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D6.3 Protocol document of rhetoric games debate: National competitions per country partner

March 2026



WP6: Design and Implementation of methodologies for “Rhetoric Speech Games” for promoting Children’s Rights Education and Democratic Participation



Lead Contributor: European Expression

Project Manager: Dr Stella Michael

Rhetoric Trainer: Manolis Polychronides M.A., Rhetoric Trainer - Political Scientist

March 2026

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Contents

1. Summary	5
2. Introduction	6
2.1 Background and Rationale	6
2.2 Role of Debate in Community-Centered Education	6
2.3 Training Objectives	7
2.4 Target Group	7
2.5 Participation Principles	7
2.6 Flexibility and Local Adaptation	8
3. Implementation Guidelines	9
3.1 Incremental Training Approach	9
3.1.1 Local-Level Rhetoric Speech Training	9
3.1.2 Debate Team Formation	10
3.1.3 National-Level Competitions	11
3.1.4 Alternative Debate Training Implementation Formats	12
3.2 Debate Day Implementation Timeline	13
3.2.1 Junior Division (Ages 10-12)	13
3.2.2 Intermediate Division (Ages 13-15)	14
3.2.3 Senior Division (Ages 16-18)	15
4. Community Debate Formats and Rules	15
4.1 Complete Six-Phase Structure	15
4.1.1 Phase 1: Welcome & Cultural Acknowledgment (5 minutes)	15
4.1.3 Phase 3: Structured Community Dialogue (32-42 minutes by age)	17
4.1.4 Phase 4: Cross-Cultural Bridge-Building Discussion (10 minutes)	18
4.1.5 Phase 5: Community Reflection (5 minutes)	18
4.1.6 Phase 6: Results & Celebration (3 minutes)	18
4.1.7 Role of Cultural Support Advisors Throughout Six Phases	19
4.1.8 Phase 6 Detailed: Hybrid Recognition Model	20
4.2 Roles and Responsibilities	22
4.2.1 Team Composition (REQUIRED)	22
4.2.2 Cultural Support Advisors	23
4.3 Role of Facilitators	24
4.4 Thematic Alignment	24
4.5 Topic Selection Guidelines	25
4.5.1 Characteristics of Good Community-Centered Debate Topics	25

4.6 Code of Conduct	27
5. Judging and Scoring	28
5.1 Evaluation Principles	28
5.2 Judge Composition	28
5.3 Judging Criteria Overview	28
5.4 Detailed Scoring Rubric (Pre-Weighted System)	29
5.4.1 Criterion 1: Argument Construction & Evidence (0-30 points)	30
5.4.2 Criterion 2: Cultural Integration & Bridge-Building (0-25 points)	31
5.4.3 Criterion 3: Community Focus & Democratic Values (0-20 points)	31
5.4.4 Criterion 4: Engagement & Refutation (0-15 points)	32
5.4.5 Criterion 5: Communication & Presentation (0-10 points)	32
5.5 Using the Scoring System	33
5.6 Feedback Orientation	34
6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	35
6.1 Quantitative Indicators	35
6.2 Qualitative Indicators	35
6.3 Implementation and Training KPIs	36
6.4 Reporting Requirements	36
6.5 Use of Monitoring Data	36
8. CONCLUSIONS	37
8. List of additional documentation	38
REQUIRED DOCUMENTS (must be used by all partners):	38
SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES:	38
APPENDICES	39
APPENDIX A: RUBRIC CONVERSION TABLE	39
APPENDIX B: SAMPLE COMPLETED SCORING SHEET	40
APPENDIX C: TOPIC DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET	42

1. Summary

Protocol D6.3 sets out the framework for Community-Centered Debate competitions under the Theory of Change (TOC) Project. It builds on the earlier rhetoric training in Protocols D6.1 and D6.2. The document explains how partners can organize debate activities in a way that is structured, practical, and flexible.

Community-centered debate is different from traditional competitive debate. The main aim is not to defeat the other team. The main aim is to listen, respond, and build understanding across different views. Participants are encouraged to connect arguments with cultural knowledge, lived experience, and community needs. Success is shown through respectful dialogue, critical thinking, and efforts to find common ground.

The protocol follows child-centered, culturally responsive, and democratic principles. It supports multilingual youth aged 10-18 to speak with confidence, take part in dialogue, and contribute to issues that affect their communities.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and Rationale

Community-centered debate was developed in response to the limits of traditional debate formats. Traditional formats can help learners build useful skills. However, they may also favor certain speaking styles, stronger language proficiency, and familiar cultural norms. For multilingual youth from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, this can make participation harder.

The TOC Project uses debate as a tool for democratic participation, cultural exchange, and bridge-building. It values Native Language, cultural knowledge, and lived experience alongside formal evidence. This creates more space for young people whose voices are often overlooked.

This protocol gives a common structure for national-level competitions. At the same time, it allows local adaptation. Partners should keep the same core principles while adjusting delivery to local conditions.

2.2 Role of Debate in Community-Centered Education

Community-centered debate serves multiple pedagogical and social purposes:

- ❖ **Democratic Skill Development:** Practicing respectful disagreement, active listening, and collaborative problem-solving
- ❖ **Cultural Bridge-Building:** Finding connections between diverse perspectives and traditions
- ❖ **Linguistic Empowerment:** Celebrating courage in multilingual communication
- ❖ **Critical Thinking:** Analyzing complex issues from multiple viewpoints
- ❖ **Civic Engagement:** Developing voice and agency on issues affecting communities
- ❖ **Identity Affirmation:** Honoring heritage knowledge and lived experience as legitimate expertise.

Traditional vs. Community-Centered Debate:

Traditional Debate	Community-Centered Debate
Focus on winning arguments	Focus on understanding and bridge-building
Single "winner" declared	Multiple forms of excellence recognized
Academic evidence prioritized	Cultural knowledge valued equally
Native speaker advantage	Linguistic courage celebrated
Adversarial stance encouraged	Respectful dialogue emphasized

2.3 Training Objectives

General Objectives:

- Develop democratic dialogue skills applicable beyond debate contexts
- Build confidence in multilingual communication
- Foster respect for cultural diversity and multiple ways of knowing
- Strengthen critical thinking about community issues
- Create networks of youth engaged in civic participation

Specific Objectives:

- • Master community-centered debate structure and roles
- • Integrate research evidence with cultural knowledge and lived experience
- • Practice bridge-building strategies even amid disagreement
- • Develop Native Language use for public discourse
- • Demonstrate active listening and responsive engagement
- • Propose inclusive solutions considering diverse community needs

2.4 Target Group

Primary Participants: Multilingual youth aged 10-18 who have completed local-level rhetoric speech training (Protocols D6.1 and D6.2).

