

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM

Teacher Resource

Gifts from the Ancestors: Debating the Gifts

Barbara Walker, High School English teacher, Princeton Day School

Curriculum Connection

The Princeton University Art Museum's exhibit and website *Gifts from the Ancestors: Ancient Ivories from Bering Strait* confronts important issues relating to ancient artifacts in the museum's collections, Alaska Native rights, and the Arctic environment. Such topics as who should control artifacts of native peoples, the issue of subsistence hunting as allowed by the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, controversies surrounding disrupting funereal sites that have archaeological significance, and other questions that relate to Native American Rights would provide students with grist for their ethical grindstones and the opportunity to practice important critical thinking skills, research practices, persuasive speaking, and questioning abilities.

This resource satisfies New Jersey Curriculum Standard 6.1 Social Studies Skills. All students will utilize historical thinking, problem solving, and research skills to maximize their understanding of civics, history, geography, and economics.

Strands and Cumulative Progress Indicators

Building upon knowledge and skills gained in preceding grades, by the end of Grade 12, students will:

A. Social Studies Skills

Analyze how historical events shape the modern world.

Formulate questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources.

Gather, analyze, and reconcile information from primary and secondary sources to support or reject hypotheses.

Examine source data within the historical, social, political, geographic, or economic context in which it was created, testing credibility and evaluating bias.

Evaluate current issues, events, or themes and trace their evolution through historical periods.

Apply problem-solving skills to national, state, or local issues and propose reasoned solutions.

Analyze social, political, and cultural change and evaluate the impact of each on local, state, national, and international issues and events.

Evaluate historical and contemporary communications to identify factual accuracy, soundness of evidence, and absence of bias and discuss strategies used by the government, political candidates, and the media to communicate with the public.

Debate Formats: Resources

High School and college debate are regulated by the National Forensic Society and there are many valuable tools online to help students organize their debates. Depending on how many debates would occur in a classroom, the teacher may wish to split students into groups by fours or by sixes. Either two or three students will represent the affirmative and two or three the negative side in the debates. If there is an odd number of students, one side could have two and the other three for the sake of experience. In that fashion, a variety of issues could be explored in a public format ending up with all the students being more informed about these issues by one another.

There are various formats for American competitive debate including Policy Debate, Lincoln-Douglas, and Public Forum Debate. The National Forensic League (NFL) website <http://www.nflonline.org/CoachingResources/Debate> has a number of coaching and teaching educational handouts available at its site including:

- Topics
- Informational Handouts
- Skills Handouts
- Sample Structure Handouts
- Vocabulary
- Topicality Assessments
- Ballots

Another informative resource is Debate Central put together by the Lawrence Debate Union at the University of Vermont located at <http://debate.uvm.edu/>. Competitive debate sites can sometimes become highly specialized. For classroom purposes a general use of the materials is helpful. For very beginning debaters a site written by Ruth Sunda, a Gifted Resource Teacher, is an excellently laid out pdf with materials to help students organize their arguments for debates and persuasive essays:

http://www.kyrene.org/schools/brisas/sunda/debate/teaching_debate.htm.

Debate Format: Policy Debate

For classroom issues perhaps the easiest, most accessible format is Policy Debate. Public Policy Debate is focused on making a change to the way things exist now. The affirmative team supports a change in policy stated as a resolution, such as Resolved: The United States government should place a ban on the provision for subsistence hunting in the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The negative supports the Status Quo, the way things are now. Any resolution always includes “should” because the debate centers around the policy, not whether the policy could or will be passed and implemented.

Policy Debate Format and Responsibilities

It is best to have the entire debate in one class period if at all possible. During a typical forty-five or fifty minute period class the debate format would be as follows:

First affirmative constructive speech (four minutes)—the first affirmative speaker states the resolution, defines the terms in the resolution, and elaborates the need for change, i.e. the harms in the present system. As in every constructive speech, the speaker should present evidence consisting of appropriate statistics or quotations of opinions from experts. Logical arguments that follow to conclusions can be used as evidence of the need for change as well. The speaker should show why things won’t change unless a policy change is made—inherency. Then, a brief description of the affirmative plan should be introduced.

