

## **German Debates - deutsche Debatten**

Undeterred by the obvious challenge of debating in a foreign language, Clifton students of German in Year 11 and in the Sixth Form competed in the annual **deutsche Debatten** on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November and found the experience to be positive and beneficial.

“It was great communicating in German with people from other schools on topics relevant to us.” This is how Pippa Robinson described the event hosted by Clifton College for the fifth year running. The debates offer students the opportunity to prepare speeches and defend points of view on motions as disparate as “*Klimawandel*” (climate change) and society’s obsession with “*Gesundheit*” (health). There was also this more light-hearted motion against being tied down in a relationship: „*Ich bin Single, das ist besser...!*”

Clifton faced very strong opposition from Germanists at Clifton High School for Girls and Badminton School. Of her victory, Dasha Gunchenko said: “It was amazing and we should do it more often. I was so happy that we won!” Our students won two of the debates and Johnnie Gill received special mention for the use of humour (yes, humour in a debate in German – and he was hysterically funny!) and Max Devlin was rewarded for his effective answers to points of information.

Emma Pelkiewicz of Badminton School said: “Although I was really nervous, I found it an enjoyable experience as everyone was so friendly and encouraging.” CHS Head Girl Helena Bolton-Jones said: ‘...it was a good opportunity to argue in German!’

All the students who participated in writing speeches, debating, posing questions or chairing ‘*die Debatten*’ deserve credit for their skill and their high level of spoken German. I look forward to next year’s round.

Owen Lewis  
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