Age Divisions:

- Junior Division: Ages 10-12
- Intermediate Division: Ages 13-15
- Senior Division: Ages 16-18

Language Proficiency: Minimum A1-A2 CEFR level in debate language. Native Language proficiency at any level is welcomed and encouraged.

Participation Scope: Each country aims to engage 60 youth (20 per age division) in debate formation and competitions, with broader reach through local training programs.

2.5 Participation Principles

Child-Centered Approach:

- Youth voice and agency prioritized
- Psychological safety maintained

- Age-appropriate topics and expectations
- Opt-out options for sensitive topics
- Trauma-informed facilitation

Language and Cultural Accessibility:

- Native Language use with translation welcomed
- Linguistic courage celebrated over linguistic perfection
- Cultural knowledge validated as legitimate evidence
- Multiple communication styles respected
- Support provided through Cultural Support Advisors

Educational and Democratic Principles:

- Learning valued over winning
- Growth mindset emphasized
- Democratic dialogue modeled
- Diverse perspectives honored
- Bridge-building as core competence
- Community wellbeing centered.

2.6 Flexibility and Local Adaptation

Protocol D6.3 is a flexible framework. It gives partners a shared structure, but it also allows adaptation to local conditions and participant needs. The protocol does not require one single format for all countries. Partners may adapt areas such as training length, delivery format, team formation, number of debates, topic selection, and facilitation methods. These choices should support access, relevance, and meaningful participation. All adaptations must remain consistent with the core principles of the protocol. These include inclusion, respect for language and culture, bridge-building, and child safeguarding. Partners are expected to document and reflect on any adaptations as part of their reporting, contributing to shared learning and the ongoing refinement of the methodology.

3. Implementation Guidelines

3.1 Incremental Training Approach

3.1.1 Local-Level Rhetoric Speech Training

Training length should remain flexible. Partners should decide the duration based on prior experience, language level, and local context. The key requirement is participant readiness, not completion of a fixed number of sessions.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENT:

All participants must complete rhetoric speech training at local level per Protocols D6.1 and D6.2 before forming debate teams. This foundational training covers the six thematic modules (Personal Presentation, Food/Drinks, At School, Clothes/Accessories, Health/Emotions, City/Neighborhood/Leisure) and develops basic rhetoric skills.

RECOMMENDED DEBATE-SPECIFIC PREPARATION (Flexible):

Beyond D6.1/D6.2 completion, partners should provide debate-specific training tailored to participant needs:

- 2-4 training sessions on debate format and speaker roles (about 4-8 hours in total)
- 1-2 practice debates before the competition
- Adaptation based on participants' language level and previous experience
- Typical preparation period: 2-4 weeks

READINESS INDICATORS:

Participants should be able to:

- express an opinion with basic justification
- understand the six-phase debate structure
- understand the four speaker roles
- engage respectfully with different views
- work with their team and the Cultural Support Advisors
- use personal experience, cultural knowledge, and/or research as evidence

TRAINING CONTENT PRIORITIES:

Debate-specific sessions should cover:

- Six-phase structure walkthrough
- • Four speaker roles and responsibilities
- • CSA role and note-passing protocols



- Evidence types and integration
- Bridge-building strategies
- Respectful refutation techniques
- Native Language use with translation
- Practice debates with feedback

FLEXIBILITY RATIONALE:

Partners work in different conditions. Participants also learn at different speeds. Some groups may be ready after two sessions. Others may need more time. Partners should use their judgment and prepare groups to the level they need.

3.1.2 Debate Team Formation

Following completion of local training and debate-specific preparation, participants form teams for competition.

TEAM COMPOSITION:

Each team consists of:

- 4 Speakers (filling the four roles: Group Leader, Local Knowledge Speaker, Bridge-Building Responder, Future Vision Speaker)
- 1-2 Cultural Support Advisors (non-speaking support role)

Total: 5-6 members per team

Teams should represent diverse backgrounds when possible, creating opportunities for cross-cultural learning within team collaboration.

TEAM FORMATION PROCESS:

- Coaches/educators guide team formation
- Consider language proficiency balance across speaker roles
- Ensure CSAs have strong Native Language or deep cultural knowledge
- Balance experienced and less confident participants
- Allow some student choice in team composition when feasible
- Form teams 2-4 weeks before competition to allow bonding and practice

PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS:

Teams should complete at least 1-2 full practice debates before competition, receiving constructive feedback on:

- Role execution
- Evidence integration
- Bridge-building attempts
- Team collaboration including CSA support
- Time management
- Respectful engagement

3.1.3 National-Level Competitions

National competitions bring together teams from across participating regions, creating opportunities for inter-regional cultural exchange and democratic dialogue.

SELECTION FOR NATIONAL LEVEL:

Partners determine their own selection processes, which may include:

- Local/regional preliminary rounds
- Performance in practice debates
- Demonstrated readiness and enthusiasm
- Representation of diverse communities
- Coaches' recommendations

A recommendation here is to either collect all teams together on a day event and organise two rounds of debate (where all teams participate at both rounds) or break the debates in separate events for more flexibility where all teams will participate in at least two debates.

COMPETITION STRUCTURE:

- Multiple debates per team (minimum 2, recommended 3-4)
- Debates within age divisions
- Mix of teams from different regions
- Varied topics reflecting genuine community tensions
- All debates use six-phase community-centered format

BEYOND COMPETITION:

National events, as an opportunity for great visibility of the TOC, as well as offering public speaking experience and social interactions to participants, should include:

- Cultural exchange activities
- Workshops on topics related to rhetoric and rights
- Networking opportunities for youth across regions
- Recognition ceremonies honoring all participants
- Documentation of experiences for project reporting

3.1.4 Alternative Debate Training Implementation Formats

Protocol D6.3 allows more than one delivery format. Partners may choose the format that best fits their context, resources, and participants. The aim is to support readiness while keeping the same community-centered principles.

The following alternative formats are recommended:

Intensive Format (3–4 Days)

Partners may deliver rhetoric speech training and debate preparation through an intensive workshop model lasting 3–4 consecutive days. This format may combine:

- ❖ Condensed delivery of key elements from Protocols D6.1 and D6.2
- ❖ Focused debate-specific training (roles, structure, bridge-building)
- ❖ Immediate practice debates followed by a final competition.

Weekly Sessions (Standard Format)

The standard format uses weekly sessions across 2-4 weeks. This format supports gradual skill development, reflection, and team-building. It is recommended when regular attendance is possible.

