

Example of a role card for the discussion leader:

Discussion leader	
1.	You open the conversation. <i>"The goal of our discussion today is..."</i>
2.	You then pose a question or ask for opinions. <i>"What do we require to reach this goal?"</i>
3.	You must ensure that the discussion participants stick to the subject. <i>"This does not fit with the topic."</i>
4.	You ask for clarification, if something is not comprehensible. <i>"What do you mean by...?"</i>
5.	You terminate the discussion! <i>"Today, we have agreed that..."</i>
6.	You ask a final question for the conversation: <i>"What do you think went well? What could we do better next time?"</i>

15 To assume the role of discussion moderator

Goal

This exercise is a simplified version of #14 and pursues the same objectives in the area of speech education: democratic conduct, and free speaking. By limiting the roles to just one (discussion leader), this exercise is also appropriate for younger students (from 2nd grade on) and for shorter discussion rounds.

2nd–4th grade

15–30 minutes



Procedure:

- It is presumed that a conversation topic has been chosen (either by the instructor or the students) or that the instructor has a prepared list with possible age-appropriate discussion topics from which the students can choose.
- The instructor explains that s/he would like to hand over the moderation of the conversation to a student. Who wants to give it a try? What do you have to pay attention to in guiding the discussion? (Key points: preparing stimulating questions and prompts; observing the time frame; compliance with the conversation rules established thus far.)
- The child who assumes the moderator role is given 5 minutes of preparation time and writes down a few inspiring questions and prompts for the conversation. The instructor must absolutely assist the student in this phase.
- The student initiates the conversation in that s/he writes the topic and the goal on the board and arranges his/her notes.
- The conversation is guided based on the discussion leader's notes.
- In closing, the course of the conversation and the experiences with the leadership of the discussion are briefly reviewed.

Variants:

- The moderator function can also be shared between two students.
- If possible, all students should be afforded the possibility of assuming the leadership of the conversation one time. This will require various conversations. It is also possible to pass on the leadership role of the discussion to another student after 5-10 minutes.
- The discussion leadership can also be implemented and practiced in forms such as class council, etc.

16

Planning discussion

Goal

In the planning discussion, the students practice their argumentative skills, as well as their listening comprehension in the first language. Their discussing in a democratic manner things like agreements and clear regulations of responsibility, deadlines, etc. in conjunction with a project strengthens their autonomy and social competence at the same time.

4th–6th grade

30–45 minutes



Hint:

The precondition for this exercise is that the students (or at least a group of them) have the time and theme for a project. This may involve minor projects (e. g. creating posters about various aspects of the country of origin in groups of 3 or 4), medium sized projects (e. g. preparing a presentation about a historical or geographical theme, or the preparation of a poetry recital) or large projects (the conception of a book or a CD with texts in the heritage language; preparation of a festival or a parents' evening with theater, aperitif, etc.). It is important that the time and content-related frame has been predetermined, so that the students can work as independently as possible.

Procedure:

- The students determine the project goal: "What do we want to accomplish together?"
- The students gather ideas: "How can we optimally achieve our goal?"
- The ideas are being discussed within the group or the class as a whole. Key questions: "Which ideas and goals can we realize? Who can contribute something?"
- Finally, a written plan is drafted: "Who does what, how, when, and with whom?"

Comments:

- The first planning discussion is guided by the instructor. After that, the discussion moderator and other roles (e. g. the recorder function) can be assumed by students (see #14 above). The instructor only intervenes when necessary.
- If the procedure, the key terms (in the first language!) and possibly other organizationally important points are listed in writing, this will enable the students to better orient themselves in the discussion and later with their work.