, when discussing the public debate on banning the burka in France, it will be useful to link this specific example to the broader issues of religious freedoms and the extent to which we need to develop common identities in a multicultural society.
4. Teachers also need to be sensitive to the local context and the needs of the students in their classes. Different children are affected by the same issues in different ways and so teachers need to think about the likely issues they may encounter, and where appropriate, discuss this with students in advance. In particular teachers need to be aware of how children may be directly affected by the issues and case studies being considered.

[6] Diana Hess (2009) *Controversy in the Classroom,* Abingdon: Routledge. Ch. 7.
[7] Hilary Claire (2003) *Dealing with controversial issues with primary teachers as part of citizenship education.* http://bit.ly/2lizx2Z
[8] ACT was funded in 2016 by the Home Office to undertake a project to work with schools to develop Citizenship curriculum responses to the Prevent duty. See https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-building-resilience-project
[9] Two articles on Clash of Civilisations hypothesis http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/04/opinion/04brooks.html http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/clash-civilizations-isnt

The DfE advice on the Prevent Duty says, "schools should provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments."[10] The development of an open atmosphere of challenge can encourage pupils to become more receptive to other ideas. Teacher and pupils also need to be clear about what is allowed and what gets ruled out. Laws cannot prevent people from holding extreme views provided these are kept private and do not lead to extremist or violent action. However, freedom of speech is not unlimited; some views are publicly forbidden, e.g. incitement to racial hatred.

It is common to have restrictions placed on our freedom to speak in the workplace, in the media, in parliament and indeed, in school, and this is a valuable lesson for pupils to learn in itself. For example, **teachers are constrained by the duty to comply with Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996, which forbids "the promotion of partisan political views"** and confers on schools a duty to "secure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils… they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views." Similarly, **schools have a duty to promote equality and tackle discrimination.**

5. Learning to debate and learning through debate

There are two strands of objectives targeted in these resources. The first is learning *through* debate, to build better comprehension of the complex issues addressed and build knowledge and understanding. The second might be characterised as learning to debate, as students gain the skills and confidence necessary to engage in nuanced debates and to address disagreements and contentious issues in a mature and balanced way.

As such, the objectives will be to look beyond 'have a debate' or 'discuss controversy x'. They will, rather, relate to the **oracy skills** being developed in each activity, the aspect of the key themes we are approaching through each controversial issue and how we connect to students' existing knowledge. Each debate resource highlights specific knowledge being addressed in each pack. There is a range of skills frameworks to develop and analyse students' oracy and knowledge available on the Association for Citizenship Teaching website www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/resources

6. Developing knowledge and understanding

There is more to a successful debate than the honing of presentation and performance skills and teachers should be aware of how these debates build a coherent body of knowledge. Understanding the key concepts and consistent themes emerging in these debates requires some structured engagement with ideas drawn from political science, history and other related disciplines. This body of knowledge is potentially powerful to the extent it can transform young people's understanding of the problems they are considering.

A curricular response to Fundamental British Values (FBVs), equality and Citizenship should design learning activities to provide students with a useful conceptual framework for understanding those fundamental values and for generating insights into a range of issues. We call this 'powerful knowledge'[11] because it provides a useful set of tools to come to a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of the world. This is the approach promoted throughout the debate resources.

A deep understanding of FBVs and a genuine enquiry into the justifications of extremism and terrorism should enable students to adopt a scepticism towards simplifying and distorting narratives, and enable them to see the value of democratic politics.

[10] Department for Education (2015) *The Prevent Duty. Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers*

An effective democratic debater must combine a deep understanding of the issues and command a range of effective communication strategies. This challenges a simplistic distinction between knowledge and skills. A speech in a debate may well be better because it is informed by a deeper understanding of the relevant issues, rather than because it uses certain 'tricks of the trade'. A better contribution to a debate may make only one point, but do so in a way which connects the specific to the conceptual, and which makes a compelling argument by reference to the issue at the heart of the case. By contrast, a more extensive list of relevant observations delivered with a rhetorical flourish may be more entertaining and appear more skilful, but in reality be less accomplished.