Standalone Debate Sessions

In contexts where extended training is not feasible, partners may organize standalone debate events preceded by short preparatory sessions. These may include:

- ❖ Brief introduction to debate structure and roles
- ❖ Rapid team preparation
- ❖ Simplified practice rounds before the main debate

Across all formats, the key requirement is participant readiness. The full training cycle may be shortened when needed, but participants should still show:

- ❖ Basic understanding of the six-phase debate structure
- ❖ Familiarity with speaker roles
- ❖ Ability to express and justify opinions at an appropriate language level
- ❖ Willingness to engage respectfully with different perspectives

Partners may adapt the timeline and format to local realities. However, the core values must remain clear in every format: inclusion, linguistic courage, cultural respect, and bridge-building.

3.2 Debate Day Implementation Timeline

This section sets out age-appropriate guidance for the 60-minute debate. The six-phase structure stays the same across all age groups. Timing and facilitation are adjusted to match the developmental stage of participants.

3.2.1 Junior Division (Ages 10-12)

TIMING ADJUSTMENTS:

- Shorter speeches (3-4 minutes vs. 4 minutes)
- More facilitator guidance in Phase 4
- Concrete, personal topics preferred
- High emphasis on encouragement

SAMPLE TIMELINE:

Phases	Time
Phase 1: Welcome	5 min
Phase 2: Context Setting	Context Setting (5 min) - teams share personal connections
Phase 3: Main Dialogue (32 min total)	Speaker 2 Team A: 4 min, Speaker 2 Team B: 4 min Speaker 3 Team A: 4 min, Speaker 3 Team B: 4 min Speaker 4 Team A: 4 min, Speaker 4 Team B: 4 min

	Brief huddles (unofficial discussion) between speakers (15 sec each = 2 min total)
Phase 4: Bridge-Building	10 min - Facilitator guides with prompts
Phase 5: Reflection	5 min
Phase 6: Results	3 min

3.2.2 Intermediate Division (Ages 13-15)

TIMING ADJUSTMENTS:

- Standard 4-minute speeches
- Some facilitator prompts in Phase 4
- Balance of concrete and abstract topics
- Moderate independence expected

SAMPLE TIMELINE:

Phases	Time
Phase 1: Welcome	5 min
Phase 2: Context Setting	5 min
Phase 3: Main Dialogue	36 min total - All speeches: 4 minutes each (32 min) - Huddles: 30 seconds each (4 min total)
Phase 4: Bridge-Building	10 min - Facilitator provides 2-3 prompts
Phase 5: Reflection	5 min
Phase 6: Results	3 min

3.2.3 Senior Division (Ages 16-18)

TIMING ADJUSTMENTS:

- Standard 4-minute speeches with potential 5-min for complex topics
- Minimal facilitator guidance in Phase 4
- Complex, policy-oriented topics appropriate
- High independence expected

SAMPLE TIMELINE:

Phases	Time
Phase 1: Welcome	5 min
Phase 2: Context Setting	5 min
Phase 3: Main Dialogue	40-42 min total - All speeches: 4-5 minutes each (32-40 min) - Huddles: 30 seconds each (4 min total) or 1 min for complex topics
Phase 4: Bridge-Building	10 min - Facilitator observes
Phase 5: Reflection	5 min
Phase 6: Results	3 min

4. Community Debate Formats and Rules

4.1 Complete Six-Phase Structure

The community-centered debate uses a six-phase structure. This structure supports argumentation, cultural exchange, and democratic dialogue. Each phase has a clear educational and social purpose.

4.1.1 Phase 1: Welcome & Cultural Acknowledgment (5 minutes)

PURPOSE: Establish inclusive, culturally responsive tone; frame debate as bridge-building.

FACILITATOR DELIVERS WELCOME SCRIPT (choose version appropriate to context):

- Version 1: Standard Multicultural Context

- Version 2: Refugee and Migrant Focus
- Version 3: Youth Rights & Empowerment Focus

Version 1: Standard Multicultural Context¹

Welcome, everyone, participants, families, coaches, and esteemed judges, to our Community-Centered Debate. We are delighted to gather this diverse group, representing a wealth of languages, traditions, and backgrounds. We want to acknowledge and celebrate the linguistic courage of every person here today.

Our debate is not about defeating another team. It is about dialogue, learning, and bridge-building. We listen to different views, respond with respect, and look for solutions that help the wider community. Every voice matters here.

Today, we will be addressing the motion: [Insert Motion Here]. Let's begin our dialogue.

Version 2: Refugee and Migrant Focus¹

Welcome to all our participants, families, coaches, and judges. We especially acknowledge the incredible resilience and strength shown by those who have undertaken long journeys and navigated new beginnings. We know that the diverse languages and cultures present in this room represent immense courage and unique wisdom. We celebrate that wisdom today.

This debate is a space for cultural exchange and problem-solving. Your cultural knowledge and lived experience matter here. They are valid forms of evidence. This is a space where multilingual and immigrant youth can speak with confidence and be heard.

Today's motion, which reflects real tensions in our communities, is: [Insert Motion Here].

We encourage you to use your Native Language with confidence, knowing that all voices matter as we work together to build bridges.

Version 3: Youth Rights & Empowerment Focus

A warm welcome to all participants, families, coaches, and judges! We are gathered here to exercise a fundamental right: the right of multilingual youth, aged 10-18, to democratic participation and free expression on the issues that affect their lives. We fully acknowledge and respect the languages and cultures that enrich our community and are present here today.

This is a child-centered space. Your voice and participation matter. This debate helps you practice critical thinking, civic engagement, and respectful disagreement. The aim is not conflict. The aim is dialogue and shared understanding.

The motion we will be debating, and contributing meaningful analysis toward, is: [Insert Motion Here].

We look forward to witnessing your powerful contributions.

4.1.2 Phase 2: Cultural Context Setting (5 minutes)

PURPOSE: To connect the topic with participants' cultural knowledge and lived experience.

PROCEDURE:

Team A speaks for 2.5 minutes.

- Speakers explain how their background or experience connects to the topic.
- Native Language may be used with translation.
- Teams should share context, not arguments.

Team B (2.5 minutes): same process is followed.

IMPORTANT: This is NOT argumentation - it's context-sharing. Teams are not yet advocating positions, simply explaining their relationship to the topic.

4.1.3 Phase 3: Structured Community Dialogue (32-42 minutes by age)

PURPOSE: To present arguments, use evidence, and practice democratic dialogue.

STRUCTURE:

Four speakers from each team speak in the same order:

1. Group Leader
2. Local Knowledge Speaker
3. Bridge-Building Responder
4. Future Vision Speaker

Team A speaks first in each role, followed by Team B.

