

Dialogue and Debate

Dialogue is collaborative: two or more sides work together toward common understanding.

In dialogue, finding common ground is the goal.

In dialogue, one listens to the other side(s) in order to understand, find meaning, and find agreement.

Dialogue enlarges and possibly changes a participant's point of view.

Dialogue complicates positions and issues.

Dialogue reveals assumptions for reevaluation.

Dialogue causes introspection on one's own position.

It is acceptable to change one's position.

Dialogue is flexible in nature.

Dialogue stresses the skill of synthesis.

Dialogue opens the possibility of reaching a better solution than either of the original solutions.

Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude: and openness to being wrong and an openness to change.

Debate is oppositional: two sides oppose each other and attempt to prove each other wrong.

In debate, winning is the goal.

In debate, one listens to the other side in order to find flaws and to counter its arguments.

Debate affirms a participant's own point of view.

Debate simplifies positions and issues.

Debate defends assumptions as truth.

Debate causes critique of the other position.

It is a sign of weakness and defeat to change one's position.

Debate is rigid in nature.

Debate stresses the skill of analysis.

Debate defends one's own positions as the best solution and excludes other solutions.

Debate creates a closed-minded attitude and a determination to be right.

Dialogue calls for temporarily suspending one's beliefs.

In dialogue, one searches for basic agreements.

In dialogue, one searches for strengths in the other position.

Dialogue involves a real concern for the other person and seeks to not alienate or offend.

Dialogue encourages de-polarization of an issue.

In dialogue, everyone is part of the solution to the problem.

Dialogue affirms the idea of people learning from each other.

Dialogue remains open-ended.

Debate calls for investing wholeheartedly in one's beliefs.

In debate, one searches for glaring differences.

In debate, one searches for flaws and weaknesses in the other position.

Debate involves a countering of the other position without focusing on feelings or relationship and often belittles or deprecates the other position.

Debate encourages polarization of an issue.

In debate, one person or viewpoint wins over the other.

Debate affirms the idea of people learning individually in competition with others.

Debate implies a conclusion.

(Adapted from Educators for Social Responsibility)

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