ESU TEACHING RESOURCE

MOTIONS PACK

In this motions pack you will find five motions to use with your class or club. The topics chosen have been used in classrooms all around the UK (and sometimes, around the world), for students who are just starting to debate.
To help out, we've provided an introduction and some starter questions for each motion – these can be used to stimulate a discussion about the topic before students start to prepare for the debate, so that everyone has a chance to become familiar with key ideas and concepts.

Each motion has been written in two ways – either as "This House…", which refers to the tradition of debates occurring as if in the House of Commons; or as a simple "we should" statement for students to discuss.

You can find more motions on the ESU Resources page – these are updated on a regular basis, and can be found at http://www.esu.org/our-work/esuresources

ESU TEACHING RESOURCE

This House Believes that children should have to do chores to earn pocket money

Children should have to do chores to earn pocket money

Overview:

Some parents who give their children pocket money do so unconditionally. Other parents require their children to do chores, such as washing the dishes, or helping to cook and clean. Perhaps we don't want to do chores, but it helps out our parents a lot. Do you think children should have to do chores to earn their pocket money?

Starter questions:

Would this encourage children to help out more around the house? Should they?

Does this change how children think about helping out their parents?

Do you think boys and girls would be asked to do different kinds of chores? Is that fair?

ESU TEACHING RESOURCE

This House Believes that children should not watch TV during the week

Children should not watch TV during the week

Overview:

Lots of people like to relax by watching their favourite programs on television. Some people watch too much television, although some manage it without any problems. School is a pressured time – there is homework to do, and extra-curricular activities to be involved with. Do you think there is still time for TV?

Starter questions:

How easy is it to choose not to watch TV if you are allowed to?

Does watching TV get in the way of homework? Of other activities? Of anything else?

How important is relaxation to children's lives? Is just having the weekend free enough?

ESU TEACHING RESOURCE

This House Believes that celebrities make bad role models

Celebrities make bad role models

Overview:

A lot of people look up to celebrities, and are interested in what they do. Some people even try to emulate famous sports stars, musicians and actors. Sometimes, these celebrities are admirable, championing valuable political causes and doing notable charity work. Other times, people admired for their talent have troubled personal lives. Do you think it's normally good to look up to celebrities?

Starter questions:

To what extent do people try to be like their favourite celebrity? Do people try to emulate everything about them, or just their talent?

Can you think of some prominent examples of celebrities who would be good or bad role models? Which is more common?

Are there any groups of people who would make better role models?

ESU TEACHING RESOURCE

This House Believes that every child should have a pet

Every child should have a pet

Overview:

Some children are lucky enough to have a pet, like a dog or a fish. Some children take care of their pet themselves, walking the dog or cleaning out their hamster cage. Do you think that it is fair that only some children have a pet? Does having a pet make you more responsible? Or, do you think only children who are responsible already should be allowed a pet? Would it be better for a pet to live with a child than to be an abandoned pet in a pet shelter?

Starter questions:

What tasks are associated with having a pet? Would you do these tasks, if you had a pet?

Does looking after something make you more responsible, or is it something you can only do if you are already a responsible person?

What would happen if a pet lived with a child who could not take care of it?

ESU TEACHING RESOURCE

This House Would ban junk food from schools

We should ban junk food from schools

Overview:

Eating junk food can have a big impact on a person's health, but lots of people really enjoy an occasional treat. We all like to make different choices at lunchtime, but sometimes this can be bad for us. Do you think it matters what we eat in school?

Starter questions:

If we ban junk food from schools, what will this do to young people's eating habits?

Does the food we eat in school change what we want to eat in later life?

Does it matter if we eat junk food at school? Are there other opportunities to eat healthily? How likely are these?