Speech length is 3-5 minutes, depending on age group.

Short huddles of 15-30 seconds are allowed between speeches so teams can consult with Cultural Support Advisors.

ROLE SUMMARY:

Group Leader: explains why the issue matters in everyday life

Local Knowledge Speaker: brings in cultural knowledge, traditions, and community wisdom

Bridge-Building Responder: responds to the other side with respect and looks for points of connection

Future Vision Speaker: proposes solutions and describes positive change

Cultural Support Advisors may pass notes during this phase.

4.1.4 Phase 4: Cross-Cultural Bridge-Building Discussion (10 minutes)

PURPOSE: To move from debate to dialogue and identify shared values.

The facilitator guides this discussion with clear prompts, for example:

- "Team A focused on [X]. Team B focused on [Y]. What shared value can you identify?"
- "What can we learn from the different cultural perspectives we heard?"
- "If both teams worked together, what combined solution could they propose?"

PARTICIPANTS engage in back-and-forth dialogue (not additional speeches).

This phase is essential to community-centered philosophy - demonstrating that disagreement doesn't preclude collaboration and that synthesis often creates better solutions than either side alone proposed.

4.1.5 Phase 5: Community Reflection (5 minutes)

PURPOSE: To reflect on what was learned and to value all contributions.

PROCEDURE:

Team A speaks for 2.5 minutes.

- What did we learn from Team B?
- What do we understand better now?
- Did our thinking change during the discussion?

Team B then responds to the same questions for 2.5 minutes.

IMPORTANT: This is NOT a rebuttal or summary of own arguments. It's a genuine reflection on what dialogue revealed.

Judges evaluate this phase as part of Criterion 4 (Engagement & Refutation) - demonstrating active listening and intellectual humility.

4.1.6 Phase 6: Results & Celebration (3 minutes)

PURPOSE: To celebrate participation and recognize different forms of excellence.

JUDGES ANNOUNCE IN THIS ORDER:

1. Acknowledgment - thank both teams.
2. Achievement level - state the level reached by each team.

3. Special recognition awards - announce 3-5 awards and explain each briefly.
4. Representation opportunity - if relevant, announce which team will represent the community at the next level.

LANGUAGE TO USE:

- ✓ "Both teams achieved..."
- ✓ "Team A excelled in..." and "Team B demonstrated strength in..."
- ✓ "Multiple forms of excellence"

LANGUAGE TO AVOID:

- ✗ "Winner/loser"
- ✗ "Team A was better than Team B"
- ✗ "First/second place"

See full Hybrid Recognition Model in Section 4.1.8.

4.1.7 Role of Cultural Support Advisors Throughout Six Phases

Cultural Support Advisors (CSAs) support the team throughout all six phases.

PHASES 1-2:

- CSAs sit with the team.
- They may help with cultural context informally.

PHASE 3:

- CSAs may pass notes at any time.
- They may suggest Native Language words.
- They may take notes on the other team's arguments.
- They may help the team manage time.

PHASE 4:

- CSAs may quietly suggest bridge-building ideas.

PHASES 5-6:

- CSAs stay with the team and take part in the celebration.

CSAs are essential team members. Teams cannot compete without them.

4.1.8 Phase 6 Detailed: Hybrid Recognition Model

The Hybrid Recognition Model avoids a simple win/loss result. It recognizes that teams may show excellence in different ways. This approach fits the values of community-centered debate, where learning, contribution, and respectful dialogue matter.

COMPONENT 1: ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

All teams receive an achievement level based on their total score.

Grades	Level and Certificate
320–400 (80–100%)	Gold / Advanced
280–319 (70–79%)	Silver / Proficient
240–279 (60–69%)	Bronze / Progressing
Κάτω από 240 (<60%)	Participant / Developing

KEY PRINCIPLE: Multiple teams can achieve the same level simultaneously. Focus is meeting standards, not beating others. NO team is a "loser" - all receive recognition appropriate to demonstrated skills.

COMPONENT 2: SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

Judges select 3-5 awards from these categories:

- Outstanding Community Bridge-Builder (highest Criterion 2 score)
- Powerful Community Advocate (highest Criterion 3 score)
- Exceptional Critical Thinker (highest Criterion 1 score)
- Courageous Communicator (linguistic courage + Criterion 5)
- Cultural Wisdom Keeper (best heritage knowledge integration)
- Most Engaged Listener (highest Criterion 4 score)

Awards can go to:

- Individual speakers (e.g., "Outstanding Bridge-Builder: Maria from Team A")
- Entire teams (e.g., "Team B - Cultural Wisdom Keepers")

- Multiple individuals from same team

Selection reflects diverse strengths, not just highest overall scores.

COMPONENT 3: REPRESENTATION OPPORTUNITY (Optional - if next level exists in the future)

ONE team per age division selected to represent the community at next level.

FRAMING: "Honor to represent community values" NOT "winner"

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Highest overall score
- Strong bridge-building demonstrated
- Community-centered focus maintained
- Team effectively models community-centered debate values

COMPONENT 4: ANNOUNCEMENT SCRIPTS

Step 1: Recognition of All (30 seconds): "Thank you to both teams for demonstrating the power of democratic dialogue. You showed us that disagreement can coexist with respect and understanding."

Step 2: Achievement Levels (1 minute): "Based on today's performance: Team A achieved [Gold/Silver/Bronze/Participant] status as [Advanced/Proficient/Progressing/Developing] Community Debaters.

Team B achieved [Gold/Silver/Bronze/Participant] status as [Advanced/Proficient/Progressing/Developing] Community Debaters.

Both teams demonstrated excellence in community-centered debate. You should all be proud."

Step 3: Special Recognition Awards (1 minute) "We're honoring specific forms of excellence we witnessed: [Award name]: [Individual name or Team X] - [brief rationale]"

[Repeat for 3-5 awards]

Step 4: Representation (30 seconds - if applicable): "Team [A/B] will have the honor of representing our community at [next level event]. This team effectively demonstrated all aspects of community-centered debate and will carry our community's voice forward."

