

# The Great Drug Debate

**Driving Question:** Should the United States take a strong or lenient stance on drug use in our society?

## The Assignment

Each group will be assigned a controversial topic related to drugs. As a group, you will spend a few days in class completing research for your topic. All research should be gathered, cited in MLA format, put into a Powerpoint presentation, and prepared to present. The following is a list of the topics:

1. The drinking age of 21 years is appropriate
2. The drinking age should be lowered to at least 18 years
3. Marijuana should be an illegal substance in the United States
4. Marijuana should be made legal in all states in the United States
5. Tobacco should be a banned, illegal substance for all age groups
6. Tobacco should be legal for those who are at least 18 years old, as it currently is
7. Welfare recipients should be tested for drugs before receiving federal benefits
8. Those who receive federal benefits should **NOT** be tested for drugs in order to receive benefits
9. Drug dealers should receive harsh punishment, including lengthy jail sentences, for selling drugs
10. Drug dealers should be rehabilitated rather than sent to jail for selling drugs
11. Random drug screening should be instituted for high school athletes
12. Random drug testing for high school athletes is **NOT** a good idea
13. Community organizations should provide clean needles for IV drug users on city streets
14. Organizations should **NOT** provide free, clean needles for IV drug users on city streets
15. The BAC limit of .08 for age 21 is safe and effective; the government should not lower the BAC limit
16. The BAC limit should be lowered to .05 for adults to reduce traffic accidents and improve safety
17. Prescription opioid painkillers should be prescribed for extreme cases only due to the risk of addiction
18. Doctors should prescribe opioid painkillers as often as needed to reduce pain and satisfy patients

## Preparing for the Presentation

Most of the preparation can take place during class time. Additional time may be required. You are responsible for this but I will be available for questions or passes to the library. Incomplete projects affect the WHOLE group.

## How to Complete the Presentation

Use Bearworks, and use as many slides as you need. The format for the project is as follows:

1. Opening Statement: discuss the history of the issue, important points, any available data that might be helpful, public opinion, etc. This should be at least a few minutes in length; 1-2 slides should be enough
2. Supporting Points: find 2-3 arguments, per person, to support your topic. Include these points on your slideshow. One slide per argument, with your name included. **In-text citations required.**
3. Conclusion: restate your stance on the issue and discuss the benefits of your beliefs; 1-2 slides.

**Sections 4-5 below do not appear on your slideshow but should be in writing, on note cards**

4. Response To Rebuttal: the students in class will have an opportunity to challenge your stance on this issue

and

ask questions from an opposing viewpoint. Your group should be prepared to respond. As part of your research, you will prepare for these questions. All group members should respond to at least 1-2 questions from classmates when you present.

5. Rebuttal: prepare 3-5 rebuttal questions for the group with opposing viewpoint; you will ask those questions when they present. **DO NOT** ask during your presentation. You must ask as part of your grade.

## Due Date

The presentation is due on \_\_\_\_\_. If not ready to present that day, your grade will be reduced by at least 20%.

## Time Limit

A timer will be running as you present. Each group will have approximately 12-15 minutes to present. This includes question/answer session from classmates. Once you reach that limit, you are done. There may be a penalty for presentations that fall short of the time limit, if it relates to lack of content on your part.

## Grading Rubric

The grading rubric will include the following categories:

1. Communication- strong, confident voice; good talking pace; enthusiastic; good eye contact
2. Mechanics- correct spelling and grammar; use of MLA format with in text citations
3. Preparation- comfort with material; ready on due date; talks to audience vs. reading to them
4. Opening- informative introduction that covers the history of the topic
5. Supporting arguments- presents at least two arguments, **per person**, in the group
6. Closing- creates a solid closing statement with summary of main points of argument
7. Response to rebuttal- demonstrates an ability to respond to questions while you present
8. Rebuttal Questions- asks a minimum of two questions to opposing group
9. Teamwork- does equal share of work; equal role in presentation itself
10. Overall Effectiveness- considers how outsiders would view the overall project

## Getting Started

1. Once you receive your topic, assign roles within the group and begin research
2. One group member opens a presentation on bearworks; share with group members and teacher
3. Start a works cited page on your slideshow
4. Begin the research portion of the project, citing in MLA format (in-text included) as you go
5. You must use multiple sources, including at least one database from the JHS library
6. Consider pictures and/or short video clips that can enhance the quality of your presentation

## Summary of Your Responsibilities

1. Create a 1-2 minute opening statement for your topic; type on your slideshow
2. Find 2-3 solid arguments, per person, in support of your topic and place on separate slides
3. Create a conclusion that restates your belief and summarizes your main points
4. Come up with 3-5 questions to ask the group whose topic is not in support of your topic; **these questions should not appear on your slideshow**
5. Research responses that you plan to provide to rebuttal questions during your presentation; **these responses should not appear on your slideshow**

**Presenter(s):**

**Final Grade:**

**Comments:**

|   | <i>All Elements Present</i> |  | <i>Most Elements Present</i> |  | <i>Some Elements Present</i> |  | <i>No Elements Present</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Quality of Verbal Communication</b><br>speaker's voice is confident, strong, steady, & clear; consistently uses inflections to emphasize key points or create interest; talking pace appropriate | 4                           |  | 3                            |  | 2                            |  | 0 - 1                      |
| <b>Nonverbal Communication- 2x</b><br>speaker appears confident; speaker faces the audience & maintains eye contact; engaging with the audience   | 8 7                         |  | 6 5                          |  | 4 3                          |  | 2 1 0                      |
| <b>Preparation- 2x</b><br>ready to present on due date; shows a comfort level with material when presenting; talks to audience vs reading to the audience; project fully completed                  | 8 7                         |  | 6 5                          |  | 4 3                          |  | 2 1 0                      |
| <b>Mechanics</b><br>all citations in MLA format to support research; citations on each slide; presentation has no spelling or grammatical errors  | 4                           |  | 3                            |  | 2                            |  | 0 - 1                      |
| <b>Opening</b><br>solid introduction that covers history of the topic and important points  | 4                           |  | 3                            |  | 2                            |  | 0 - 1                      |
| <b>Supporting Arguments- 2x</b><br>researches and shares a minimum of two convincing, supporting arguments  | 8 7                         |  | 6 5                          |  | 4 3                          |  | 2 1 0                      |
| <b>Closing</b><br>concludes with supporting statements that highlights importance of the issue  | 4                           |  | 3                            |  | 2                            |  | 0 - 1                      |
| <b>Response to Rebuttals</b><br>responds appropriately to at least two rebuttal ?'s asked by classmates   | 4                           |  | 3                            |  | 2                            |  | 0 - 1                      |
| <b>Rebuttal Questions</b><br>asks a minimum of two questions to main group opposing your topic  | 4                           |  | 3                            |  | 2                            |  | 0 - 1                      |
| <b>Teamwork</b><br>very consistently works on project in & out of class; is a very cooperative member of the group; equal participant in the presentation itself                                    | 4                           |  | 3                            |  | 2                            |  | 0 - 1                      |
| <b>Overall Presentation Effectiveness</b><br>exceptional & effective presentation; worthy of a 10 out of 10 by most judges  | 8 7                         |  | 6 5                          |  | 4 3                          |  | 2 1 0                      |

Total 60 points