

GMO Debate

Before I begin, here is a recap of what my assignment will be about. When I started thinking about a topic for social justice, I had to think about how I could relate biology to this matter. While brainstorming, I picked up the latest issue of Discover and read an article entitled "Crop Wars." This article was about GMO's in our society and the impact they are having socially, economically, and ethically. When my classes have class discussions, I always challenge them to look at both sides of the spectrum. I often play devil's advocate and present opposing points to make them think outside the box. For this assignment, I am thinking about setting up a debate where I put my students into teams. Each team will be responsible for researching recent (and credible) literature that pertains to GMO's.

Here are my answers to the guidelines (I'm not sure if this is how you want it, so I hope this is ok)

1. I plan on using this assignment in my Bio 111 course.
2. Our final unit in this course has a chapter that emphasizes biotechnology. My GMO debate would be an alternate method to get my students thinking about biotechnology on their own.
3. GMO's relate to social justice in many ways. Modification of organisms impacts our environment, health, and economy. On one hand, it's great to be able to feed the masses, but we have to think about the implications involved to the modification of organisms to do this. In addition, are corporations really looking out for our best interest or are they just trying to make a buck?
4. I plan on using this assignment at the end of the semester in my Bio 111 course during our discussion with biotechnology. I might try it this semester, but if not, then next Fall.
5. GYC201
6. KirkpatrickBIO111
7. GMO Debate
- 8, 9, 10, and 11. All of this should be apparent in my actual assignment.
- 12 and 13. See attached assignment and rubric. I plan on passing out this rubric to my students for them to perform a peer evaluation. This should help hold the students more accountable if they know their peers will be evaluating them.

Background: Genetically modified organisms are a hot topic in our society. The next couple of days you (and your group) will be role-playing and debating on a specific issue that I assign. You will be split up into groups of 3 or 4 and will be given a topic to research either the pros or the cons on the issue. Your group will have to develop some ideas to try to win the debate.

Tasks to complete:

Once I assign your group a topic, here are the following steps you should take in order to organize your position.

- ✓ Each team must be able to explain what GMO's are and provide several examples. Try to find examples of GMO's you actually use in your daily life.

- ✓ Each team should research the benefits of GMO's and how they may help society (ex: drought resistant crops, pest resistant crops, etc.)
- ✓ Each team should research the pitfalls GMO's may have on society. (ex: health effects, "superweeds", etc.)
- ✓ Research the topic at hand and find out other views and opinions that some people might have that match yours.
- ✓ Compile a list of about 5-10 strong ideas that outline your group's position on the topic (your group can make one collective list)- **This will be turned in to me**
- ✓ **Each person in the group needs to express an opinion** (say at least one or two things during the debate)
- ✓ Debate between the groups will last about 10 minutes, so try to look for your strongest points to talk about.
- ✓ Each individual will turn in a 1 page paper outlining the benefits and costs of GMO's. In this paper, student can express their own viewpoint regarding this topic (it can be longer than a page if you wish).

Issue #1: GMO's, Economic

-For: Give reasons why we should put funding into this. How does it benefit us? What are some positive economic factors? What corporations are making money? How does this affect jobs?

-Against: Give reasons why we should not put funding into this. What are the negative sides to it? Why are some of these corporations bad? What are some alternatives?

Issue #2: GMO's, Social

-For: What are GMO's? What are some examples that could be helpful for people around the world? Give reasons why GMO's benefit the nation and the world.

-Against: What are GMO's? State how GMO's are bad or potentially bad. Give reasons why we should not produce GMO's. Why could they cause negative effects to humans? What are some alternatives?

GMO Debate Rubric

Names of group members: _____

Topic: _____

<u>Presentation requirements</u>	<u>Your points</u>	<u>Possible points</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1. What are GMO's? This was explained by one of the teams.		2	
2. Examples- The group provided at least 3 different examples of GMO's.		3	
3. Pro's/Con's- The group gave ample positive or negative aspects about GMO's to make an argument.		5	
4. Each person spoke and made at least 1 comment about their assigned issue. Make a note of those who did not speak.		5	
5. Presentation: Debate wasn't too short (under 5 minutes) or too long (over 15 minutes). Group members were audible and spoke clearly. Member's kept "uhs" and "ums" to a minimum. Group members made eye contact with the audience and opposing side of the debate		10	
6. Each student turned in a 1 page paper summarizing the costs and benefits of GMO's. This paper expressed his or her "true" viewpoint on the issue.		10	
7. References/Works cited page- Each member of the group provided at least 5 (credible) sources. Use APA format when typing your sources.		5	
8. Handout/Outline: The group provided the instructor with an outline composed of 5-10 ideas on the group's position.		5	
9. Other: Grammar, spelling, and typed paper/outlines will be a part of the grade as well.		5	

Total: _____ / 50