This is followed by the cross-examination of the first affirmative by the negative (two to three minutes depending on the class time frame). If there are two members of the negative team, the cross-examination of the first affirmative will be done by the second negative as the first negative prepares notes to speak. If there are three-member teams, the role of cross examination and rebuttal will all be carried out by the third negative speaker. This is a time for questioning any disagreement about definitions, logical conclusions, or for posturing points that may come up in the first negative speech.

The first negative constructive speech is in response to what has gone before (four minutes). It is the time to address any disagreement about definitions, and any topicality issues. For example, what is meant that a ban on subsistence hunting may mean different things to different people, but if the affirmative team is only banning hunting of whales, for instance, they are not meeting the complete burden of the resolution. The first negative should try to mitigate the argument that there are harms or needs in the system by use of the negative’s own statistics and expert opinions, or show that the harms the affirmative addressed aren’t significant, and that even if there were significant harms, a plan such as the one the affirmative team is proposing would not solve it—solvency.

Cross-examination of the negative (two to three minutes) then takes place, either by the first affirmative in the case of a two person team or third affirmative if there are three team members.

The second affirmative constructive (four minutes) begins by refuting any topicality arguments, and elaborating on the plan. In addition, the speaker will try to show how the plan will meet the needs in its solvency requirement. In addition to explaining the plan, the affirmative should claim that there are other benefits that would be gained by the policy. Finally, using expert opinion, the affirmative should try to show the negative team's philosophy is misguided at best.

This is followed by cross-examination (two to three minutes) of the second affirmative by the first negative or third negative team member.

The final negative constructive speech (four minutes) focuses the arguments through use of expert opinion and logic on the lack of harms and furthermore if there were harms, the lack of solvency of the plan. Outlawing hunting, for instance, is not going to stop the extinction of a species because the cause of the extinction is not hunting. The negative should diminish the claimed benefits of the new policy and show why these are not benefits. It should also show that there are disadvantages to instituting this policy that go beyond solving the problem by, in fact, creating new ones. Any additional arguments or pieces of evidence must be introduced at this juncture.

The affirmative will cross the second negative speaker (two to three minutes).

There is a short break of five to ten minutes for preparation of rebuttals.

The purpose of rebuttals is to make clear to the judge exactly where the debate stands by reviewing the relevant points made and the argumentative stance that each team has taken. Each rebuttalist should explain why the judge should find for its side. The order for rebuttals is for the negative to go first. The negative's advantage here is that it gets a large block of time and attention to pursue its objections to the change of policy and to bolster the status quo. The affirmative advantage is that it gets to speak first and last. During rebuttal no new arguments, statistical evidence, or expert opinions may be introduced. Partly that is because no refutation can be made by the negative after the affirmative rebuttal. In formal debate there are two rebuttals from each side, but for classroom time one may be sufficient. The rebuttals can be three to four minutes depending on the class time available.

Debate Format: Other Styles

Lincoln-Douglas is another style of debate which centers more on arguing philosophical values, often relating to the social contract centered in ideas of Locke, Hobbes, and Kant. Questions raised by *Gifts from the Ancestors*, may be subject to values debate, but Lincoln Douglas is more likely to result in research in political philosophy than in Native Alaskan issues. An Extensive Guide to Lincoln Douglas Debate is provided by the NFL at: <http://www.nflonline.org/CoachingResources> or at <http://www.debate-central.org/learn/resources-for-understanding-lincoln-douglas-debate>.

The third kind of debate is relatively new, first initiated in 2002, also known as the Ted Turner Public Forum, it focuses more on rhetorical skill than policy debate. Instead of cross-examination of particular speakers, after the first two constructive speeches (there is a coin flip to see which side goes first) a crossfire round is held in which the two first speakers can ask and answer questions of one another. The second set of speeches is then given followed by a second round of crossfire. There is then a third round of two short speeches, one from each side and then a Grand Crossfire, which is questions and answers for all four participants followed by a Final Focus speech for each side. There is a comprehensive pdf on Public Forum Debate offered by the NFL at www.nflonline.org/uploads/AboutNFL/cr1o3pf_instr.pdf.

Student Handout on Debate Format for Four Debaters

First affirmative constructive speech—four minutes

- State resolution
- Define terms: need for change and harms (why the harms are inherent)
- Brief plan outline

Second negative cross-examines the first affirmative speaker—two or three minutes

First negative constructive speech—four minutes

- Any topicality issue
- Any definition dispute
- No harm/harms not significant
- Status quo can solve problem even if harms were significant
- Affirmative plan would not solve the problem

First affirmative cross-examines the first negative speaker—two or three minutes

Second affirmative constructive speech—four minutes

- Refute definition and topicality issues, if any
- Explain plan with more evidence of support
- Show how the plan meets need
- Explore additional benefits that will arise because of the introduction of the plan
- Attack negative philosophy

First negative cross-examines the first affirmative speaker—two or three minutes

Second negative constructive speech—four minutes

- Attack needs and solvency
- Raise disadvantages of implementation (cost, enforcement)
- Explain how the impact of policy will create new impacts

Second affirmative cross-examines the second negative speaker—two or three minutes

Prep time for conferencing and making notes (one student will present). If there are three debaters on a side, the third debater does the cross-examinations and the rebuttal.

Negative rebuttal—three minutes

- Review case explaining why the judge must reject the affirmative plan and find for the negative

Affirmative rebuttal—three minutes

- Explain why it is crucial that the need be met and the plan adopted

Resolution One

Resolved: That the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) should be amended to exclude articles of significant scientific, medical, or archaeological importance.

Some places that students might start their research:

- American Indian Ritual Object Repatriation Foundation-An Intercultural Repatriation Foundation <http://www.repatriationfoundation.org/>. Extensive resources and links on NAGPRA and related issues.
- Indian Burial and Sacred Grounds Watch
<http://www.ibsgwatch.imagedjinn.com/index.htm>. Includes a discussion of laws, controversies concerning archaeology news archives, and an extensive list of links.
- Johnson, George. "Indian Tribes' Creationists Thwart Archeologists." New York Times 22 Oct. 1996. The New York Times.
<http://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/22/science/indian-tribes-creationists-thwart-archeologists.html?scp=1&sq=Indian%20creationists&st=cse>.
- National NAGPRA Online Databases. U.S. Department of the Interior
<http://www.cast.uark.edu/other/nps/nagpra/>. This is a point of contact for the Legal Mandates and includes Congressional Oversight and Proposed Amendments. There is also a list of repatriated materials and one of intended repatriations. There is also a lot of material related to Kennewick Man and other archeological items of interest.
- Repatriation Office of the National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology <http://anthropology.si.edu/repatriation/index.htm>. Includes links to the idea of repatriation, definitions and case studies.
- Scott, Malcomson. "The Color of Bones." New York Times Magazine 2 Apr. 2000. The New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/04/02/magazine/the-color-of-bones.html?n=Top/Reference/Times%20Topics/Subjects/I/Indians,%20American&scp=4&sq=nagpra%20issue&st=cse>. Provides an in-depth discussion of the debates around the Kennewick Man.
- Van Allen, Amy. "Ted Case Studies: Artifact Trade." Trade and Environment Database. American University. 13 Apr. 2009 <http://www1.american.edu/TED/artifact.htm>. Discussion of the artifact trade and how much has been lost through looting and vandalism
- Zimmerman, Larry. Repatriation and Reburial Issues
<http://www.larryjzimmerman.com/reburial/repat.htm>. A set of links on many aspects of the repatriation issue

Resolution Two

Resolved: That since polar bears have been categorized as an endangered species they should be excluded from the subsistence hunting allowance to Alaskan Native peoples under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. (This resolution could also include walruses which are threatened though not endangered)

Some places that students might start their research:

- “Contentious fact in Polar debate bears scrutiny.” CNN.com. 15 May 2008. © 2009 Cable News Network LP, LLLP. <http://scitech.blogs.cnn.com/category/polar-bears/>. Dispute on Polar Bear numbers.
- Erb, Christina. “Russia to Allow Subsistence Hunting of Polar Bears.” Outside Online 17 Apr. 2007. Outside Magazine. http://outside.away.com/outside/news/20070417_01.html. Includes subsistence hunting arguments on both sides.
- Joling, Dan. “Federal Gov’t May Limit Subsistence Hunting in Alaska to Save Threatened Birds.” CNSNews.com 31 Mar. 2009. <http://www.cnsnews.com/Public/Content/article.aspx?RsrcID=45877>. Proposed change in rules for subsistence hunting.
- Kofinas, Gary. “Subsistence Hunting in a Global Economy.” Making Waves: A Newsletter for Community Economic Development (CED) Practitioners in Canada Aug. 1993, vol.4, no.3 ed. The Arctic and the Global Economy. <http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/NatResources/subsistglobal.html>. Discussion of wildlife management in Alaska and Canada
- “Polar Bear News- The New York Times.” Times Topics. 13 Apr. 2009 http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/p/polar_bears/index.html?scp=1-spot&sq=polar%20bears&st=cse.
- Site with links to photographs and news stories related to Polar Bears and their habitat “Polar Bear SOS.” Natural Resources Defense Fund <http://www.savebiogems.org/polar/>
- “Polar Bears Spared From Trophy Hunters.” Wildlife Abuse Campaign. The Humane Society. 11 Apr. 2009 http://www.humanesociety.org/wildlife_abuse/campaigns/bears/polar_bears/. Protests hunting and has links.

Resolution Three

Resolved: That all proposals for drilling for Arctic Oil should be permanently rejected as they violate the livelihood, well being, and civil rights of indigenous Alaskans

Some places that students might start their research:

- Explore the Arctic with Google Earth
- Sierra Club site, Chill the Drills! Protect America's Arctic
<http://www.sierraclub.org/arctic/>. Provides information about the places, people, and wildlife that will be put in danger by drilling.
- "Arctic Power-Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." anwr.org. 2009. Arctic Power.
<http://www.anwr.org/>. Organization supporting exploration and development of oil and gas resources. This site has a number of resources and related links including one showing that Inupiat Eskimos support drilling.
- Arctic Slope Regional Corporation. <http://www.asrc.com/home/home.asp>. Alaskan Natives have formed corporations that negotiate energy deals.
- "Climate Change: Introduction." Gwich'in Steering Committee. Gwich'in Steering Committee. <http://www.gwichinsteeringcommittee.org/climatechange.html>. Links to other organizations that wish to conserve the arctic refuge; on the homepage there is a pdf: A Moral Choice for the U.S. The Human Rights Implications for the Gwich'in of Drilling in the Arctic.
- "Human Rights Commission to Hear Inuit Challenge to U.S. on Global Warming." Climate and Capitalism. 2007. <http://climateandcapitalism.com/?p=19>. Discussion of a challenge to United States policy by a delegation of Inuit peoples at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
- "Oil Drilling Debate Rages On." U.S, News and World Report 13 Apr. 2009. U.S. News.com. <http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/energy/2009/03/24/oil-drilling-debate-rages-on-20-years-after-the-valdez-spill.html?PageNr=2>. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar says that the Obama administration is not opposed to offshore drilling. Includes a link to Alaskan Senator Murkowski's pro-oil exploration views.
- "Potential impacts of proposed oil and gas development on the Arctic Refuge's coastal plain: Historical overview and issues of concern." US Fish and Wildlife Service. 17 Jan. 2001. Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Fairbanks, Alaska
<http://arctic.fws.gov/issues1.htm>.
- Tolberg, Sheryl Gay. "Arctic Refuge Oil Drilling Is Near Fact, Backers Say." New York Times 20 Apr. 2005. New York Times.
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9903E3DE1E31F933A05757CoA9639C8B63>. Article includes some history of the controversy