

## 7.7 Writing a Refutation

*This activity introduces basic refutation and argumentation skills. In this activity, students practice writing out direct refutations to specific evidenced arguments. It serves as a good introduction to line-by-line argumentation. This activity is a follow up activity to "Four Step Refutation."*

### Time Allotment

30-40 minutes

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- be introduced to directly refuting specific arguments.
- be introduced to discussing the use of claims and warrants within cards.
- be introduced to articulating their ideas in structured arguments.
- develop skills in using published material to support their own ideas.

### Materials and Preparation

A photocopy of a piece of tagged evidence for each student. (The cards can be all the same or all different).

### Method

Explain to the students the purpose and objectives of the activity, then distribute a piece of tagged evidence to each student. Ask students to imagine that this evidence has been presented by their opponent in a debate round.

Ask students to write down an ideal refutation of this argument using this 4-step refutation model. Write the four steps below up on the board then take some time to explain and discuss these four steps:

Step 1: Write a statement summarizing your opponent's argument.

Step 2: Summarize your counter-argument.

Step 3: Offer evidence and/or analysis that supports your counterargument.

Step 4: Explain why your counter-argument is superior to the argument and what the implications of the counter-argument are for the debate.

Once you explain this model, give them five minutes to write out a four step response to the piece of evidence you gave them.

Call on a few volunteers to present their refutation. Speeches should be no longer than one minute. Give students a second chance to present the four steps in under a minute if they are not concise enough to keep it under a minute the first time. Insist that the class flows these speeches. Collect flows after the activity, giving students credit for participation for their flows.



Follow up:

Give students a tagged piece of evidence to serve as the original argument they presented in a debate round and two or three tagged pieces of evidence or analytical arguments that an opposing team made against their argument.

Brainstorm with the class in advance about the most effective ways to rebuild your argument while defending yourself against the arguments of your opponent. After this discussion, have your students go through the four steps of refutation, this time focusing on rebuilding their original argument.