



11.2 T-Violation Worksheet

This activity develops understanding of topicality argumentation and structure. It introduces students to the process of writing topicality violation shells. Students work in groups to construct a basic violation using a pre-written topicality shell worksheet. This activity can also be done as an individual homework assignment.

Time Allotment

30-40 minutes

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- advance their understanding of topicality.
- develop skills in constructing written arguments as a group.

Materials and Preparation

Students should have a thorough understanding of the component parts of a topicality violation before the activity begins. Depending on the class's level of understanding of topicality, they may need to have reviewed a topicality worksheet or a section of a chapter as homework the night before. Prepare an empty topicality shell worksheet. This shell is a worksheet and should have blanks for a definition, a violation, a set of two or three standards, a set of one or two voting issues.

A list of topicality violations relevant to this year's resolution. This list might be constructed from topicality file from a summer institute or from a core file. The list should outline specific violations that are relevant to affirmative cases with which the class is familiar.

Method

Divide students in groups. Assign each group a specific topicality violation shell to write. Tell the students to find a useful definition of their word (either in a dictionary or from the files produced in the dictionary search activity). When they have found a definition that is appropriate to the resolution they intend to write, each group should begin filling out the empty topicality shell worksheet.

Explain that on the worksheet, they should write in their definition of the relevant word and its source. In the violation blank, the students should explain in writing why the plan does not meet their definition of the word from the resolution. In the standards blanks, they should explain in writing what standards they think ought to be used in evaluating definitions and why those standards hold their definition superior. Finally, in the voting issues blank, they should select and explain reasons why this topicality violation they have constructed is a voting issue.

When each group has finished the violations, they can exchange violations and make written comments of the worksheets of their peers. In addition (or alternatively), you may also want students to turn in the worksheets for your evaluation and comments.