



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
Portugal

NEWSLETTER

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Debating Skills - developing effective communication

Dr Miguel Sousa Ferro, a lawyer and assistant lecturer at the Law Faculty of the University of Lisbon and one of our illustrious ESU members, once said about participating in our debating activities: “Debating was mostly responsible for a lot of fun stories and for making me a more annoying lawyer.”

We can infer from this that debating skills are of vital importance to help create critical thinkers who are confident communicators. Debate skills help to empower people, so that they can become active citizens in their communities and beyond.

In schools, the ability to talk fluently and express ideas develops students’ confidence, self-esteem and communication skills.

Debating activities are instrumental in developing students’ reasoning, listening and presentation skills, and these skills are important

across the whole curriculum, be it Portuguese, English, Maths or any other subject. Listening critically and speaking critically enhances the students’ performance at school and prepares them for life upon leaving school.

In today’s society, students need to take more responsibility for their own learning and their own achievement. Debating activities help students find their own voice and develop their own learning. Debating unleashes thinking and engages students, thus promoting learning and excellence.

Furthermore, as Dr Geoff Barton argues, Secondary School Debating helps students enter language’s corridors of power in as far as it provides the students with the appropriate language and communication tools to survive and thrive in today’s highly competitive world.

[Find out more at oracynetwork.org](http://oracynetwork.org)



News

- 26th March - The National Public-Speaking Competition (nearly 40 students are taking part)
- 27th - 30th September - ESU’s International Council Meeting hosted by The English-Speaking Union of Portugal

National Public-Speaking Competition 2017

Thirty-nine students have already been enrolled in the NPSC by their English teachers.

In some schools, due to the number of students interested in participating in the NPSC, the English teachers had to hold their

own school competitions in order to select the 3

students who will represent their school at the competition at the British Council, in Lisbon.



Further information about the competition programme will be sent to you soon.

Workshops in schools 2017

St. Peter's School, Palmela



HERE are a few photographs taken during our debating workshop at St. Peter's School in Palmela, on 17th January. After the workshop, led by André Gonçalves of Sociedade de Debates Académicos de Lisboa, the students debated the theme "This house believes homoparental adoption should be illegal". In this debate, the students put into practice what they had been discussing about parliamentary debating.

At the end of the debate, everybody agreed that it had been a very useful workshop with plenty of information and

good tips to help students develop their debating skills.

We would like to thank teacher Carla Davies for inviting us to run this workshop and take this opportunity to congratulate the students who carried out an interesting debate on a particularly difficult topic, we thought. It just goes to show what our students are capable of when given the opportunity to do their best.



Jácome Ratton School, Tomar

These photographs were taken during the workshop in Tomar.



Jácome Ratton School

THE workshop at Jácome Ratton School took place on 1st February.

After André's presentation, the students debated the motion "This house believes that everyone should become vegetarian".

It was good to see that students used their knowledge of other school subjects to make some very good arguments both for and against the motion. Despite having only 15 minutes to prepare their speeches, the students discussed very important and thought-

provoking issues related to this topic. It was a good, enjoyable and productive afternoon's work!

We must thank the Principal of Oeiras International School, Chari Empis, who arranged for two of her students and teacher Barbara Monteiro, herself an experienced debater, to accompany us to Tomar and take part in the workshop. This gave another dimension to this workshop and debating practice. Having someone from outside their own school encouraged the students to

do their very best and it also enabled all the participants to exchange ideas and knowledge, which is always a very enriching experience.

Congratulations to all involved.



English idioms

A Heartfelt* Exercise

In honor of Valentine's Day, here are some commonly used idioms that include the word "heart" as well as the names of other internal organs.

Go over these idioms with your conversation partner and try using them in sentences.

***heartfelt** - sincere; deeply and strongly felt

Her apology was **heartfelt**, so of course I forgave her.

have the stomach for something - have the courage or resolution to do something

I thought of enlisting in the army, but I don't **have the stomach for** violence.

have the gall (to do something)—have enough arrogance (to do something)

After she won the lottery, my friend **had the gall** to ask me for a loan.

lily-livered –weak and cowardly; lacking courage

He considers his political enemies to be a bunch of **lily-livered** hypocrites.

at the top of one's lungs – very loudly

The angry child yelled **at the top of his lungs** until he got his mother's attention.

have butterflies in your stomach – be anxious or nervous

I **had butterflies in my stomach** before I gave my speech.

have a big heart – be generous, kind or helpful

My neighbor **has a big heart**. She feeds my cat when I go away and shovels the front walk when it snows.

have a change of heart—change the way you feel or think about something

I didn't think I wanted to study French, but after I read *Emma Bovary*, I **had a change of heart**, and I decided to sign up for French lessons.

With thanks to The English-Speaking Union of USA

Public Speaking Competition at Jácome Ratton School, Tomar

In order to select the three students to participate in the National Public Speaking Competition on March 26th, the English teachers at Jácome Ratton School in Tomar had to hold their own Public Speaking Competition, such was the interest shown by the students.

A total of 18 students delivered their speeches before an enthralled audience.

According to teacher Maria José Marques, the selection was quite difficult as there were a number of very good speeches. In the end, the winners were Ricardo, Simone and Miriam who will represent their school at the NPSC at the British Council on March 26th.



Here is what Alechandre António, a year 11 student and one of the non-winning participants, said at the end of the competition, after the winners had been announced:

“It was an afternoon well spent. It was a good experience to listen to all the different opinions and metaphors used to describe the same experience and theme, and despite the hard work I put into my speech - it was a challenge writing (and rewriting) my dear “There, I fixed it with my Roadrunner” - I’m already looking forward to competing in next year’s public speaking competition.”

Congratulations to you all at Jácome Ratton School.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

GREAT minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)

JOKE OF THE MONTH

WHAT do you call a dinosaur that has a great command of English?
A Thesaurus.

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<https://www.facebook.com/ESUPortugal/?fref=ts>