



Skill Set Resource Sheets

Reasoning and Evidence

Reasoning and evidence denotes the argumentation skills students need. It represents the ability of students to explain and justify the positions they take.

A persuasive speaker:

- Defends statements using clear, logical reasons
- Chooses relevant statements to defend
- Supports their arguments with well-chosen evidence, which is explained and analysed thoroughly

Developing Arguments With ‘Why?’

The most intuitive way to develop an argument is to ask ‘why?’ after every statement made. In answering those questions, students will provide justifications, and in doing so, construct an argument.

When students are new to debating, they will need to be prompted (you’ll have to ask ‘why?’ on their behalf). This method is also a good illustration of the idea that statements need justification, rather than being ‘just true’.

Developing Arguments With ‘Who?’

In a classroom setting, debates may be linked to existing schemes of work, and as such students may have a strong knowledge base to draw from. In other cases, pre-existing knowledge may be more variable.

Considering who will be affected by a proposed motion is another good way to generate arguments for a debate. Stakeholders may include groups of people (e.g. ‘tourists’, ‘school students’) or organisations (e.g. ‘universities’, ‘small businesses’).

Students should consider: who are the most important groups in this debate? How will they be affected? Throughout, students should remember that stakeholder groups can be complicated, and persuasive speakers must describe them carefully, bearing in mind the differences within groups, as well as between them.

Structuring Arguments With ‘PEEL’

Good arguments have a clear structure. It can help to plan your arguments by thinking ‘PEEL’:

Point - a short statement or headline that makes it clear what your argument is about.

Explanation - an explanation of why the point is true, and why it is important.

Evidence or example - a statistic or story that illustrates the point and makes it easier for the audience to understand.

Link - a connection back to the point to bring everything together.

For example:



