



Teaching Material

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On the Edge of the Woods

Research and preparation for watching the show

Can't See the Wood for the Trees? – Research

Robin Hood – the outlawed Robin, Earl of Locksley. No, wait – he wasn't a nobleman surely? Perhaps even a Norman? No! He must at least have been a true Saxon! But, wait, he was really Roger Godberd, highwayman and robber, right? Well, never mind, at least we know he married Maid Marian and lived happily ever after... No? Really? Not even that?

The legend of Robin Hood is ancient and based on oral tradition. It has been added to and retold and adapted into all thinkable formats and media. Let's face it; between Sir Walter Scott's classic hero in *Ivanhoe* through Disney's lovable swashbuckling fox right up to Russel Crowe's serious political navigator, it can be hard to keep track of the story.

Have your students research the origins and permutations of the Robin Hood legend online. You can let them venture unguided into the bewildering wood that is the world wide web, or they can take their starting point in our collection of useful links:

- <http://myths.e2bn.org/mythsandlegends/story13478-the-legend-of-robin-hood.html>
This website aims at a young audience, but is a good basic introduction for anyone to the Robin Hood legend with an audio run through of the story and a short text about its origins.
- http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/robin_01.shtml
A clear and fact-oriented look at the historical origins of Robin Hood.
- <http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofEngland/Robin-Hood/>
A straightforward run through of the legend and its possible origins, fairly short and easily accessible.
- <http://www.boldoutlaw.com/realrob/index.html>
A thorough and detailed but easily accessible presentation and discussion of the legend and its various possible origins. It includes good information about the other characters in the legend as well.
- <http://www.robinhoodlegend.com/>
This site is a very detailed and scholarly collection of a lot of the original sources for the legend with comments. It also looks at some of the various branchings out of the story.

Robin Outside His Hood? – The Concept of Robin Hood

So, Robin Hood is the outlaw of Sherwood Forest. Only, “Robin Hood” has come to mean so much more than the green clad dweller in the woods. Explore the way the ancient hero has become ... a metaphor? A symbol? A synecdoche? A metonymy? A personification?

If you haven't done the research assignment above, start with a brainstorm on the board; just to discover your students' immediate associations for our hero in Lincoln green. How far away from the actual man in the forest have you moved? Maybe you have stayed under the branches of the Sherwood oaks and the tiles of Nottingham, but maybe a wider, more general understanding of Robin Hood has surfaced. If so, discuss how and why.

Have your students google “Robin Hood” and “Steal from the rich and give to the poor” and similar well-known phrases from the legend – remember the quotation marks to narrow down the search results. Let them include both Danish and English results. See how many hits they get that have nothing to do with Sherwood Forest but everything to do with the concept of transferring value from those who have to those who haven't. Most likely, all sorts of things from real estate agents to NGOs will pop up.

Discuss:

- 🏹 why do people, companies, and organisations use the Robin Hood legend?
- 🏹 what effect do they create by doing so?
- 🏹 why/how can they achieve that effect?

Finally, this use of Robin Hood as an idea, a concept dissociated from its legendary context, can become the basis of a discussion of literary terms. Ask your students what literary term they think best describes this detached idea of Robin Hood. Take your starting point in the definitions of metaphor, simile, metonymy, symbol, synecdoche and personification attached at the end of this teaching material.

After the show: you might consider whether you can use your exploration of Robin Hood as an idea to account for some of the political references in the show?

Whence the Mirth of These Merry Men? – This Year's Names

Get acquainted with our version of the boisterous band of rascals and the other inhabitants of Nottingham and surroundings – merry and not so merry.

Once you have done some research on the various original versions of the Robin Hood legend, take a look at the names of the curious crowd that will be peopling the stage this year. Have your students consider:

- ↪ what names are modifications of original characters?
- ↪ what names are not easily identifiable with someone from the original legends?
- ↪ what's behind these new and modified names - discuss the comic effect.
- ↪ after you have seen the show; do some of the names make better sense after you have seen them in action?
- ↪ also after the show; discuss the interaction between the characters as we get to know them on stage and the puns and other linguistic antics of their names?
- ↪ if you have not dealt with this in your research of the original legends, figure out the difference between the Saxons and the Normans.
- ↪ finally, if you choose to pick apart the pantomime below, you might speculate which names belong to what traditional pantomime characters.