LANGUAGE PRINCIPLES:

DO SAY:

- ✓ "Both teams achieved excellence"
- ✓ "Team A scored 340 points" and "Team B scored 310 points" (state facts)
- ✓ "Different strengths enrich our community"
- ✓ "Multiple ways to excel"

DON'T SAY:

- ✗ "Winner/loser"
- ✗ "Team A beat Team B"
- ✗ "Team B came in second"
- ✗ Any language positioning one team as inferior

AWARDS DISTRIBUTION:

- All receive: Achievement level certificate + written feedback
- Special award recipients: Additional certificate for specific excellence
- Representation team: Representation certificate + next level information

CELEBRATION ATMOSPHERE:

- Warm applause for ALL participants
- Teams exchange congratulations and thanks
- Photo opportunities include both teams together
- Families invited to celebrate
- Refreshments if available
- Celebratory for everyone, not just highest scorers

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

4.2.1 Team Composition (REQUIRED)

Each team:

- 4 Speakers (filling four designated roles)
- 1-2 Cultural Support Advisors

Total: 5-6 members per team

Teams missing CSAs cannot compete - CSAs are essential, not optional.

4.2.2 Cultural Support Advisors

CSAs support speakers with Native Language, cultural context, notes, and encouragement.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Participate actively in 30-minute preparation

- Sit with team during debate (not in audience seating)
- Pass notes at ANY time - before, during, or between speeches
- Provide Native Language words if speaker forgets
- Take notes on opposition arguments
- Monitor time as backup
- Offer supportive presence

CSAs do not give speeches. They do not interrupt speakers. They do not coach aloud during speeches.

ALLOWED:

- ✓ Pass written notes any time
- ✓ Quiet whispered Native Language support
- ✓ Quick strategic huddles during 15-30 second transitions

NOT ALLOWED:

- X Give speeches or speak aloud during debate
- X Interrupt speakers while they're talking (notes only)
- X Leave team's seating area during debate
- X Coach speakers verbally during their speeches

RECOGNITION IN SCORING:

While CSAs do not receive individual speaker scores, their contributions are recognized through:

- Named on team certificates and awards
- Eligible for "Outstanding Team Support" special recognition
- Judges may note effective CSA support in written feedback

- CSAs advance with their team if team selected for representation

Effective CSA support (strategic note-passing, cultural context, Native Language assistance) is considered part of team performance and contributes to team success in Criteria 2 (Cultural Integration) and 4 (Engagement).

- Where CSA availability is limited, partners may adapt by assigning one CSA across teams or integrating the role into coaching support

4.3 Role of Facilitators

Facilitators manage debate flow, timing, and bridge-building discussion. See Facilitator's Handbook for complete guidance.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Deliver opening cultural acknowledgment
- Manage timing for all phases
- Support Native Language use protocols
- Actively facilitate Phase 4 bridge-building discussion
- Ensure respectful behavior and safe space
- Intervene if cultural misunderstandings occur

4.4 Thematic Alignment

Topics should connect to TOC Project's six thematic modules where possible:

1. Personal Presentation
2. Food and Drinks
3. At School
4. Clothes and Accessories
5. Health and Emotions
6. City, Neighborhood, and Leisure

Topics draw on vocabulary and concepts participants developed through Protocols D6.1 and D6.2.

4.5 Topic Selection Guidelines

4.5.1 Characteristics of Good Community-Centered Debate Topics

Good community-centered debate topics should create real discussion, but they should still allow room for bridge-building. Topics should reflect issues that immigrant and multilingual communities genuinely face.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

- ✓ Genuinely Controversial - Real disagreement exists, not manufactured opposition
- ✓ Bridge-Buildable - Opposing sides share underlying values enabling synthesis
- ✓ Community-Relevant - Reflects actual tensions immigrant/multilingual youth experience
- ✓ Legitimately Multi-Sided - Both perspectives have valid concerns grounded in experience
- ✓ Personal Stakes - Participants can draw on lived experience and cultural knowledge
- ✓ Age-Appropriate - Suitable for youth 10-18 at different language levels

AVOID TOPICS THAT:

- X Have obvious "right answers" everyone agrees with (e.g., "We should be kind to others")
- X Are so polarizing no common ground exists
- X Require specialized knowledge participants don't have
- X Put participants in uncomfortable positions about identity
- X Involve trauma without proper support structures

TOPIC CATEGORIES THAT WORK WELL:

- Language & Identity tensions (heritage vs. host language decisions)
- Cultural Practices vs. Integration (traditions vs. adaptation pressures)
- Generational Conflicts (parent vs. youth perspectives in immigrant families)
- Educational Approaches (different strategies for multilingual learners)
- Community Resources (allocation decisions for diverse needs)
- Religious/Cultural Expression (practice vs. secular institutions)

TESTING A TOPIC:

Ask: "Can reasonable people argue BOTH sides using evidence from research, culture, and experience?"

- If YES → Likely good topic
- If NO (one side requires ignoring evidence or shared values) → Revise the motion

EXAMPLES OF GOOD AND BAD TOPICS:

Bad Topic	Good Topic
"Schools should have community gardens" (Not Controversial) Everyone agrees; no real tension	"Schools should prioritize teaching host language over maintaining Native Languages"(Genuinely Controversial) Real tension: integration vs. heritage maintenance; both sides have valid concerns. Shared values: educational success, belonging, identity. Bridge through: recognition that both languages serve important purposes
"Immigration should be completely stopped" (Can't Be Bridged) - Too polarizing; no common ground possible	"Refugee support services should prioritize recent arrivals over families who have been here longer"(Bridgeable) → Real tension: equity and resource allocation → Both sides value successful integration → Bridge through: recognizing different needs at different stages
We should learn to cook"(Not Community-Relevant) - Doesn't reflect immigrant community tensions	"Immigrant families should celebrate host country holidays instead of only traditional holidays"(Community-Relevant): Real tension many families face; Integration vs. cultural preservation; Bridge through: recognizing the value of multiple cultural celebrations.

4.5.2 Topic Development Process

STEP 1: Identify possible topics based on real community tensions.

STEP 2: Check each topic with the Topic Development Worksheet in Appendix C.

STEP 3: Test topics with a small group of young people.

STEP 4: Review for cultural sensitivity and possible harm.

STEP 5: Finalize 6-9 topics, with 2-3 topics for each age division.

STEP 6: Prepare short facilitator notes on the topic, the key tension, and the potential for bridge-building.

Provide topics to teams 1 week before competition for preparation.

4.6 Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is critically important as the foundation for the entire Community-Centered Debate structure, demanding a non-negotiable commitment from all participants, coaches, judges, and facilitators. Its primary justification is to establish and maintain a safe, inclusive environment that fully honors linguistic and cultural diversity. By requiring respectful treatment of all individuals regardless of background, the code safeguards the psychological safety necessary for genuine learning. Furthermore, it ensures that personal information shared remains confidential. Finally, the code is essential for modeling democratic dialogue and respectful disagreement, thereby reinforcing the project's core goal of collaborative problem-solving, and requires all participants to report concerns to a safeguarding officer, which should be a specific role assigned to one of the organizers.

