



## 8.3 Ineffective Cross-Ex

*This activity develops cross-examination skills. Students will take turns modeling ineffective cross-examination questions in order to spark discussion about common pitfalls. This activity will help students understand the difference between effective and ineffective cross-examination questions and answers.*

### Time Allotment

One class period

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- learn to use and respond to strategic cross-examination questions.
- develop skills in critical listening and analysis.

### Materials and Preparation

Write common cross-examination errors on cards for pairs of students draw to model in front of the class. Some sample questions are at right.

### Method

Choose an affirmative case to use in this activity. Make sure that all students in the class are familiar with the case and all its components. Have a quick review session if necessary.

#### Sample Questions

- Please summarize your affirmative case.
- Why do we need to do your plan?
- Yes or no: Will your case cost too much money?
- Doesn't your case link to the \_\_\_\_\_ DA?
- Wouldn't your case be unpopular?
- Why would Congress pass your plan? They don't like it.
- Your case is dumb.
- I couldn't understand what you said. What was it about?
- Can I please see the case? Thank you. [silence]

Explain to the class that pairs of students will model ineffective cross-examination techniques. Ask students to take out a pen and paper and prepare to write down reasons they think that each question is ineffective.

Invite a pair of students to the front of the class and allow them to draw a card. The first student is on the negative side and will ask the question, and the second student is on the affirmative side and will answer the questions. The first student should read the question aloud in front of the class and the second student will do their best to answer the question. The second student should try and take advantage of the problem in the question. For example, if the question is "Summarize the affirmative case," the second student should describe the case in as much detail as possible to use up cross-examination time.

After a pair of students have presented a question and an answer, give the students a few moments to jot down their ideas about why the question was ineffective. Discuss as a class the implications of asking this type of question, and generate reasons the question does not accomplish the aim of strategically attacking the affirmative case. Also discuss possible ways that students can take advantage of ineffective questions when their opponents ask them.

Continue by asking pairs to demonstrate more questions. Follow each demonstration with a short discussion.