**Target Area:** Grades 9-12

**Overview:** Students will learn about the death penalty in America and in other countries. They will use this knowledge to defend their point of view on the subject.

**Objective:** After this lesson, students will be able to:
- Research controversial topics and use that information to form an opinion.
- Debate a controversial topic based on the information that the researched.

**Material:**
- Research skills
- Computer
- Mobile phone (not required)

**Procedure:**
1. Explain the death penalty and all the controversy surrounding it.
2. Teacher will have a class from another country or state already contacted.
3. Students will contact these students through an e-mail at first.
4. Explain brightkite and how it will be used in this project.
5. Explain how to create an account, log on, add friends, and set their accounts to private.
6. Separate students into two groups. Try to keep the groups even, but do not force someone to argue a point of view that they do not agree with.
7. Each group will research the topic and create an argument for their point of view. The students should cover most issues surrounding the topic. (Cost, benefits, down falls, etc.) The teacher should set a list that all groups must cover.
8. During research students should also use their distance partners for information.
9. The students will then debate the issue in the class.
10. After the debate each group will correspond with the other class. They should have at least ten posts explaining their points in the debate.
11. If pictures are taken during the debate they can upload those onto brightkite as well.
12. After this the students will be responsible for a short essay on the death penalty and debate. Have them use examples from the distance class in their essay.