



8.5 Partner Cross-Ex Practice

This activity builds advanced cross-examination skills. Students will prepare a set of cross examination questions in advance and write out the purpose and anticipated response to each questions. Working with a partner, students will test out their questions to see if their opponents respond as they expect. This activity provides and opportunity for students to think about each of the steps of building a strategic and effective question.

Time Allotment

One class period. (with optional take-home assignment)

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- learn techniques to evaluate the effectiveness of cross-examination questions.
- develop skills in critical listening and analysis.

Materials and Preparation

A copy of a 1AC. You may choose to use a shortened version.

Method

Select a 1AC to use for this activity. You can give a copy of the 1AC to each student the day before and ask students to prepare cross-examination questions in advance, or ask a student volunteer to read the 1AC aloud at the start of the activity while the class flows. The first way emphasizes preparation and close reading skills, the second way emphasizes quick thinking and listening skills.

In class or as homework, students should divide a blank piece of paper into four columns. Students can fill out the first three columns as homework or individually in class (if using this as an in-class activity, give students 10-15 minutes to do this):

- 1.** In the first column, each student should write 5-8 cross-examination questions that they might ask the 1AC speaker.
- 2.** In the second column, next each question the student should briefly explain the intent of the question. (i.e. "To encourage the speaker to say how much money their plan costs to establish a link between the case and a spending disadvantage. ")
- 3.** In the third column, the student should write 1-2 ways that a 1AC could answer each of their questions.
- 4.** Students should leave the fourth column blank for now.



Next, assign each student a partner. The first student will ask each prepared question to her partner, and the partner will respond as if she were the 1AC speaker. The student asking the questions should look for differences between the actual answer and the expected answer, and note these differences in the fourth column on the paper.

Once the first student in each group has had the opportunity to ask each of their questions, the partners should switch. By the end of the activity, each student should have had both the opportunity to ask and answer questions.

To conclude this activity, choose a few volunteers to present their questions in front of the whole class. Call on members of the class to answer the questions. Then discuss as a class the effectiveness of each question, and offer suggestions for improvement.

Students should turn in their four-column pages at the end of the activity for the instructor to review.

Follow-up:

As an optional follow-up, you may have a student or students deliver a 1NC speech against the affirmative case that utilizes the affirmative responses to cross-examination questions. For example, a 1NC might present a disadvantage that uses both evidence and the affirmative's cross examination response to establish the link between the plan and the disadvantage argument.