

## Should English be the Official Language of the United States? In-Class Debate

To be used with “English-Only Triumphs, but the Costs are High” by Alejandro Portes. *Contexts*. Spring 2002.

Directions: Students will read the article before the class period and come to class prepared with 3 arguments in favor of English being the official language of the United States (check out <http://us-english.org> for arguments on this side) and 3 arguments opposed to English being the official language. Students will be assigned a side to take when they come into class. The two sides will break into smaller groups of 4-5 and discuss their arguments supporting their assigned side. Each small group will have 1 or 2 representatives who will be responsible for presenting their arguments to the other side. All representatives from one side will present their groups arguments, followed by all representatives from the other side. While one side is presenting, each student on the opposing side will come up with a rebuttal to an argument presented. After both sides have presented, the floor will be open for debate. After the debate, all students will come out of character and will have the opportunity to express their opinions on the issue. Afterward, all students will write an in-class reflection on what they learned from the debate and how they feel about this issue.

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To be completed before class:

English should be the official language of the United States because:

1)

2)

3)

English should not be the official language of the United States because:

1)

2)

3)

**In-class Small Group Work:**

After all members of your group have presented their arguments, pick 3 that the group agrees are the best arguments for the debate:

1)

2)

3)

As the other side presents their arguments, think of a rebuttal to one or more of their points.

Rebuttal(s):

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**Individual Reflection (after the debate):**

What was your position on this issue before the debate?

What did you learn from this debate?

What is your position on this issue now?