**Subject area/course**: English/Language Arts

**Grade level/band**: 11-12

**Task source**: Summit Public Schools

**Debate**

**STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **Task context**:

How do writers utilize logic to convince and/or distract their audience from their true purpose? How does one construct a logical argument that is persuasive?

Your goal in this Debate Project is to hone and practice your logic and argumentation techniques in an authentic way. In particular, you will be concentrating on practicing using logic effectively, and identifying logical fallacies in other people’s arguments.

1. **Final product**:

Your final product for this task is to participate in a debate and submit an annotated written argument. You will complete the live Debate as a member of a group of four.

Steps:

1. Determine your debate partner and opposing team (group of 4)
2. Your group will be given a topic and your team will be assigned a position (affirmative or negative) Note: You may be arguing a position you do not personally support – this is a learning opportunity!
3. Research the topic. You will gather evidence that will be used to support your group’s position.
4. Using this evidence as an aid, the team prepares a set of persuasive arguments designed to sway the judges to your side.
5. Use the best of what you have found and house it in rhetorically effective, confident delivery. Practice makes perfect.
6. Final Performance Task: On the day of the debate, you and your partner will debate with the opposing team, using the timing and format guidelines provided.

Your goal is not necessarily to win, but to prepare to defend your side as best you are able. You will be marked on the quality of your evidence, your ability to defeat your opponent’s arguments (logical fallacies, quality of evidence, etc.), adherence to rules, and the confidence of your presentation. You will need to present a more coherent, logical, and a forceful set of arguments in a polished manner to prevail over your opponent. Additionally, you will submit your written argument with annotations.

\*See debate assignment sheet (Item A) for more detail on this assignment.

**Additional Information**

1. **Knowledge and skills you will need to demonstrate on this task:**
* Research skills: location of information, evaluation of source validity/reliability, synthesis of information, citation
* Analysis skills: identify examples of logic-based rhetorical devices in complex texts/speeches/etc.
* Presentation: explain why logical fallacies are illogical/misleading
* Organization of evidence in support of an argument: use logical (syllogism) arrangements in your own arguments
1. **Materials needed:**
* Item A: Debate Assignment Sheet
* Item B: Debate Terminology
* Item C: Argumentation Organizing Strategies

1. **Time requirements:**

This task will take approximately 4-6 weeks to complete. Your teacher will provide information regarding deadlines and due dates.

1. **Scoring:**

Your work will be scored using the Summit Public Schools Mock Trial/Debate rubric. You should make sure you are familiar with the language that describes the expectations for proficient performance.