

# Discover and debate with the EcoQuest characters!



**Topics:** Presentation of each game character, debating and negotiation skills

## Pedagogical objectives

- Analyse character depictions and debate strategies.
- Understand different perspectives, conflict resolution and how to handle disagreement.
- Develop debate and negotiation skills.
- Develop empathy and communication strategies.

## Necessary materials

- EcoQuest video game.
- Character sheets.
- Whiteboard or digital screen for notes.
- Timer for managing debate time.
- Documentation on climate change.

## Educational methods

Teamwork, role play, group discussion and brainstorming, content analysis and debate-based learning



Age: 16+



Max. 25 participants



100 minutes

## Activity description

All participants must have played the EcoQuest videogame before the activity (45 to 60 mins).

### 1 Introduction (5 minutes)

- Start by briefly discussing the game scenario and context, and asking participants which character they agreed with and who invited them to join their project.
- Emphasise that the game portrays debates between various perspectives on how youth can get involved in environmental activism and tackling ecological issues.

### 2 Characters analysis (15 minutes)

- Provide the participants with character sheets displaying the video game characters' image and name, as shown on the last pages of this document.
- Participants must fill in those sheets with as much information about each character that they can remember, in the form of keywords about their background, interests, perspectives and motivations. Focus on each character's arguments and approaches on environmental activism.

- Engage in a brainstorming session and take note of all elements suggested for each character on a whiteboard or screen to ensure that all participants have all the relevant information on their character sheets.

### 3 Debate preparation (15 minutes)

- Divide the participants into 6 groups and assign each group with one character or allow participants to pick one that they will represent in a debate, with the specific instruction that each group will have a total of 5 minutes to present their point.
- **Content preparation:** Participants discuss within their group in order to build thicker arguments and more precise and engaging stances based on the perspectives and points expressed in the video game. They need to stay true to the character's original viewpoint and evolution but explore them in more depth and nuance: what other types of justification or topic would the character bring up to defend their views?
- **Structure preparation:** Participants must also think about what strategies and behaviours to adopt in order to keep the debate structured, efficient and convincing. For example, they should designate which participants will speak up about which aspects of their stance, ensure that their arguments are based on a specific logic or data and take into account opposing points or counter-arguments to prepare their responses and justifications.

**Tip:** Provide participants with documentation on climate change (see “To go further” section) and a series of discussion prompts to help them prepare more efficiently and have a clear direction in mind. They can either be imposed or picked at random. Examples:

- Should we prioritise voting and raising awareness over direct action and movements?
- Should the responsibility for environmental change fall on individuals or corporations?
- Is online and global activism as effective as face-to-face and local activism?
- Are peaceful protests and technological progress as effective as radical and direct actions?

### 4 Role-play debate (45 minutes)

- Engage in a structured debate, where each group will express their character's views on how to address environmental issues in order to convince the others, with a maximum of 5 minutes per group. All participants must speak at least once.
- The debate can be guided and structured with specific prompts or build from the stances expressed in the video game, with more developed points.
- Groups will take turns expressing their arguments, before opening the general debate where they can respond, ask questions and propose counter arguments to challenge each other's arguments.

- Encourage participants to use negotiation techniques to resolve disagreements and come to a collective conclusion, to ensure that they will practice their debating and negotiation skills, learning how to keep the conversation respectful even in disagreement.

## 5 Reflection and debrief (10 minutes)

- After the debates, lead a reflective discussion about the participants' strengths and weaknesses and encourage them to share how they felt during the debate.
- Help students analyse their experience, acknowledge what they learned and connect it to real-life environmental discussions and decision-making processes.

**Tip:** Help participants reflect on their debate skills and experience by asking questions such as:

- What new insights did you gain about environmental activism?
- Were you able to convince others or were you convinced of their stances?
- Did you face any challenges or struggles?
- How well did you handle disagreement?
- What strategies worked well in convincing the other parties?
- What strategies worked well in keeping the dialogue open?

## 6 Conclusion (10 minutes)

- Summarise and formalise the key takeaways and teachings by gathering them onto a whiteboard or digital screen for participants to keep a trace of what they learned about debating and negotiation skills, how to handle disagreement and to keep the dialogue open, along with strategies to engage and incite action.
- Reinforce the importance of interacting with data and others' perspectives in the context of environmental activism.

**Tip:** Assign a brief homework or follow-up task, such as writing a reflection on the debates or researching a specific environmental topic discussed in the game or during the debate.

## To go further

- ✚ **Assessment tool: Debate evaluation rubric:** Use a rubric listing the different criteria to assess participants' performance in the debate, focusing on argument quality, organisation, oratory qualities and use of negotiation techniques. Here are examples from [CEDEC](#) and [ESL Debates](#).

- Alternative activity: Global summit:** Organise a simulation of an international climate change summit where young participants represent different countries or national organisations with varying priorities and negotiate solutions to a global issue.
- Alternative activity: Action plan development:** Participants work in groups or all together to create an action plan for youth-led environmental activism, incorporating ideas from the game and the debates.
- Additional documentation and resources:** Provide participants with resources or articles on climate change data and debate points, with examples of how different topics and perspectives can be integrated into activism. Share case studies or documentaries about how policies and movements have influenced progress and actions on climate change. Examples: IPCC **Reports**, NASA Global climate Change's **resources for educators**, the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** or the European Environment Agency's **analysis and data**.

## Sources and additional resources

- Ericson, J. M., Murphy, J. J., & Bud Zeuschner, R. (2003). **The Debater's Guide**. Third edition. Southern Illinois University Press.
- Wertheim, E. (n.d.). **Negotiations and Resolving Conflicts: An Overview**. College of Business Administration, Northeastern University
- Up to Youth. (n.d.). **Negotiation training booklet**. USAID.
- National Speech & Debate Association**.



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#EcoQuestProject

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**Sam**

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**Leo**

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**Alex**

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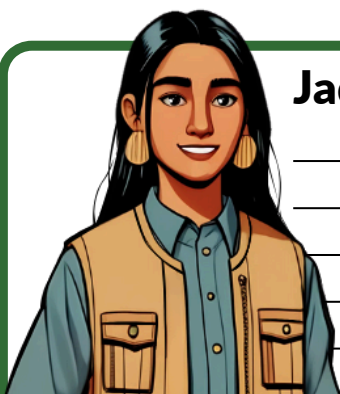
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**Jade**

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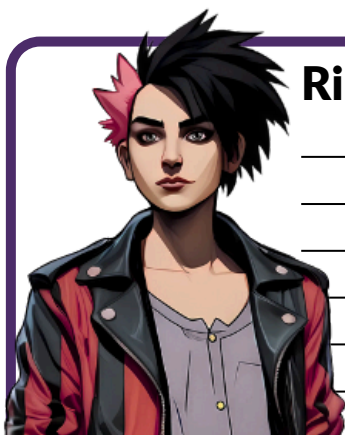
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**Riley**

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