Mastering the Art of Debate with Leo the Lion

Learning objective: To understand and apply rhetorical devices and structured argumentation in a formal debate setting.

Read the prompts carefully. Use your knowledge of persuasive techniques to craft arguments, identify rhetorical devices, and structure your responses to convince an audience.

Leo the Lion is organising a debate for the forest animals. The topic is: 'Should the Great Meadow be turned into a protected nature reserve?' To win the debate, you must use strong vocabulary, clear structure, and persuasive techniques to influence the other animals' opinions.

Word bank: rhetorical question · emotive language · rule of three · counter-argument · rebuttal · modal verb · conjunction · persuasion

1. Leo wants to start his speech with a rhetorical question to hook the audience. Write a suitable rhetorical question about the importance of protecting the Great Meadow. (2 marks)

2. Identify and explain the 'rule of three' in this sentence: 'The meadow is beautiful, peaceful, and essential for our survival.' Why is this technique effective in a speech? (3 marks)

3. Write a sentence using emotive language to describe the potential destruction of the meadow. Explain why your chosen words would make the audience feel concerned. (3 marks)

4. A squirrel argues that the meadow should be used for building more nut storage sheds. Write a short rebuttal (maximum two sentences) that acknowledges their point but explains why the nature reserve is more important. (3 marks)

5. Which modal verbs (such as 'must', 'could', 'might', 'should') would you use to show that the protection of the meadow is a necessity rather than just a suggestion? Write a persuasive sentence using one of these verbs. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene of Leo the Lion standing at a wooden podium in the meadow, with an audience of forest animals listening attentively. Include a speech bubble above Leo with one of your rhetorical questions from the worksheet.

Extension challenge: Research a current local issue in your town. Write a short paragraph using at least two rhetorical devices to persuade your local council to take action on that issue.