
AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT: DEBATE

This authentic assessment example is from an Art and Education Unit called Disaster Resilience and Response Through a Planetary Health Lens from the Graduate Certificate in Planetary Health degree.

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Overview	Duration	Weighting	Due
Debate on ethical dilemmas in disaster risk reduction and response.	12 minutes (4 minutes per team member)	15%	Session 6 of 8 (script due before class; present in class)

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment task is to:

- Argue a position on an ethical dilemma in disaster risk reduction and response using evidence and examples.
- Use knowledge and understanding of an ethical issue to rebut an argument from an opposing point of view.

It aligns with the following learning outcomes:

- **LO 3:** Advocate for the use of specific and practical frameworks and tools to inform disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery that fosters ownership and builds resistance
- **LO 5:** Interpret statements of ethics, human rights and codes of conduct in disaster management and hypothesise their practical impact

Assessment requirements

Disaster management is complex. The urgent need to respond to and mitigate the impact of a disaster in often unfamiliar and rapidly evolving situations raises ethical issues for the people involved. Understanding the ethical implications of decision-making in disasters is a vital skill for emergency and disaster practitioners.

You will be a member of a three-person team, debating an ethical issue that can arise in disaster management. Your team will be supporting or opposing the issue. Each team member will have 3 minutes to present their arguments, and 1 minute to rebut the arguments of the opposing team. You will be assessed on your teamwork, as well as individually on your performance in the debate.

Debate topics include but are not limited to:

- International principles and values should take precedence over local cultures and norms when responding to a disaster
- Spontaneous volunteering in a disaster response is more of a hindrance than a help

- Responding to needs is more important than upholding rights in a humanitarian response
- Humanitarian action should be considered an act of charity rather than an internationally and legally agreed obligation
- If the capacity of local government organizations is weak it is worth overriding these systems to save lives and alleviate suffering.
- Aid is important to avoid disasters and to build back better after a disaster
- Most natural disasters today are human-made
- Disaster management today is unfavourably guided by Western ideas

In addition to participating in debates, you will judge all of the other teams in their debates and vote on the winners.

Instructions

1. Carefully read the assessment requirements, criteria and rubric for this task
2. You will be allocated to a team of three members to debate an issue or a resolution
3. Discuss the topics with your team and give a preference for a topic – you may choose from the topics provided or suggest a different topic
4. Topics will be allocated to teams considering preferences
5. Meet as a team to plan the structure of your debate, including deciding the order of speakers and which speaker will present which argument
6. In Session 6, debate your position against another team which will present the opposing position

You will also judge each debate in your session and vote for the winners by a show of hands.

Assessment criteria

Criterion 1: Knowledge of the topic

Criterion 2: Use of evidence/examples

Criterion 3: Presentation of argument

Criterion 4: Persuasiveness of argument

Criterion 5: Rebuttal

Criterion 6: Teamwork