The Saxons:

Robin Hood
Little John
Willem von Tell
Friar Tuck
Legoklods
Alania Dale

The Normans:

Prince John
Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine
Sheriff Ronald Rump of Nottingham
Guy the Geezer
Maid Marion
Mistress May Ophelia Cox

The Vikings:

Dr Bent van Helsingør from Elsinore
Hordur Sigurdsson

... and of course a profusion of peasants and immigrants and outlaws and other lovable oddities without which no tale of mediaval England would be complete.

Back to the Roots – the Tradition of the British Pantomime

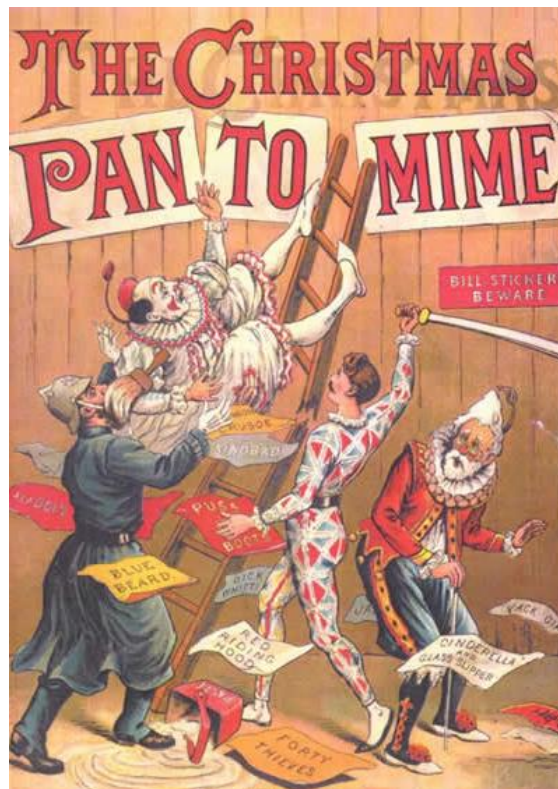
The rich soil from which springs our forest of fun is the age old tradition of the British Pantomime. Digging into this murky mulch is helpful for young saplings who have not previously ventured into the tangled woodland of a Crazy Christmas Cabaret.

Have all your students scroll through this bit of background:

<http://www.its-behind-you.com/Factsheets/The%20History%20of%20Pantomime.pdf>

Now have your students write down 5 questions for the background information – if you want to make sure everything is covered, divide the text between them. Then send them into the nearest spacious area and let them walk among each other for 10 minutes swapping questions.

But nothing about the *Crazy Christmas Cabaret* is ever simple – where would the fun and craziness be in that? Why follow a tradition when you can pick it apart and make your own unique creation? Have your students translate a few paragraphs from Pernille Nørregaard's book *Crazy Christmas Cabaret, hurrays og boos i 25 år* (attached at the end of this teaching material). In doing so, they can trace the path that the *Crazy Christmas Cabaret* has followed from traditional British panto to Copenhagen cult.



From: http://www.englishblog.com/2008/12/sky-video-panto-season-lightens-economic-gloom.html#.V9E0qg1EB_k

Through the Woods and into the Classroom

Exercises and approaches for after the show

Robin Hood – A National Hero! The Role of Robin Hood in English National Identity

Discuss to what degree Robin Hood forms part of the English national identity. We offer two different approaches to this; first a simple approach applicable to any class, and then a more complex approach that requires a high level of English reading skills.

The simple version:

Brainstorm in class: what constitutes English national identity? Use your brainstorm to explain why Robin Hood is such a successful national hero. What is it about the stories of this outlaw that is so well-suited to the English character?

The more complex version:

Below are links to two texts about Robin Hood and English national identity. Read the two texts. Which points do they make about the legend of Robin Hood and its role in English national identity? Compare and discuss. You might qualify your discussion by first reading an excerpt of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* which deals with the way national identities function as imagined communities. A good excerpt with notes and explanations is available in two different anthologies; *Cross Country Canada* from L&R Uddannelse and *Narrating India* from Alt I Ord.

↪ [The Faith of the English: Integrating Christ and Culture](#)

Read the section named "Robin Hood – foundational to Englishness?"

Excerpt on Google Books from: Nigel Rooms. [The Faith of the English: Integrating Christ and culture](#). SPCK. London: 2011

↪ [Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood](#)

Read page v-vii (until and including the first paragraph) of the preface.

