

Key Concepts from the Sphere Summit for the High School English Classroom

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- Palmer- The language of authoritarian populism (us vs. them and its many permutations), Chavez saying “I am Venezuela”, analysis of rhetorical language, relate it to literature (i.e. *Heart of Darkness*)
- Klang- the three language of politics. Our division is rooted in fear. For conservatives, there is a fear of barbarism. For liberals, there is a fear of oppression. For libertarians, there is a fear of coercion.
- Cannon & Glied- Ideological turing test. Here’s what I think your argument is... Here’s my evaluation of your argument and here’s what you missed or got wrong.
- Interpreting the Constitution
- Human Progress website- spark daily writing, compare/contrast evidence
- Actively listening to the thoughts of others, repeating back what someone said, acknowledging the argument of another before beginning your own (This is already done often in English classes re: Socratic Seminars, fishbowls, etc.) These models and norms of civil discourse can be helpful in communities that are quite diverse.
- “Lowering the temperature” Necessary in the face of populism, but possibly problematic because throughout time passion has been necessary to create change.
- Davis- show respect, don’t dismiss the speaker just because you don’t see eye-to-eye
- Strauss- need to save freedom of speech, give writing prompts about different court cases relating to free speech and push students to express an opinion
- Annie Duke’s probabilistic thinking, push students to think beyond black & white, characters in literature who make decisions, her quote “What I know is the head of a pin; what I don’t know is the size of the universe.”
- Helping students understand that the opinion expressed is not the thinker, separate the emotion from the statement
- Hate Speech- what is it? How do we define it? Who makes that decision? Write about and debate the right to free speech.
- Teaching point of view, word choice, tone
- Echo chambers & confirmation bias- the usefulness of this awareness in argument writing
- National Writing Project’s [C3WP](#) Argument Writing Project (heavy focus on teaching kids in grades 3-12 about civil discourse)