

Lesson Suggestion 1: Debate

Course(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">This activity could be adapted for all courses identified (see Appendix A for related courses and policy document expectations)
Resources required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Video of <i>The Corporation</i> (you may wish to select specific sections to view based on topics of interest to the class or the community)BLM 2: California Academic Press Holistic Critical Thinking RubricBLM 3: Argument Analysis SheetBLM 4: Debate Organization SheetAccess to a computer lab with Internet access, and a copy of the “Electronic Resources” provided in this package.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In addition to viewing the documentary, allow 2 to 6 75-minute periods. Time will vary depending on the size of the class, and the amount of time provided for students to conduct research.
Background and/or prior learning	<p>It is important that students understand what a debate entails. Spend some time prior to this activity establishing a format for debate, and discussing the process and expectations with students. A number of resources can be found online that detail how to structure and prepare for debates.</p>
Suggested learning strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide students with an overview of the activity prior to viewing <i>The Corporation</i> so that they can take appropriate notes. Consider providing a template to assist them in recording relevant information.After viewing <i>The Corporation</i>, ask students to identify issues that caused dispute between different people. Generate a class list of possible topics that might be suitable for a debate based on issues identified.Relate these issues to specific topics in class (e.g., social change and poverty in HSB4M, values and ideologies in CPC3O, government regulations in business courses, etc.). Select two to three issues (depending on the size of the class) particularly relevant to the class for debates.Form teams of four or five students to debate against one another. Distribute assessment criteria (e.g., BLM 2) to class and ensure they understand the process and expectations. Assign topics to groups, and provide time for preparation. Ensure that students research perspectives on their issue. The “Electronic Resources” provided in this package provides a starting place. Encourage students to use BLM 3: Argument Analysis Sheet when looking at positions, as well as to help them form their own sound arguments.Conduct debates, allowing for debriefing and class discussion after each. Some potential areas for debate might include (but certainly are not limited to):<ul style="list-style-type: none">Labour practices in developing countries – while some argue that paying workers pennies a day to manufacture goods for export actually benefits developing countries and their citizens, others feel that this practice is unfair.Ownership of “commons” – some argue that natural resources such as water or air should be publicly-held (i.e., by governments and citizens), others argue that privatizing them (i.e., shifting ownership to private companies) will actually contribute more to their care and protection.Advertising to children – while some argue that advertising to children is taking advantage of their lack of cognitive development, others feel it is fair game to help them satisfy needs and wants.Social responsibility and accountability – some argue that corporations who do not act responsibly will be “punished by the

market” (i.e., consumers will not make purchases if they act unethically), while others feel that governments or citizens should regulate industries and businesses.

- Corporate involvement in government – some argue that corporations are legitimate stakeholders and citizens who are entitled to their say in the democratic process, while others feel that corporate involvement can lead to unfair influence.
- Advertising and public space – Naomi Klein expressed concern that certain forms of advertising and promotions compromise public space, while others (specifically branding) are “invasive.” Others feel that advertising is fair game, and even desirable to consumers.
- Influence of corporations on society – some (Chomsky, Klein) have charged corporations, through years of advertising and public relations, with defining people’s social roles as consumers and creating beliefs that corporations are responsible for prosperity. The concern is that people are disassociated from one another, and preoccupied with fulfilling needs and wants at the expense of democratic participation, human development, interaction, etc. Those who dispute this claim feel that it is either inaccurate, not a result of corporate actions, or both.

Assessment/evaluation

Formative

- Observation of student interaction and participation in the process
- Consider creating a peer-assessment instrument so that students can provide constructive feedback to one another

Summative

- Use of BLM 2: California Academic Press Holistic Critical Thinking Rubric for assessment of debate content
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