So, teachers should seek to develop 'powerful knowledge' through these debates, which will introduce students to the knowledge developed by political theorists, moral philosophers, historians and theologians. This will enable the holder of that knowledge to see the world in new ways, to re-frame the specific problem as an instance in a broader debate, and to draw on others' reasoning and other situations to think afresh about the problems. By focusing on this level of knowledge and the historical context, the debates will build into a more cumulative and substantial learning experience over time. It is important to show students how these concepts (British values, democracy, equality etc.) are each associated with an extensive knowledge base for thinking about them, even though they may remain the subject of debate. The knowledge here is powerful because it helps us think more deeply about political problems, not because it solves the problem automatically.

The debate and discussion resources are focussed around six core concepts as the foundation for building knowledge based debates. Detailed topic briefings are provided for the teacher, but below we address some of the general knowledge that might be helpful to underpin planning and teaching across the debates.

Democracy

It may be interesting, as a form of benchmarking for your pupils, to ask them to define democracy at the start of your work with them. When we have done this with secondary students they have tended to focus on elections, voting and political parties, and may take some prompting to think about the other essential elements such as: the on-going nature of representation and accountability to the electorate; access to alternative, independent sources of information; freedom of expression; autonomous associations; inclusive citizenship; independence of the judiciary[12]. If schools are to promote democracy, it is essential that teachers can help their pupils to understand what these broad constituent elements are, and the various ways in which citizens relate to a democratic society. Democracy may be seen as a principle of governance, a set of institutional practices or a form of behaviour. Concerns are expressed that certain forms of democracy may also become anti-democratic, referring to the 'tyranny of the majority' or the 'multiplication of ignorant opinions.' Alongside these concerns are the on-going debates about the extent to which democracy confers on individual citizens' rights or duties, or both. Learning about democracy enables young people to recognise the myriad ways in which democracy can be supported or threatened, and the ways in which anti-democratic ideologies threaten many aspects of life we may take for granted, and may even see as essentially non-political. Ultimately building a more sophisticated understanding of democracy as an idea, a system and a set of behaviours enables young people to search for solutions to contemporary problems within a democratic framework, i.e. it is powerful to understand that democracy provides a process of critique and evolutionary change.

[11] Michael Young (2013) 'Overcoming the crisis in curriculum theory: a knowledge based approach.' *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 45 (2): 101-118.
[12] Bernard Crick (2002), Democracy: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Equality

It is a cliché to point out that young people have an innate sense of fairness, and that this can be a powerful starting point to draw them in to discussions about politics, values and equality. If we want to want to build their understanding of the notion of equality though, then we need to think about what it means beyond the everyday common sense expectation that we are all the same, or at least we should all be treated the same – this is a core principle. At a basic level, we expect everyone to be treated as an equal before the law, and for no-one to be able to evade justice because of who they are. This refers to a formal equal citizenship status in a democracy. We also talk about equality of opportunity, which implies we would be happy to live with inequality in outcomes, as long as we felt there were equal chances to compete. It may also imply that we are happy with any existing patterns of inequality in terms of housing, employment, and educational attainment. But we also sometimes recognise that to make such equal opportunities real, we may have to offer some unequal support to minorities or under-represented groups, and this may for example, take the form of quotas to promote diversity in certain institutions or professions; encouragement and support for people from under-represented groups; or even positive discrimination, such as all women shortlists for selecting political candidates. Alternatively, actions taken to combat inequality of outcomes often involve curtailing the freedoms of certain individuals. To understand what and how different practices can be justified, pupils need to consider the nature of discrimination, and this requires a consideration of indirect or institutional prejudice. These ideas are essential to develop an understanding of equality which is more than superficial, but they also start to be more challenging, especially for younger pupils, where there is often a tendency to see such matters as essentially inter-personal, rather than subject to broader institutional or social processes.

