



EduTrend Contents

P4C · LOGIC AND CRITICAL THINKING · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Evidence Detectives

How strong is the evidence for a claim?

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 04

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

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

Evidence Detectives

Students examine invented claims: a cereal box says children who eat breakfast do better at school; a friend says a lucky pen improves test scores; a survey of ten people says most prefer summer. Groups rate the evidence using questions such as how many, who says, could something else explain it and has it been tested. They then enquire into when we should believe a claim.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- evaluate evidence quality;
- distinguish correlation and cause;
- identify bias and sample size;
- justify a level of belief.

KEY WORDS

evidence · claim · sample · bias ·
cause · correlation

CURRICULUM LINKS

Science: fair tests. Maths:
statistics. PSHE: media literacy.

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)

- Claim cards
- Evidence rating sheet
- 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 04 · 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	Share the claim and evidence 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 evidence strong?"</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)

Rate one claim's evidence and explain what would make it stronger.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

When two things happen together, it does not prove one causes the other.

Larger, fairer samples and repeated tests usually give stronger evidence.

Common ideas to listen for

- “One story proves it.” Anecdotes are weak evidence.
- “Numbers are always reliable.” Samples can be biased.
- “If an expert says it, it must be true.” Check the evidence.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use one claim.

Stretch

Design a fair test for the lucky pen claim.

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

Evidence check

Rate each claim.

Evidence check

Question	Claim A	Claim B
How many?		
Who says?		
Other explanations?		
Tested?		

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

When should we believe a claim? 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

Evidence Detectives is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Logic and Critical Thinking 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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