All participants, coaches, judges, and facilitators must:

- Treat all individuals with respect regardless of background
- Honor linguistic and cultural diversity
- Maintain confidentiality about personal information shared
- Create safe, inclusive environment
- Report concerns to safeguarding officer
- Model democratic dialogue and respectful disagreement.

5. Judging and Scoring

5.1 Evaluation Principles

Community-centered debate uses a different judging approach from traditional competitive debate.

CORE PRINCIPLES:

- Linguistic Courage Over Perfection: Celebrate multilingual communication attempts
- Cultural Knowledge as Evidence: Heritage wisdom valued equally with research
- Bridge-Building Weighted Heavily: Synthesis valued over domination
- Standards-Based: Teams compared to rubric standards, not just each other
- Multiple Forms of Excellence: Diverse strengths recognized simultaneously
- Individual and Team Evaluation: Both individual contributions and collective achievement matter

5.2 Judge Composition

PANEL COMPOSITION:

Each debate evaluated by 3 judges (odd number for decision-making)

JUDGE QUALIFICATIONS:

- Completed mandatory adjudicator training
- Familiar with community-centered debate philosophy
- Culturally competent and sensitive to multilingual contexts
- Understands pre-weighted scoring system
- Committed to full tournament participation

JUDGE TRAINING: Mandatory 3-hour session covering scoring system, rubric application, and community-centered principles. See Adjudicator Training Guide.

5.3 Judging Criteria Overview

Five weighted criteria evaluate individual speaker performance:

Criterion	Weight	Score Range
1. Argument Construction & Evidence	30%	0-30 points
2. Cultural Integration & Bridge-Building	25%	0-25 points

3. Community Focus & Democratic Values	20%	0-20 points
4. Engagement & Refutation	15%	0-15 points
5. Communication & Presentation	10%	0-10 points

Maximum per speaker: 100 points

Maximum per team (4 speakers): 400 points

Weights are PRE-WEIGHTED into scoring scales - no calculation needed.

5.4 Detailed Scoring Rubric (Pre-Weighted System)

Judges assess each speaker using rubric levels: Developing, Progressing, Proficient, and Advanced. They then convert these levels into weighted numerical scores using the Rubric Conversion Table.

SCORING APPROACH:

1. Judge determines rubric level for each criterion based on descriptors
2. Consults Rubric Conversion Table to find score range
3. Selects specific score within range based on performance quality
4. Records score on Individual Speaker Evaluation sheet

RUBRIC LEVELS DEFINED:

- DEVELOPING (equivalent to 1-4 in traditional 10-point scale)
- PROGRESSING (equivalent to 5-6 in traditional 10-point scale)
- PROFICIENT (equivalent to 7-8 in traditional 10-point scale)
- ADVANCED (equivalent to 9-10 in traditional 10-point scale)

See Judge's Handy Reference Guide and Appendix A for complete Rubric Conversion Table.

CRITICAL REMINDERS FOR JUDGES:

DO NOT PENALIZE:

- ✗ Accents
- ✗ Grammar errors typical of A1-A2 learners
- ✗ Pauses while searching for words
- ✗ Code-switching between languages
- ✗ Use of sentence frames or simplified structures
- ✗ Native Language use (WITH translation enhances score; WITHOUT doesn't penalize)

DO CELEBRATE:

- ✓ Linguistic courage - attempting complex ideas in additional language
- ✓ Cultural knowledge as evidence
- ✓ Native Language integration
- ✓ Bridge-building attempts
- ✓ Personal and family experience as expertise

The rubric descriptors below reflect these principles.

5.4.1 Criterion 1: Argument Construction & Evidence (0-30 points)

Evaluates quality of claims, diversity of evidence, and logical reasoning.

RUBRIC LEVEL	Grade	Description
Developing	3–12 points	Claims unclear/missing, little evidence, logic hard to follow
Progressing	15–18 points	Clear claims with some evidence, generally logical
Proficient	21–24 points	Strong claims, diverse evidence (research + culture + experience), clear reasoning
Advanced	27–30 points	Exceptional claims, masterful evidence integration, sophisticated reasoning

Evidence should include where feasible multiple types: research data, cultural knowledge, personal/family experience, community examples. Strongest performances integrate all forms.

5.4.2 Criterion 2: Cultural Integration & Bridge-Building (0-25 points)

Evaluates integration of cultural knowledge and ability to build bridges between perspectives.

RUBRIC LEVEL	Grade	Description
Developing	3–12 points	No cultural knowledge, dismisses opposition, no bridge-building
Progressing	13–15 points	Some cultural knowledge, acknowledges opposition respectfully, Native Language used
Proficient	18–20 points	Strong cultural wisdom, respectfully engages multiple perspectives, active bridge-building
Advanced	23–25 points	Exceptional heritage knowledge as expertise, masterful synthesis, creative bridge-building

This criterion has high weight (25%) reflecting community-centered emphasis on cultural respect and synthesis.

5.4.3 Criterion 3: Community Focus & Democratic Values (0-20 points)

Evaluates whether solutions consider the entire community and use inclusive language.

RUBRIC LEVEL	Grade	Description
Developing	2–9 points	Focus on personal benefit only, solutions benefit one group
Progressing	10–13 points	Community wellbeing part of argument, generally inclusive language
Proficient	14–16 points	Community wellbeing central, solutions benefit diverse members, consistently inclusive
Advanced	18–20 points	Exceptional community-centered framing, solutions brilliantly address diversity, sophisticated rights-based analysis

5.4.4 Criterion 4: Engagement & Refutation (0-15 points)

Evaluates active listening and responsive engagement with opposition.

RUBRIC LEVEL	Grade	Description
Developing	2–7 points	No engagement with opposition, delivers prepared speech regardless
Progressing	8 –10 points	Acknowledges some opposition, provides basic refutation
Proficient	11–13 points	Directly addresses main opposition arguments, strong relevant refutation, clear active listening
Advanced	14–15 points	Exceptional engagement with every point, sophisticated refutation, outstanding listening, models respectful disagreement

5.4.5 Criterion 5: Communication & Presentation (0-10 points)

Evaluates clarity, organization, and linguistic courage (NOT perfection).

RUBRIC LEVEL	Grade	Description
Developing	1–4 points	Extremely disorganized, very quiet, difficult to understand due to structure issues
Progressing	5 –6 points	Generally clear and organized, adequate volume, communication understandable
Proficient	7–8 points	Clear and well-organized, good structure with signposting, communication courage evident
Advanced	9–10 points	Exceptionally clear and engaging, sophisticated organization, outstanding linguistic courage, compelling delivery

Remember: This criterion has the lowest weight (10%) because we value IDEAS over polish.

