

# Debate Mate

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**Debate Mate** is an educational charity based in London that teaches debating in inner-city schools across the UK in areas of high child poverty. Debating is used to develop confidence and communication skills in young people with the aim of improving social mobility. It also runs programmes overseas in Nepal, Israel/Palestine, Jamaica, Rwanda, Zambia, Dubai and the USA.

## Work

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Debate Mate was founded in October 2007 and works with young people attending challenging inner-city schools in areas of high child poverty. They send top university students into these schools to establish and run after-school debate clubs, delivering dynamic and cost-effective peer-to-peer mentoring. Participants develop key 21<sup>st</sup> century core skills crucial to addressing disadvantages and increasing social mobility, namely communication, teamwork and leadership skills. The lack of these skills amongst children from disadvantaged backgrounds is holding them back, stifling social mobility. Through debating, Debate Mate empowers and inspires participants, developing confidence and self-esteem and instilling belief in their abilities and what they can achieve. Debate Mate also run bespoke workshops for teachers looking to integrate debating into their classroom, and specialised training for students who want to “debate like a world champion”. Data collected shows that on average, by participating in the Debate Mate programme, students improve by nearly 2 levels on the National Curriculum English Speaking and Listening scale over the duration of the program, which is over three times the expected increase for students in a year.

## History

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Debate Mate was founded in 2007 by Margaret McCabe, who has over twenty years’ experience as a commercial barrister combined with two decades in the voluntary sector including Centre Point, NSPCC Justice for Children programme and as an advisor to Human Rights Watch.

In 2015 Debate Mate was the subject of an 8-part prime time documentary series commissioned by Sky entitled ‘Kings and Queens of Speech.’

### Debate Mate

<b>Motto</b>	Empowering the youth of today. Creating the leaders of tomorrow.
<b>Founded</b>	October 2007
<b>Founder</b>	Margaret McCabe
<b>Type</b>	Charity
<b>Registration no.</b>	1121222
<b>Focus</b>	Providing under-privileged children with confidence, communication skills and higher order thinking through debating
<b>Location</b>	London, England
<b>Area served</b>	London, Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Zambia, Rwanda, Jamaica, UAE, USA, Israel, Nepal
<b>Services</b>	School Debate clubs, organised competitions
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.debatemate.com">www.debatemate.com</a>

## Debate Mate Core Programme

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The core programme consists of a 15-week after-school debating programme led by top university students in over 200 schools across the UK (in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol and Merseyside).

Programme structure:

- 16 weeks of 1-hour after school clubs with a university mentor as a mentor: student ratio of 1:15.
- 2 weeks of local, inter-school debating competitions where each school competes against each other and are ranked in a national league table (the Artemis Urban Debate League), with the top 8 schools “breaking” to a national finals day in London in June. With the grand final being held at the House of Lords.

The 2014-2015 core programme was the biggest in Debate Mate’s seven-year history; over 4,500 students took part in the programme.

The programme is being received positively with teachers quoted as saying:

- “Debate Mate has raised the standard of oracy in school, enabling pupils to confidently share ideas, take part in whole class discussions and independently add their own opinions. It has also encouraged children with behaviour issues to positively impact the class.”
- “Debate Mate gives children a clear sense of achievement and they feel empowered by their voice. They are heard and feel listened to, and they gain a sense of the power they will have in the future to influence change.”
- “A fantastic opportunity for the students and a brilliantly well organised event.”

Competition	Winner
Debate Mate Cup 2014	Parrs Wood High School
Urban Debate League 2014	Haberdashers’ Aske’s Hatcham College
Debate Mate Cup 2013	Central Foundation Boys School
Urban Debate League 2013	Bridge Academy
Debate Mate Cup 2012	St Angela’s
Urban Debate League 2012	Eastbury
Debate Mate Cup 2011	St Angela’s
Urban Debate League 2011	RSA Academy
Debate Mate Cup 2010	Kingsford
Urban Debate League 2010	Kingsford
Debate Mate Cup 2009	Cator Park

## Debate Mate Graduate Programme

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Debate Mate Graduate Programme is part of the Onward Learning Programme. This programme:

- Works exclusively with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Prepares participants for prestigious schools’ debating competitions
- Targeted at years 10-13 (15-18 year old) pupils
- Delivered by international debating champions
- Develops advanced debating technique and subject knowledge workshops on topics such as Law, Economics, Politics, International Relations, Science and Ethics
- Entrepreneurship and Employability is part of an Onward Learning Programme

- Develops financial literacy and business skills to improve employability of Debate Mate students in the UK's top-growth industries: financial services, law, media and fashion
- Delivered by university students and leading business figures

Furthermore, this extended version of the core programme helps the participating students with university applications; they receive help with personal statements and receive one-on-one interview practices.

## Partners

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Debate Mate works with and is supported by an extensive network of organisations and individuals. Partners include:

### Private

- Stephen Fry
- Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education
- Krishnan Guru-Murthy
- Boris Johnson, Mayor of London
- Tessa Jowell MP
- Richard Koch
- Arlene Phillips
- Sir Peter Bazalgette
- David Miliband MP
- Margaret Mountford

### Corporate

- Deutsche Bank
- Credit Suisse
- Artemis Investment Management LLP
- CBS
- Man Group
- Redington
- Shell
- Simmons & Simmons
- Shearman & Sterling
- Intelligence Squared
- Standard Chartered
- Slaughter and May
- UBS

### Trusts and foundations

- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- John Lyon's Charity
- Paul Hamlyn Trust
- Shine Trust
- The Wessex Youth Trust
- POP – Justin Bieber's Foundation

### Source

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Debate\\_Mate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Debate_Mate) [Accessed 21 May 2015]  
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## Reading

1. This article informs us that debating ...
- a. is taught in all schools in Britain.
  - b. is part of the English curriculum.
  - c. helps to impart confidence and self-esteem.
  - d. only takes place in Years 12 and 13.

*This is an inference question which asks you to think about what is suggested by the vocabulary used.*

2. Are the following statements true or false?

	True	False
Debate Mate was founded five years ago.		
Debate Mate can be very empowering.		
Debate Mate clubs are taking place in every town in Britain.		
Students who participate in Debate Mate programmes improve their learning.		

*This is a retrieval question which asks you to find and convey information.*

3. What is the meaning of the word 'challenging' as used in the following sentence?  
'... challenging inner city schools.'

- a. very large
- b. competitive
- c. rural
- d. difficult

*This is a context question. You can identify the correct meaning of a word by reading and understanding the surrounding text.*

4. Using your own words describe the principles and the work of Debate Mate.

*This is a paraphrasing question. Locate the information in the text and write it out in your own words.*

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Link your points using appropriate discourse markers such as:

- In addition ...
- Of course, we can also add ...
- Furthermore ...
- What is more ...
- Most worrying is ...
- The best thing about this is ...

Think carefully about the ending of your speech. You might like to end by:

- inviting the audience to think about their own interpretation of the topic;
- creating a climax to the speech using repetition or rhetoric;
- summing up what you have said and making your own interpretation clear.

## **Writing**

8. Imagine you are a parent who is very worried about your child who has real fears about speaking in public. Write a letter to a year tutor/English teacher explaining your worries and outlining clearly how your child feels. You should write 400-500 words.
9. Write a reply to the parent, explaining the benefits of learning to speak in public and suggesting effective coping strategies for the child. You should write 400-500 words.
  - Ensure that you use the correct register for both writing tasks.
  - Ensure that you use the correct format for a formal letter.
  - Use paragraphs to create a logical argument.
  - Aim to persuade the reader that your views are valid.