Excerpt on Questia from: Stephanie L. Barczewski. [Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood](#). Oxford University Press. New York: 2000.

Unfortunately, due to copyright issues, we cannot simply attach the parts of the texts we consider relevant but have to make do with linking to the sites.

Who are the rich and who are the poor? Discussion about the World of Today

Discuss in class: what groups of people in today's society match the different groups that we meet in the Robin Hood legend? Who are, for instance, today's poor inhabitants of Sherwood Forest? The working classes? Refugees? The people in the UK dependent on foodbanks for survival? People living in council estates? Take into account the topical/political references in *Shaking Up Sherwood*.

You might finish off this discussion with a formal debate:

- ✦ is the Robin Hood approach to the distribution of wealth in today's society right?
- ✦ how should the "steal from the rich and give to the poor" redistribution be organised – who should benefit?

- and so on and so forth. Instructions for conducting a formal debate are attached at the end of the teaching material.

Pantomime Revisited

After your students have been to our Sherwood shenanigans, have them consider the following questions regarding pantomime (this only works if you have worked with the section on pantomime above):

- ✦ The *Crazy Christmas Cabaret* not only honours the proud traditions of pantomime; it also has traditions of its own such as Dr. Van Helsingør (you can call him Bent) and the phone call from Her Royal Highness Queen Margrethe II. The Doctor in particular is immensely popular, and devoted fans go to the show dressed as their Danish idol. Discuss what it is about these two elements that appeals so strongly to a Danish audience.
- ✦ Where did *Shaking Up Sherwood* depart from the traditions of the original panto?
- ✦ Why do you think Vivienne McKee has made these changes? If you have done the translation exercise, include your knowledge from the text you translated.
- ✦ Did *Shaking Up Sherwood* live up to your expectations for a Robin Hood adaptation? Why/why not?
- ✦ Did you encounter any topical satire on your way through the woods?

From Scrolls to Scrolling – Writing Exercises

Explore the Robin Hood universe through writing.

Use the well-known story to play with genres. The original legends were part of an oral tradition of rhymes and ballads. Have your students write a modern Robin Hood story using a modern genre like a short story, a blog, a facebook profile, an article in an internet paper, a rap song etc.

Use the possibilities afforded by social networking sites to let your students produce writing on a smaller scale than the traditional paper:

- ✦ they can set up facebook pages for the different characters in the story – what would they post?
- ✦ they can write blogs as the different characters for instance on Google Blogger.
- ✦ they can chat with each other either in a chatroom like Google Hangouts or you can try a more formal forum like SLACK. SLACK is a site that allows you to create discussion forums for your students that you can use in many different ways to have them discuss texts and issues with each other online. The great thing about chatroom writing is that it is immediate, and it combines the actual discussion with note taking as the students can return to the discussion and extract valid points for later assignments. It also allows the teacher to see what the students write to each other so one can assess their skills and give encouragement and help along the way.

You can also choose a more traditional approach and have your students write a review of the show including a summary of the plot.

Finally, for creatively minded classes, you might make your seedlings prove their worth as merry mediaeval minstrels by writing a ballad inspired by some of the original rhymes and ballads available on the websites linked to in our research section. It can be a collaborative writing project in which they get parts of the story individually or in groups to write into stanzas for a ballad.

The Hero in Green on the Silver Screen – Film Analysis

The Robin Hood legend has inspired all kinds of film makers since the very birth of moving pictures. Have your students choose a film from this list (of course, it has to be one that they can get access to on dvd, streaming services, youtube, the library or elsewhere)

<http://www.imdb.com/list/ls000834583/>

- ✦ Let them watch the film at home as homework, either individually or in groups.
- ✦ Have them analyse the film using a film analysis tool; make sure they deal with the focus of the filmatisation and the effect of that focus compared to the focus in *Shaking Up Sherwood*.
- ✦ Have them make a screencast of a prezi or powerpoint presenting their analysis for instance on www.screencastomatic.com
- ✦ Have them watch one or two of each other's screencasts – or watch all the screencasts in class.
- ✦ Discuss in class the different approaches to the adaptation of the Robin Hood legend to film.

Rolling with the Rollickers – Grammar Dice Game

Finally we have devised a little grammar dice game.

