**The Great Energy Debate**

**Scenario**: You are an aide to a U.S. Senator. The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is scheduled to hold a hearing on the country’s energy policy, with a goal of making some changes. Your job is to help your boss, the Senator, prepare for that hearing.

With your fellow Senate aides, you have decided to divide up the work of researching energy sources for your bosses. Here is the procedure you will follow:

**Task 1:** Each Senatorial office will research one or two forms of energy production which occur in their state:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| California: hydropower and geothermal | Arizona: solar and wind |
| West Virginia: coal | Iowa: ethanol |
| Texas: petroleum | Pennsylvania: natural gas |
| South Carolina: nuclear |  |

You have a **chart** to help organize your information.

Follow this procedure in your group:

* Read the first paragraph of your handout silently. Feel free to mark up your copy.
* One person will lead the discussion of that paragraph. Did you find any useful information for your chart?
* Read the second paragraph silently.
* The next person in your group leads the discussion.
* Continue with this process until you have read all of the handout. Everyone in your group will lead the discussion at least once.
* If your group has two energy sources to research, divide your group in half, and each half can read one handout. When both halves of the group finish their chart, meet as a whole group. Each subgroup will report what they learned from their reading.

**Task II.** Now you need to exchange information with your colleagues. We will form 4 new large groups, so divide your team up into four pieces (it’s OK if two people go together to the new group). Designate your four pieces A, B, C and D.

A team members will meet to share information on how the resource forms or works.

B team members will meet to share information on where the resource comes from.

C members will meet to share information on how the resource is used.

D members will meet to share information on environmental and economic issues.

**Task III:** It’s time to prepare for the debate. Return to your original team.

To help your boss, the Senator, do a good job at the hearing, your team will design an energy policy that is favorable to your state, and that you think is good for the country.

**You have three tools to use in your energy policy:**

1. You can award government subsidies to producers of some kinds of energy to encourage production.

2. You can impose taxes on producers of other kinds of energy to discourage use.

3. You can regulate some kinds of energy production by requiring anti-pollution technology. This will drive up the cost of that kind of energy, and discourage its use.

**Choose two kinds of energy you want to promote, and two kinds of energy you want to discourage.**

**Summarize your energy policy on your whiteboard.** We will hold a practice **debate** so that you can try out your ideas on the other Senate aides.

**Debate rules:**

Round 1: each state will have 2 minutes to present their plan

Huddle: 5 minutes for each team to decide which plans they want to rebut, and what arguments they want to make

Round 2: each state will have 1 minute for rebuttal.