5.5 Using the Scoring System

JUDGE'S WORKFLOW:

STEP 1: Evaluate Each Speaker Using Rubric Levels

As each speaker presents, judge determines performance level for each criterion:

- Developing (1-4 equivalent)
- Progressing (5-6 equivalent)
- Proficient (7-8 equivalent)
- Advanced (9-10 equivalent)

STEP 2: Convert to Weighted Scores Using Reference Guide

Judge consults Rubric Conversion Table (see Appendix A or Judge's Handy Reference Guide):

EXAMPLE: Speaker is PROFICIENT in Criterion 1

- → Table shows: PROFICIENT in Criterion 1 = 21-24 points (out of 30)
- → Judge selects: 22 points based on where in proficient range performance falls

STEP 3: Complete Individual Speaker Evaluation

Repeat conversion for all 5 criteria for all 8 speakers (4 per team)

Record scores on Individual Speaker Evaluation Scoring Sheet (6-page document)

STEP 4: Calculate Team Totals

After all debates, add all 4 speakers' scores for each criterion:

- Criterion 1 total: Max 120 points (4 speakers × 30 points each)
- Criterion 2 total: Max 100 points (4 speakers × 25 points each)
- Criterion 3 total: Max 80 points (4 speakers × 20 points each)
- Criterion 4 total: Max 60 points (4 speakers × 15 points each)
- Criterion 5 total: Max 40 points (4 speakers × 10 points each)

TEAM TOTAL: Max 400 points per team

STEP 5: Determine Achievement Levels and Awards

- Compare team totals to achievement level thresholds:

- 320-400: Gold (Advanced)
 - 280-319: Silver (Proficient)
 - 240-279: Bronze (Progressing)
 - Below 240: Participant (Developing)
- Identify individual speaker excellence for special awards:

Example: Highest individual score in Criterion 2 → "Outstanding Bridge-BUILDER" award
 - Select team for representation opportunity if applicable

ADVANTAGES OF PRE-WEIGHTED SYSTEM:

- ✓ Weights automatically reflected in every score - no complex calculations
- ✓ Judges think in familiar rubric levels (Developing/Progressing/Proficient/Advanced)
- ✓ Simple addition for totals
- ✓ Individual speaker evaluation enables recognizing specific excellence
- ✓ Transparent and easy to explain to participants
- ✓ Consistent scoring across multiple judges

Partners with limited capacity may use simplified scoring (e.g., rubric levels only) provided core evaluation principles are maintained.

5.6 Feedback Orientation

Judges should provide written feedback that supports growth.

FEEDBACK SHOULD:

- Identify specific moments of excellence (with examples)
- Note areas for continued development
- Recognize cultural knowledge contributions
- Celebrate linguistic courage
- Suggest concrete next steps
- Maintain encouraging, supportive tone

FEEDBACK SHOULD NOT:



- Focus primarily on what went wrong
- Compare teams to each other
- Emphasize grammatical errors
- Use discouraging language
- Be generic without specific examples

Use Detailed Feedback Templates for structured guidance.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Protocol D6.3 should be monitored through a clear framework of quantitative and qualitative indicators. These indicators help partners track participation, implementation quality, and alignment with the goals of community-centered debate.

6.1 Quantitative Indicators

The following measurable indicators assess participation, structure, and competition outcomes:

- Number of youth participating per country (target: 60 participants per partner; 300 total)
- Debate teams formed (target: approximately 15 teams per country, with 4 participants per team)
- Distribution of participants across age divisions (10–12, 13–15, 16–18)
- Number of debates conducted per age division at local and/or national level
- Completion rate of rhetoric speech training and debate preparation
- Achievement level distribution (Gold / Silver / Bronze / Participant)
- Number and distribution of special recognition awards across categories

6.2 Qualitative Indicators

Qualitative indicators assess inclusivity, learning impact, and alignment with community-centered values:

- Participant feedback on inclusivity, psychological safety, and cultural respect
- Evidence of linguistic courage and multilingual participation
- Judge feedback on scoring system usability and fairness
- Coach and facilitator observations of skill development (critical thinking, argumentation, bridge-building)
- Quality of dialogue, including respect, engagement, and synthesis of perspectives
- Case studies of individual and team development

- Video and photo documentation of debates (collected with appropriate consent)

6.3 Implementation and Training KPIs

The protocol also monitors the quality and reach of educational implementation:

- Delivery of training in critical thinking, argumentation, and democratic dialogue
- Use of child-centered, gender-inclusive, and culturally responsive methodologies
- Formation of debate teams with defined roles (including Cultural Support Advisors)
- Evidence of incremental learning processes from local preparation to competition
- Participation in local, national, and (where applicable) international or pan-European activities
- Coordination and alignment across partners to ensure complementary and interoperable implementation

6.4 Reporting Requirements

Partners must submit a national tournament report within two weeks after implementation. The report should include both KPI data and short contextual analysis. It should cover:

- Participant demographics and total numbers (aligned with participation KPIs)
- Number and structure of debates conducted
- Summary of achievement levels and special recognitions
- Topics used and their relevance and effectiveness
- Summary of participant, judge, and coach feedback
- Description of implementation format (e.g., weekly, intensive, hybrid, standalone) and any local adaptations
- Challenges encountered and solutions applied
- Best practices identified
- Recommendations for future implementation

6.5 Use of Monitoring Data

Data collected through this framework will be used to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness and inclusivity of the community-centered debate model
- Ensure accountability and transparency across partner countries
- Identify best practices and areas for improvement
- Inform future refinement of Protocol D6.3 and related methodologies
- Contribute to project-level reporting and dissemination at European level

Category	Description
Total Participants	60 youth per partner country
Age Divisions	3 groups: 10–12 (Junior), 13–15 (Intermediate), 16–18 (Senior)
Participants per Division	Approximately 20 participants per age group
Team Composition	4 speakers per team (+ 1–2 Cultural Support Advisors)
Number of Teams	Approximately 15 teams per country (across all age divisions)
Teams per Division	Approximately 5 teams per age group
Competition Structure	Teams compete within their age division at local and/or national level
Progression	1 team per age division may be selected to represent the country (if applicable)

8. CONCLUSIONS

The Community-Centered Debate National Competitions represent a culminating educational activity that empowers children aged 10-18 to exercise their rights to free expression and democratic participation. Through culturally responsive debate, multilingual youth develop critical thinking, public speaking, and bridge-building skills essential for active citizenship in pluralistic democracies.

