The Case for Chapter-Length Reacting Games

Tony Crider, Elon University
David Henderson, Trinity College
The Pluto Debate: The International Astronomical Union Defines a Planet
Tony Crider (Elon)

The USDA Food Pyramid
Susan Henderson (Quinnipiac)
& David Henderson (Trinity)

Ways and Means, 1935: Debating the Social Security Act through Math
Andrew Ross, Mark Higbee,
& John Curran (Eastern Michigan)
The Pluto Debate: The International Astronomical Union Defines a Planet

1999 DEBATE IN NEW YORK CITY
On May 24, 1999, Neil deGrasse Tyson hosted a panel debate at the Hayden Planetarium, including Mike Brown, Jane Luu, and Richard Binzel. Tyson welcomed students from the Audience to the debate. In the audience were many people who had never seen a planet before.

2006 VOTE IN PRAGUE
On August 24, 2006, the IAU Planet Definition Committee presented its revised proposal for defining a planet. It was a compromise between the original proposal and the definition put forward by Julio Fernandez, leader of the “populist” faction. The debate was held in Prague.

THE POPULIST FACTION
The populists see Pluto as just one of a large population of icy bodies orbiting the Sun. They are in favor of Resolution 5B, as it would remove Pluto from the list of planets. They believe that the current definition of a planet is too outdated and needs to be updated to reflect modern astronomical knowledge.

THE PLUTOPHILE FACTION
The plutophiles would like to see Pluto retain its status as a planet. They believe that Pluto is a unique and special celestial body that should be included in the list of planets. They are in favor of Resolution 5A, as it would keep Pluto on the list of planets.

THE OUTSIDE FACTION
The outside faction is not tied to any particular definition of a planet. They believe that the debate should be focused on the scientific importance of Pluto, rather than on the definition of a planet. They are in favor of Resolution 5C, as it would allow for a more flexible definition of a planet.

INDETERMINATE VOTERS
The indeterminate voters are undecided. They believe that the definition of a planet is important, but they are not sure which resolution is the best. They are in favor of Resolution 5D, as it would allow for a vote on the definition of a planet.

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Chapter-length games are a good way for new instructors to sample Reacting games at conferences.
Chapter-length games allow students to learn how to play a Reacting game before playing a full-length game.
Chapter-length games can be written, play-tested, and revised quickly.
Chapter length games can be run by a single instructor in other teachers’ classes.
Chapter-length games can be used in place of a single textbook chapter in a survey course.
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