



EduTrend Contents

P4C · REASONS AND ARGUMENTS · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Build an Argument

Claim, reasons, evidence and conclusion: the building blocks of an argument

Ages 11–13

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 03

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 03 · AT A GLANCE

Build an Argument

Groups receive building block cards: a claim, possible reasons, pieces of invented evidence and a conclusion space. The question is “Should school start later?” Groups build the strongest argument they can, then swap with another group, who look for missing links or weak evidence. The class enquires into what makes an argument hold together.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- identify parts of an argument;
- connect reasons to a claim;
- use evidence appropriately;
- critique another group’s argument.

KEY WORDS

claim · reason · evidence ·
conclusion · link · support

CURRICULUM LINKS

English: argument writing. Science:
evidence. Citizenship: debate.

1**STIMULUS**

Share something to
think about

2**THINK**

Quiet thinking time

3**QUESTION**

Create and choose
a question

4**ENQUIRE**

Reason together

5**BUILD**

Agree, disagree,
add

6**REFLECT**

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Building block cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people,
and use the story or invented examples rather
than personal situations.

ACTIVITY 03 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Stimulus	Give out the argument building block cards.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–20 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
20–44 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"What makes an argument hold together?"</i>
44–50 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Build an argument where every reason clearly supports the claim.

ACTIVITY 03 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

An argument is a set of reasons offered to support a conclusion.

Critiquing another group's argument shows where links between reasons and conclusions are weak.

Common ideas to listen for

- “An argument is a fight.” In philosophy it is reasoning.
- “More evidence always helps.” Relevance matters.
- “The conclusion comes first.” It should follow from reasons.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use a writing frame.

Stretch

Build the best argument for the side you disagree with.

WORKSHEET 1

Argument builder

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Fill in.

Argument builder

Part	Our argument
Claim	
Reason 1	
Evidence	
Reason 2	
Conclusion	

WORKSHEET 2

Thinking moves

Use these in the enquiry.

Thinking moves

Thinking move	My example
I agree with... because...	
I disagree with... because...	
An example is...	
A counter-example is...	
Building on what... said...	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Is evidence always needed for a good argument? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Build an Argument is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Reasons and Arguments programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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