As a revision game:

- ↪ Divide the class into six groups.
- ↪ Each group makes a number of questions about a certain topic in English grammar – see suggestions below. The number of questions depends on how long you want them to play the game. The teacher also needs to have a number of questions ready for each topic.
- ↪ When they are done, they go into matrix groups to play the game. Each time a dice roll requires a question within a certain topic, the student responsible for that topic asks the question and determines whether the answer is right or wrong. If a student has to answer a question within the topic they prepared themselves, they call the teacher who then asks one of his/her questions. They are awarded a point for their correct answers. If they get it wrong, they just don't get a point. You might up motivation by having a prize for the winner with the most points.

As a game for just one grammar topic:

Instead of having the students prepare questions, the dice rolls coupled with grammar topics in the revision game are simply coupled with particular rules within the topic you are currently dealing with. The students then have to come up with examples of the rule that the dice have chosen. It can also be played vice versa; the teacher has made a great pile of cards with examples of rules, and when the dice roll dictates a grammar question, the student reads an example and has to identify the rule it exemplifies. Both these approaches require that the teacher or an advanced student of grammar is present with each group of players to check that the answers are right. This can be solved by having just one or two groups playing while the rest of the class do something else.

Rules:

You play the game with two dice. The numbers from 2-12 represent the combined result of the dice roll. Each roll has its own rule:

2. Richard Lionheart returns from the crusades and wipes away Prince John's legislation. The latest PJ rule (see 7) is erased. If someone later rolls a 7, PJ is back in business.
3. The Sheriff of Nottingham collects taxes: the player loses all his or her points
4. Auxiliary verbs
5. Subject-verb agreement
6. Joker – if no one has rolled a 7 yet (see 7), there is no rule attached to this roll and it simply lets you roll again. If someone has rolled a 7, they will have made a rule for this roll.

7. Prince John – an arbitrary ruler and cruel tyrant – makes a rule for what happens if someone rolls a 6. Just remember, PJ, once the rule is there, it applies to you too until:
 - ⚔ someone else rolls a 7 and replaces it with another rule or
 - ⚔ someone rolls a 2 and Richard Lionheart returns from the crusades and brings an end to your evil reign.
8. (Relative) pronouns
9. Nouns: plural and genitive
10. Adjective or adverb
11. Verbs: tense
12. Robin Hood – steal from the rich and give to the poor! Even out the number of points between the players including yourself. If there are any points that cannot be distributed fairly, you get them yourself. After all, an outlaw has to live right?

Scroll for Translation

Vivienne var ikke i tvivl om, hvad det var der skulle være fokus i hendes egen panto, da hun skulle skrive en.

„Jeg grinede altid af tvetydighederne, hvor man siger noget uskyldigt, men mener noget andet. Jeg elsker den slags humor, og den er meget britisk. Den slags blev brugt sparsomt i den klassiske panto, men da jeg skulle lave en til voksne, kunne jeg bruge en masse af den slags,“ siger hun.

Det er en tradition, at damen har en scene alene med publikum, som hun taler direkte til. Det unikke ved panto er nemlig, at publikum er en del af forestillingen og giver sin mening til kende ved at råbe „hurray“ for helten og „boo“ af skurken. Og den del har Vivienne McKee taget med sig til Danmark.

„Jeg er klart inspireret af pantoen i min brug af publikum. Men jeg har ført det til et nyt niveau, fordi jeg bruger dem aktivt i forestillingen. Hvert år råber publikum noget nyt. I 2006 var det „Close your eyes and think of England“. I James Bond var det subtilt. Vi lavede vores egen James Bond-film, og vi var skuespillere. Hver gang publikum blev spurgt om noget, råbte de: „No, absolutely not“. Det fungerede godt, for de var filmproducere, så de skulle tage beslutningen, hvis vi havde problemer under optagelserne. Og de svarede altid: „No, absolutely not.“ Det er sjovt at bruge publikum, så de bliver en figur i forestillingen. Det er helt unikt for *Crazy Christmas Cabaret*,“ fortæller Vivienne.

Da Vivienne introducerede tanken, om at publikum kunne deltage i en teaterforestilling i Danmark, var det helt uhørt. I hvert fald inden hun lavede sin første *Crazy Christmas Cabaret*. Hun var blevet bedt om at instruere Melby Revyen, og der var en sang, der ikke rigtig fungerede. Den

manglede ligesom noget. Hun foreslog derfor skuespilleren, at han skulle stoppe midt i sangen og tale med publikum.