Liberty

The notion of freedom is intuitively easy to grasp, but the simple idea that freedom is good (and more freedom is better) is a starting point for an informed understanding of liberty in a democracy but not a sufficient end point. Views of liberty are inherently linked to ideological viewpoints about the best way to organise society. Paul Smith[13] has described negative liberty as being concerned with whether or not someone is 'allowed' to do something; whereas positive liberty refers to whether someone is 'able' to do something. Introducing these synonyms (negative/allowed; positive/able) may help to avoid misconceptions. Negative conceptions of liberty are concerned with removing constraints on individuals, who are thus free to the extent they can exercise their own will, without being controlled or coerced by others. But there is another way to think about liberty, referred to as *positive* liberty, which pays attention to the enabling factors that allow individuals to actually pursue their will. On the one hand, the government's role is to provide a framework to ensure people are not interfered with; but on the other hand, government is justified in providing the conditions, resources and opportunities required for people to realise their freedoms (this has resource implications and leads to a more redistributive form of social welfare). This distinction becomes clearer with an example: on the one hand, I am free to eat three meals a day even though I am homeless and have no money, because no-one is stopping me; but on the other hand, it is important that I do not have the means to obtain those meals, and therefore am not actually able to realise that freedom. Taking this example further, it also follows that if we believe it is perfectly predictable, given the way our current society operates, that someone will be so poor they cannot buy three meals a day, isn't this a form of coercion or interference, even though it is not exercised by an individual? This is an important distinction in political philosophy, but it can be a useful way to develop an appreciation of what we really mean by liberty. For example, as a society we want women to be free, so does that mean we should ban the burka or allow women to wear it? Part of the argument revolves around this notion of coercion, but those in favour of banning the garment end up arguing that an obvious example of state coercion can be the route to a greater freedom, even though many women argue they have exercised their own freedom to choose to wear it. Here the advocates of a ban argue that direct coercion can lead to a greater liberty than the coercive effect of diffuse cultural expectations. Here we suggest that opening up pupils' understanding of liberty to these complicating factors is helpful in building an appreciation of the complex and contestable nature of liberty in a democratic society. If teachers decide to use the terms positive and negative liberty in class they should explain to pupils that positive is not better than negative, and that these terms refer to different conceptions of liberty rather than value judgements about them.

A second element of knowledge we might want to aim for in relation to liberty, is the connection between liberty and rights. Here this conceptual division of negative and positive conceptions can also be applied. For example, we have the right to life (Article 3, UDHR)[14], but on a negative interpretation this requires people not to deliberately undertake action that would end or endanger our life (e.g. laws against murder); but on the positive interpretation we also expect governments to provide some level of healthcare to extend our life to the extent possible. Men and women also have the right to marry and have a family (Article 16, UDHR), and the negative view requires the state to allow this to happen, whilst the positive view can be used to argue for state funded IVF treatment. The positive view implies some resource expenditure and some form of intervention, whilst the negative view requires non-action and non-interference. Many of the debates around how to interpret human rights actually revolve around this issue and so the distinction, and the link to what it actually means to have a right (to really be free to enjoy it) is a useful one to bring to the discussion.

Religious Freedom

Having thought about the overarching framework for liberty, we consider two specific examples, in relation to religious freedom and freedom of speech. The first perhaps benefits from a distinction between toleration and mutual respect. In the UK, with its established church, there has been a history of gradually increasing toleration of minority religions. Toleration carries with it a nuance that, although one is willing to not interfere with another's religious beliefs and practices, there is an element of endurance in that process. For that reason it is often hotly contested as an inadequate basis for multicultural democracy because it implies that the person doing the tolerating has made a negative judgement (possibly prejudiced) about the religious beliefs and practices of the other person. For that reason, many people prefer to talk about mutual respect, which implies a more egalitarian embrace of diversity. It is useful to understand a little of the history here, because in the UK the idea traces back as far as the Act of Toleration (1689), which allowed freedom of worship to some Protestants who dissented from the Church of England, but it did not apply to non-Protestants, nor did it enable them to take a political office or attend a university. In the context of Britain's bloody history of religious reform this kind of official tolerance marked a significant advance on the executions and oppression that had preceded it. It was not until the Roman Catholic Relief Act (1829) that Catholics were allowed to stand for Parliament, educational access came later, and Jews had to wait until 1858 for similar reforms.

[13] Paul Smith (2008), *Moral and Political Philosophy. Key Issues, Concepts and Theories.* London: Palgrave Macmillan

[14] UN General Assembly (1948) *Universal Declaration of Human Rights.* New York: United Nations.

