

Discussion and Debate

Introduction

As a plenary session, a discussion or debate would give students the opportunity to bring together much that has been covered in this topic, and arrive at their own conclusions about CAM. The class could propose their own motion for debate or use this one:

'This house believes complementary and alternative therapies are a waste of money and do not work.'

Timing

The discussion / debate itself would probably take about 30 minutes, but sufficient time should be allowed for students to prepare their cases. At least one whole lesson is needed in total, with some preparation done for homework.

Teaching methods

Whether you run this as a whole class discussion, several small group discussions or a formalised debate will depend on the number of students in your class and their abilities. In discussions all students should contribute but you may not be able to moderate each discussion group. In a formal debate there should be a proposer and seconder for and against the motion and a vote at the end. The teacher or a student could act as the Chair. If you have a debate, fewer students will have a chance to speak so there should be an opportunity for questions from the floor to allow all a voice.

Whichever method you chose, students must have sufficient time to prepare. Emphasis should be placed on using examples and evidence as well as opinion and belief. Discussions could be audio- and /or video recorded to provide evidence for a Key Skills Communication portfolio.

References

Textbook
Chapter 5

Specification
9.4 Alternative medicine