

Handout 2

Activity 3: participants will build arguments having claim, evidence and bridge.

“You are going to brainstorm arguments as a group. The ideas for the parts of the argument can come from issues you’ve seen, heard or read about. The issues may have appeared in current events or in your daily lives. Issues arising in the sciences and social sciences may have appeared in articles, speeches, correspondence, and journal entries, through different media. Workplace issues may have come to your attention through letters, memos, flyers, procedural documents, or change in policies at your workplace.

The first three students sitting next to each other will create a part of the first argument (claim, evidence and bridge). The next two students will also each create a part of the first argument but only the evidence and bridge this time (in support of the claim already presented). In this way a claim generates two different types of evidence with their respective bridges.

We will go round robin around the class in this way in order to create 5 - 10 arguments. I will record all arguments on the flip chart for further discussion. Please review Handout 1 for the definitions and examples of claim, evidence and bridge in an argument.”

Activity 4: analyze an argument and decide whether it is supported by evidence.

The groups will identify the evaluation criteria from Handout 3 and 4 which describe an argument’s evidence in a positive or negative light. If the group decides an argument’s evidence is weak on a certain criteria they will list the criteria under the “weak” column on the flip chart with explanation. If the group decides an argument’s evidence is strong on a certain criteria they will list the criteria under the “strong” column on the same flip chart with explanation. Finally the group will note whether an argument is strong based on the number and quality of criteria in support of it.

A different member from each group will take turns orally presenting the group’s evaluation of an argument, until all the arguments assigned to that group are exhausted. Each person will present the group’s evaluation of whether one of the arguments they worked on is effectively supported by evidence.

Each oral evaluation will include the following:

- Statement of whether the claim in an argument is supported by evidence in light of important quality and logic criteria.
- Paraphrasing of the evidence analyzed.
- Listing of the criteria used to analyze each argument and an explanation of why the criteria were picked as significant by the group.
- An explanation of why evidence was deemed strong or weak on criteria important to the argument.
- An explanation of whether one piece of evidence was more important than the other in evaluating the argument.