This protocol ensures that competitions remain child-friendly, inclusive, and aligned with children's rights while maintaining educational rigor and meaningful civic engagement. By celebrating linguistic diversity, honoring cultural knowledge, and emphasizing collaborative dialogue over adversarial competition, the TOC community debate model offers an innovative approach to youth civic education that can inform practice across diverse contexts.

While maintaining core community-centered principles, this protocol allows partners considerable flexibility in implementation. Partners may adapt training duration to participant readiness and create topics that are relevant to their local community contexts. Facilitation approaches can be adjusted to align with cultural norms, and tournaments may be scaled to match available resources. Throughout all of this, partners are encouraged to innovate within the framework while preserving its foundational values.

Protocol D6.3 will continue evolving based on a range of inputs, including partner implementation experiences, participant feedback, and judge usability assessments, as well as emerging best practices and ongoing research on community-centered pedagogies. Partners are encouraged to share their

innovations, challenges, and recommendations, as these contributions will directly inform the ongoing refinement of the protocol.

8. List of additional documentation

The following documents support the implementation of Protocol D6.3. All documents are available through TOC Project coordination.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS (must be used by all partners):

1. Individual Speaker Evaluation Scoring Sheet - Pre-weighted scoring system for comprehensive evaluation of all speakers
2. Judge's Handy Reference Guide - One-page laminated quick reference with complete rubric and weighted score conversion table
3. Registration Form - including CSA information fields and emergency contacts
4. Adjudicator Training Guide with complete rubric descriptors, community-centered philosophy, and pre-weighted scoring guidance
5. Facilitator's Handbook - concise, role-specific guidance including Phase 4 facilitation strategies
6. Cultural Support Advisor Handbook - explaining CSA role, note-passing techniques, and team support strategies
7. Participant Handbook - designed with narrative flow and youth-friendly language, minimal bullet points

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES:

8. Community-Centered Debate Topics - Guidance document on creating genuinely controversial yet bridgeable topics reflecting real community tensions, includes examples and vetting criteria
9. Detailed Feedback Template - Structured performance analysis aligned with five criteria
10. National Tournament Implementation Guide - Step-by-step practical guide for organizing tournaments
11. Welcome Scripts & Bridge-Building Scenarios

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RUBRIC CONVERSION TABLE

This table helps judges convert rubric levels into weighted numerical scores for each criterion. Judges should use it during scoring to keep decisions consistent and clear.

Rubric Level	Criterion 1 (0-30)	Criterion 2 (0-25)	Criterion 3 (0-20)	Criterion 4 (0-15)	Criterion 5 (0-10)
DEVELOPING (1-4)	3-12	3-10	2-8	2-6	1-4
PROGRESSING (5-6)	15-18	13-15	10-12	8-9	5-6
PROFICIENT (7-8)	21-24	18-20	14-16	11-12	7-8
ADVANCED (9-10)	27-30	23-25	18-20	14-15	9-10
<i>Quick Reference (midpoints)</i>	14-16	12-14	9-11	7-8	5

USAGE EXAMPLE:

Judge evaluates Speaker A3 as PROFICIENT in Criterion 1 (Argument Construction).

Table shows PROFICIENT in Criterion 1 = 21-24 points.

The judge determined the speaker's performance was solidly proficient → awards 22 points (out of 30).

Quick Reference row provides midpoint values for rapid scoring when performance clearly falls in the middle of range.

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE COMPLETED SCORING SHEET

This sample demonstrates how judges complete the Individual Speaker Evaluation Scoring Sheet, calculate team totals, determine achievement levels, and select awards.

[Note: Full sample scoring sheet would be included as image or detailed example. For protocol document, the key elements are:]

SAMPLE SCENARIO:

Team A vs Team B debate on topic: "Families should speak only the host language at home to help children learn faster"

TEAM A INDIVIDUAL SCORES:

Speaker	Grade by Criterion → Total
Speaker A1 (Group Leader)	22 + 18 + 14 + 11 + 7 = 72/100
Speaker A2 (Heritage Wisdom)	24 + 23 + 16 + 12 + 8 = 83/100
Speaker A3 (Bridge-BUILDER)	21 + 20 + 15 + 12 + 7 = 75/100
Speaker A4 (Future Vision)	24 + 19 + 16 + 11 + 8 = 78/100

TEAM A TOTALS BY CRITERION:

Criterion	Grade
Criterion 1	91/120
Criterion 2	80/100
Criterion 3	61/80
Criterion 4	46/60
Criterion 5	30/40
TEAM A TOTAL	308/400 (77%) → SILVER (Proficient)



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SPECIAL AWARDS:

Outstanding Bridge-BUILDER: Speaker A3 (highest Criterion 2 score: 20)

Cultural Wisdom Keeper: Speaker A2 (exceptional heritage integration)

This demonstrates a complete workflow from individual evaluation through team recognition.

APPENDIX C: TOPIC DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to review potential debate topics before they are used.

Use this worksheet to vet potential debate topics before use.

TOPIC BEING EVALUATED:

VETTING CHECKLIST:

☐ 1. GENUINELY CONTROVERSIAL

- Can reasonable people disagree on this topic?
- Is there real tension in communities around this issue?
- Are there legitimate arguments on multiple sides?

☐ 2. BRIDGE-BUILDABLE

- Do opposing sides share underlying values?
- Can synthesis solutions be imagined?
- Is there potential for finding common ground?

☐ 3. COMMUNITY-RELEVANT

- Does this reflect actual tensions immigrant/multilingual communities experience?
- Will participants have personal/family/cultural knowledge to draw on?
- Is this issue meaningful to their lives?

☐ 4. LEGITIMATELY MULTI-SIDED

- Are both perspectives grounded in valid concerns?
- Can participants argue both sides using evidence?
- Does one side require ignoring evidence or values?

☐ 5. AGE-APPROPRIATE

- Is vocabulary accessible at target language level?
- Are concepts understandable for age division?
- Is the topic relevant to participants' developmental stage?

☐ 6. SAFE AND ETHICAL

- Does the topic avoid stereotyping any group?
- Will anyone feel unsafe or targeted?
- Is trauma considered and opt-out available if needed?
- Are support structures in place if needed?

TESTING QUESTIONS:

What are the two main opposing positions?

Position A:

Position B:

What underlying values do both sides share?

What synthesis or bridge solution might emerge?

What personal/cultural knowledge can A1-A2 speakers access?

FINAL DECISION:

☐ APPROVE for use

☐ REVISE (specify changes needed):

☐ REJECT (specify reason):

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____