



# 1.4 One-on-One Refutation

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*This activity introduces the technique of line-by-line refutation. Using a simple debate with only a few arguments, the instructor walks two students through a demonstration line-by-line refutation. Meanwhile, the class learns to flow arguments in an orderly fashion that will allow them to visualize the progress of an argument.*

## **Objectives**

By the end of this activity, each student will:

- be introduced to recording debate arguments in the format of a flow.
- be introduced to responding to individual arguments in a structured and understandable way.

## **Time Allotment**

10 minutes. Can be extended by repeating the activity with different student speakers.

## **Method**

Ask two students to sit face to face in desks at the front of the classroom. Ask the rest of the students to take out a piece of paper and pen in order to flow the debate they are about to observe. Each student should divide their paper into three columns in order to flow the debate. You may wish to flow the debate on the board as well to demonstrate to students the basic technique of flowing.

The first student at the front of the class should make a simple, controversial statement (e.g. "Ice cream is healthy"). The students in the class should write this statement in the first column of their paper.

The second student should come up with 3 or 4 arguments against the proposal and deliver them with clear distinction between the arguments ("My first argument is..., My second argument is..., My third argument is.....") The students in the class should write each of these points, in order, one beneath the other, in the second column of their paper.

The original speaker should answer each of the second speaker's arguments one by one. The original speaker should reference her opponent's arguments and then offer at least two responses. For example: "Her first argument is... One. [Speaker's first response] Two. [Speaker's second response] Her second argument is... One [Speaker's first response] Two [Speaker's second response]." The students in the class should write the original speaker's responses in the third column of their paper next to each of the second speaker's arguments.