Freedom of Speech

This freedom is one of the elements we place in our framework for defining democracy – freedom of speech is essential if free and equal citizens are to participate in public debate, to express and encounter a range of beliefs and opinions, and to test out those ideas through deliberation to help us come to an agreement about the best course of action. It is useful therefore to build pupils' understanding that freedom of speech is not just to be seen as a narrow individual act, it is in many ways part of the mechanism democracy creates to test ideas and help us make progress. Restrictions on freedom of speech have to be very carefully justified therefore, because they narrow the range of possible ideas and values we can incorporate into the public debate. That is why current debates about banning hate speech and creating safe spaces are so controversial. Here it is useful to revisit the liberal notion that the only reasonable restriction on someone's freedom is that it will do harm, and this is often used as the benchmark for placing restrictions on free speech. But, of course, that begs the question of what would constitute sufficient harm to justify a restriction. Some commentators are worried that 'harm' seems to be being reinterpreted as 'offence', which risks reducing the scope of what is permissible to a very great extent. Indeed Lynn Davies[15] has argued that one element of anti-extremist education is to prepare pupils to be offended, as that is a necessary side effect of free speech. Whilst it would be wrong to determine the answer and teach it directly, it is useful to enable pupils to think about what is at stake and the various ways in which the line has been drawn. This concept also becomes the topic of direct conversation to the extent that teachers will have to set some boundaries for classroom debate. What contributions might be ruled out and why?

Hate and Violence

As with the other concepts, pupils will start with an innate sense of what we mean by hatred, but there are some useful tools for thinking more systematically and analytically about this issue, and therefore using it to understand problems more politically[16]. A useful framework might be Allport's Scale of Prejudice[17], which describes how hatred grows from prejudice, or at least how it relates to it:

1. Negative images – an in-group holds negative images of an out-group, which might take the form of making ethnic jokes about people, or even practising forms of hate speech.
2. Avoidance – members of the in-group actively avoid members of the out-group, this may lead to social exclusion at work or housing segregation.
3. Discrimination – here members of the in-group take their prejudices one step further and seek to actively disadvantage the out-group, e.g. segregation laws in the USA.
4. Physical attacks – physical harm is done to individuals or groups by members of the in-group.
5. Extermination – the in-group seeks the extermination or removal of the out-group, e.g. the holocaust.

For Allport there were two incentives to such prejudice, a *love-prejudice* which binds us more closely to people with whom we have an affinity, especially when we also feel threatened by some other group; and a hate-prejudice, which is more concerned with identifying and attacking the object of hatred. If we think about the rise of the far right and nationalist populism in Europe, we can identify elements of both. We can also use this knowledge to analyse speeches, movements and policies more carefully to disentangle what is happening.

[15] Lynn Davies (2008) *Educating Against Extremism.* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.
[16] Derek McGhee (2005) *Intolerant Britain? Hate, Citizenship and Difference.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.
[17] Gordon Allport (1954) *The Nature of Prejudice.* New York: Addison Wesley.

7. Curriculum links

The Deliberative Classroom debate resources aim to develop knowledge and informed discussion. The lessons for each of the six themes in these resources can be linked to and embedded within existing curriculum subject teaching to support pupils on-going knowledge acquisition and skill development. The relevant aspects of each debate resource theme can be connected to teaching required in Citizenship, English, History and RE at key stage 3. Links and opportunities within these subjects include:

Citizenship

The Deliberative Classroom resources engage directly with the core knowledge of the Citizenship curriculum and the skills of critical thinking, debate and argument. Topics will address the nature of democracy (e.g. through exploring rights and freedoms and the nature of toleration in diverse societies), the role of laws (e.g. in balancing different rights and ensuring the rule of law in a democracy), and the role of individuals and groups in bringing about change in society (e.g. campaigns for minority rights).

English

The main connection between the Deliberative Classroom resources and the English curriculum relates to the development of speaking and listening skills. In particular, the resources will ensure students develop familiarity with a range of debate and discussion formats, and develop their own informed opinions and present these to others.

History

The Deliberative Classroom resources offer history teachers the opportunity to connect with specific topics being taught in history and with the concepts required to understand the discipline of history. The resources help teachers use historical knowledge in the context of contemporary issues, for example knowledge of the Reformation and the development of religious freedom over time to inform debates about contemporary religious freedom. Teaching will develop an appreciation that history involves the construction of an account of events and people in the past, and that these accounts are judged according to their purpose, their use of sources, and the strength of arguments developed. Similarly, the debate resources encourage students to consider how debates reflect the interests of participants, their values, the information they use and the arguments they develop to build an opinion.

RE

The Deliberative Classroom resources relate to the diversity of our society including religious and non-religious values, beliefs and practices. RE teaching can explore the ways in which religion and belief relate to 'national life' and the diversity of people's lives in the UK. The debate resources enable students to hear directly from others who may have a range of beliefs, which will help to inform their own position in debates and discussions.

SMSC and FBV and the skills required for oracy, critical thinking, debate and deliberation can also be addressed extra-curricular activities, such as debate clubs as well as in lessons and subject teaching.

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