„Jeg kan ikke tale direkte til publikum,“ sagde han. Og det gik pludselig op for mig, at dengang lavede ingen stand-up, og ingen talte direkte til publikum. De var bare den fjerde væg på scenen. Man spillede sin rolle og sang sin sang, men man forholdt sig ikke til publikum. Jeg talte direkte til publikum: „Velkommen, hvordan går det? Morer I jer? Lad os synge sammen.“ Alle råbte „hurray“, „boo“, eller hvad det nu var,“ siger Vivienne.

Og danskerne kunne lide det, for på få år fik hun opbygget en fast skare af publikummer, der gerne råbte og sang med under forestillingen.

Nørregaard, Pernille. *Crazy Christmas Cabaret, hurrays og boos I 25 år*. Forlaget Documentas. Hellerup: 2007. 17-18.

Definitions of Literary Terms

Metaphor

Comparison - often implicit/indirect – of seemingly unrelated subjects; x IS y.

“At the dawn of spring last year, a single act of terror brought forth the long, cold winter of our hearts”

(Al Gore)

Metonymy

Describing something by using a word that is closely linked to the thing it describes but is not a part of it. For example, using *Crown* to describe *power* or *authority*, is a metonymy. In the example below, *pen* is closely associated with and refers to *the written word* while *sword* is closely associated with and refers to *military aggression and force*

"The pen is mightier than the sword"

(Edward Bulwer Lytton's play Richelieu)

NOTE! Metonymy is different from metaphor.

A metaphor draws resemblance between two different things: “You are sunlight and I moon” (Sun And Moon from Miss Saigon). *Sunlight* and a human are two different things without any association but the metaphor describes one thing in terms of the other based on a supposed similarity.

Metonymy, however, develops a relation between two words based on close associations as in: “The White House is concerned about terrorism.” *The White House* here represents the people who work in it, the house and the people working in it are closely associated unlike a human and the sun in the example above.

Simile

An explicit comparison of seemingly unrelated subjects using the words like or as; x is LIKE/AS y.

“My love is like a red, red rose”

(Robert Burns)

Personification

A thing or an abstract idea is given human traits and qualities.

“The spirit of America weeps for a tragedy that denies the very meaning of our land”

(Lyndon B. Johnson)

Symbol

A symbol is literary device that contains several layers of meaning, often concealed at first sight, and is representative of several other aspects, concepts or traits than those that are visible in the literal translation alone. Symbol is using an object or action that means something more than its literal meaning.

The phrase *a new dawn* does not talk only about the actual beginning of a new day but also signifies a new start, a fresh chance to begin and the end of a previous, tiring time. OR the cross as a symbol of death/Christianity – not simply two pieces of wood arranged across each other.

Synecdoche

Referring to a thing by the name of one of its parts; calling a your car *my wheels* is a synecdoche. A part of a car i.e. *wheels* stands for the whole car. In the example below, the captain does not want his sailors to pull their hands off and throw them on deck. *Hands* are a part of the sailors which signify their ability to work, and he wants the sailors – complete with all limbs – on deck to work.

“All hands on deck”

NOTE! Synecdoche is different from metonymy.

Metonymy is based on close association:

Ears = your attention, not your actual ears (lend me your ears)

Synecdoche uses a part to signify the whole or (less often) the whole to signify the part:

Part for whole: bread = food in general

Whole for part: world = some people you have met (the world is treating me badly today)

Mainly based on explanations and examples found on: www.literarydevices.net and www.americanrhetoric.com

Formal Debating

Formal debate is an excellent teaching tool as it is applicable to almost any topic and can be used to deal with both non-fictional and fictional issues.

Now, be a true adventurer! Do not let yourself be daunted by the seeming complexity of the task. Any wilderness is negotiable with a map, which is what we're giving you here:

The setup of a formal debate involves eight people in the actual debate and then the audience who also get to participate. The underlined words are explained below.

The chairperson:

The chairperson welcomes the audience to the debate, reads out the motion to be debated and introduces the teams before he/she sets the debate going. Before each speech, the chairperson introduces the speaker and generally runs the debate.

After the main speeches (first and second speakers of both teams), the chairperson opens the floor debate and asks the audience to pose questions or make comments. The chairperson chooses the people in the audience who get to speak. These questions and comments are not answered straight away but the summary speaker of each team takes notes and includes these questions and comments in their summaries.

After the floor debate the chairperson introduces the third/summary speakers. When the summary speakers are done, the chairperson asks the audience to vote and either pass or reject the motion.


