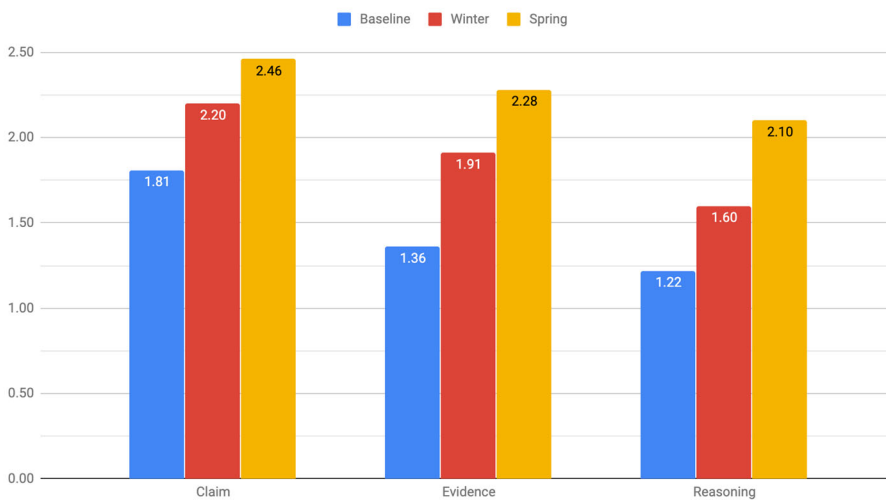


Debate-Inspired Classrooms' School-Wide Initiative: Impact

IMPACT ON STUDENTS: COMMON CORE SKILLS

Debate-Inspired Classrooms helps improve student's skills needed to meet Common Core State and Next Generation Science and Math Standards. In the 2018-19 school year, teacher leaders across Year 2 and 3 partner schools designed and implemented authentic, content-specific argumentative writing assessments in the fall, winter, and spring. They used a common rubric to grade the assessments. The scores reflect significant growth in the skills of argumentation – namely claim, evidence, and reasoning – including **an 87% growth in evidence and 112% growth in reasoning**. In 2019-20, teacher leaders across Year 2 and 3 partner schools will implement similar assessments.

2018-19 CER Score Improvement



Percent CER Skill Improvement (from Fall 2018 to Spring 2019)



Assessments implemented and evaluated in Fall 2018, Winter 2019, and Spring 2019 by **5 teachers from the Margarita Muñiz Academy and Henderson Inclusion Upper School.**

Represents **215 students**, in the English Humanities, Spanish Humanities, ELA inclusion, Environmental Science, and Biology.

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BDL VISION: All young people in Boston are: **ENGAGED** in critical discourse, **INFORMED** by evidence, **EMPOWERED** to lead.

BDL VALUES: Power of Young People. Analytic Discourse. Diversity and Inclusion. Racial and Social Equity. Joy in Learning.

IMPACT ON TEACHING & LEARNING

2018-19 EOY TEACHER SURVEY

Over 90% of teachers surveyed agreed that Debate-Inspired Classrooms:

- ❖ Helps students build critical thinking and argumentation skills (Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning)
- ❖ Helps students collaborate with their peers as learners
- ❖ Helps build a classroom environment in which student voice is central
- ❖ Fosters high student engagement

Teacher reflections about the impact of Debate-Inspired Classrooms on their classrooms and practice:

- ❖ "A great deal of my approach to teaching has changed since I started implementing Debate-Inspired Classrooms into my practice."
- ❖ "Too many positives to name. Mainly, Debate-Inspired Classrooms has taken the weight off me and provided engaging activities for my students that challenge their thinking skills."
- ❖ "It provides excellent structures, especially when I am looking for something fresh and new to do. I use Debate-Inspired Classrooms all the time."
- ❖ "Argumentation is really important in math and this helps give techniques."
- ❖ "I try to give students as many chances as possible to write and talk to each other using evidence for problems that don't have a 'solution.'"
- ❖ "It has shown me that even in a foreign language class, students can use the language of argumentation."
- ❖ "I feel like I am able to give students a more structured approach for writing an argument that encourages the use of evidence."
- ❖ "I think much more about genuine student academic discourse."
- ❖ "Debate-Inspired Classrooms pushes me as a facilitator."
- ❖ "Giving my students more space to voice their thoughts and understanding and learn from each other rather than just from me."
- ❖ "Expanded strategies for engaging deeply with material. Helped me talk less and students talk more. Helped me connect consistently to focus on argument skills."
- ❖ "The coach gives me immediate feedback which has helping me build confidence around this kind of work. I have a variety of formative lessons in my repertoire."