It is advisable to let the teacher be chairperson the first couple of times.

The timekeeper:

Each person gets three minutes to speak – no more, no less. During the first and last 30 seconds, the opposing team are not allowed to make points of information. The timekeeper marks each stage of the three minutes clearly for instance by knocking on the table.

The floor debate is given a set time limit by the chairperson depending on the groups of students and their level of activity.

The actual debate is between two teams of three:

 **The proposition team** who propose and defend the motion

 **The opposition team** who oppose the motion

Each team is divided into different speakers. All speakers have to give well-structured speeches with arguments and reasons that support their side. Part from the first proposition speaker, the speakers also have to think up rebuttals during the debate.



First speaker:

The first proposition speaker is the first speaker of the entire debate who introduces the motion and then argues FOR this motion.

The first opposition speaker is the second speaker of the debate who argues AGAINST the motion



Second speaker

The second proposition speaker is the third speaker of the debate who continues the argument FOR the motion

The second opposition speaker is the fourth speaker of the debate and continues the argument AGAINST the motion



Third speaker or summary speaker

The third opposition speaker or the opposition summary speaker is the fifth speaker of the debate. After the floor debate, he/she sums up the entire debate in a way that argues AGAINST the motion.

The third proposition speaker or the proposition summary speaker is the sixth and last speaker and sums up the entire debate in a way that argues FOR the motion. PLEASE NOTE! The rhythm of the debate changes here because the proposition team always get the last word.

Thus the summary speakers cannot prepare their speeches in advance, but must base them on their notes from the debate. No points of information are allowed during the summary speeches.

Motion:

The subject of the debate. For instance: This house believes that private archaeologists should be given absolute freedom to explore, excavate and acquire artefacts across national boundaries.

Points of information:

Questions or challenging comments from one side to the other. After the first 30 seconds and for the following 2 minutes, the opposing team can ask questions that challenge the speaker currently making his/her point. The last 30 seconds of the 3 minute speeches are closed for points of information like the first 30 seconds.

You make a point of information by raising your hand and saying "Point of information." The current speaker finishes their sentence and can then either say "Yes please" upon which the person with the point of information puts their question or challenging comment and receives an answer. They are then NOT allowed to continue asking. You only get ONE question/comment for each accepted point of information.

Alternatively, the current speaker can say "No thank you" and reject the point of information. There is no arguing with a rejection of a point of information.

There can be no points of information during the summary speeches.

Rebuttal:

A rebuttal is when a speaker responds to previous speeches from the opposing team or from the audience during the floor debate. Logically, the first proposition speaker does not have to make rebuttals, but all subsequent speakers do. This means they have to adjust the speech they have already prepared while

listening to the opposing speaker to include rebuttals of points made in the opponent's speech. This is why it is best to write speeches down in keyword form only. It makes it easier to adapt them with rebuttals and easier to present them with a natural flow.

Floor debate:

The floor debate is the part of the debate when the audience make comments or ask questions. It is not a true debate in itself since the speakers do not answer immediately. The answers are woven into the summary speeches.

Useful link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDTk-Lt6sQ>

This link is a short YouTube film where students illustrate the rules of formal debating with LEGO figures to the soundtrack of AXL F. - what's not to like? There are several more examples of debates following this pattern, go excavate for further treasures online.

When your students need to dig out material for their debate, a simple Google search on eg. "debate Egyptian artefacts" is usually a fruitful venture. Ever eager to please, we have singled out two useful links:

🔗 <http://debatewise.org/debates/204-historical-artefacts-should-be-repatriated-to-their-country-of-origin/>

This links to a debating exercise on exactly this question of cultural artefacts being kept in Europe. It basically feeds arguments to your students ready organized in pros and cons. So as a fast lane to completing the exercise, it's just perfect. Also, it has lots of other topics for debate that can be used in other connections.

🔗 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/the-big-question-what-is-the-rosetta-stone-and-should-britain-return-it-to-egypt-1836610.html>

This article outlines the question of ownership of historical artefacts nicely exemplified in the Rosetta stone. It is a good place to start.

We have now outlined the raw basics of a formal debate. There are several ways to refine and adapt this excellent exercise. If you are interested in more details and sophistications and maybe even in competing nationally and internationally, go to this website www.dodebate.dk. Through the courses offered here, you can learn much more, including the most effective ways to structure an argument or speech.