REFLECTIONS FROM THE 2018 GRADUATE COURSE

Teacher Participant: "If I use Debate-Inspired Classrooms in my lessons, it may change the way students think about school, at least in my classroom; they may come in with the notion that they will be active participants, rather than passive imbibers of whatever is scheduled for the day... I noticed this in myself and others in class this week. Typically, I take a skeptical view of professional development. So much of it is not worth my time... Having said that, this professional development charged me up. I really could not wait to see what we might learn next, and I came mentally prepared to 'do battle' with whatever challenge was put before us. Working with others was a joy, and I heard perspectives that made me think in a new way."

Teacher Facilitator: "This experience [facilitating Debate-Inspired Classrooms grad class] really reaffirmed a lot of what I felt about Debate-Inspired Classrooms. It was awesome to see a group of (particularly math) teachers come in skeptical about Debate-Inspired Classrooms and leave loving it. I also feel like I am better able to identify my weaknesses as a facilitator now; this experience has shown me what I need to work on to improve my ability to run/assist PD sessions."

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2018-19 EOY HEADMASTER/PRINCIPAL SURVEY

100% of school leaders who completed the EOY survey agreed that Debate-Inspired Classrooms:

- ❖ Supports the school's instructional focus
- ❖ Helps improve students' critical thinking and argumentation skills (Claim, Evidence, Reasoning)
- ❖ Helps students collaborate with their peers as learners
- ❖ Helps build a classroom environment in which student voice is central
- ❖ Fosters high student engagement

"Why Debate-Inspired Classrooms?" TESTIMONIALS FROM PRINCIPALS & HEADMASTERS

Lindsa McIntyre, Burke High School (Alumni School)

My number one heartfelt thought: Debate-Inspired Classrooms is about equity. When I hear students stand up in a classroom and use their voice, with a thought process, with evidence, that's a beautiful thing. Because most of our students are marginalized, they haven't had voice in any process. First, with Debate-Inspired Classrooms they get a voice. Second, Debate-Inspired Classrooms provides a process to think about how students learn and think. We ask, "Where is your evidence to support your thinking?" In addition to supporting students, Debate-Inspired Classrooms also explores, what do teachers need to know? Debate-Inspired Classrooms gives them an opportunity to learn without feeling vulnerable; it helps create psychological safety in the community.

Matt Holzer, Boston Green Academy (Alumni School)

Debate-Inspired Classrooms is awesome! To understand what it means to be "green" requires the ability to make and evaluate arguments, and to have the skill set to grapple with complex problems. This is exactly what sustained, school-wide Debate-Inspired Classrooms work provides.

Andrew Rollins, Mildred Avenue K-8 School (Alumni School)

It's how you actually invigorate the Common Core State Standards in the classroom and make them come to life. It's easier to get teachers to teach in alignment with the standards; Debate-Inspired Classrooms is at the forefront driving students to engage with the standards.

Jeff Cook, Urban Science Academy (Alumni School)

The intensive and differentiated coaching support provided by BDL is the major reason. So often, we roll out initiatives without providing our faculty with the necessary support for effective implementation. The Debate-Inspired Classrooms model solves this all-too-common dilemma. And second, the beauty of having a common language (Claim, Evidence, Reasoning) centered around our instructional focus area is just incredibly powerful. Already, in just a few short months, Debate-Inspired Classrooms has become deeply engrained at USA - across all content areas.

Pauline Liguria, Lilla Frederick Middle School (Year 3 School)

Debate-Inspired Classrooms has supported our students with instruction discourse. Our students have more confidence as a result of engaging in the Debate-Inspired Classrooms activities. The activities have ultimately supported our students in their ability to complete end of unit tasks.

Dania Vázquez, Margarita Muñiz Academy (Year 3 School)

Debate-Inspired Classrooms is closely aligned with our overarching school goal of developing independent learners in a dual language context. We are able to engage students in Debate-Inspired Classrooms in both languages which feels inclusive and accessible for all students. Our focused Debate-Inspired Classrooms principles of Voice, Collaboration and Argumentation have allowed for more depth in most classrooms.

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