



UNIVERSITY OF  
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## Session 2: Critical Arguments in Effective Teaching

A guide in how to write in an educational way...

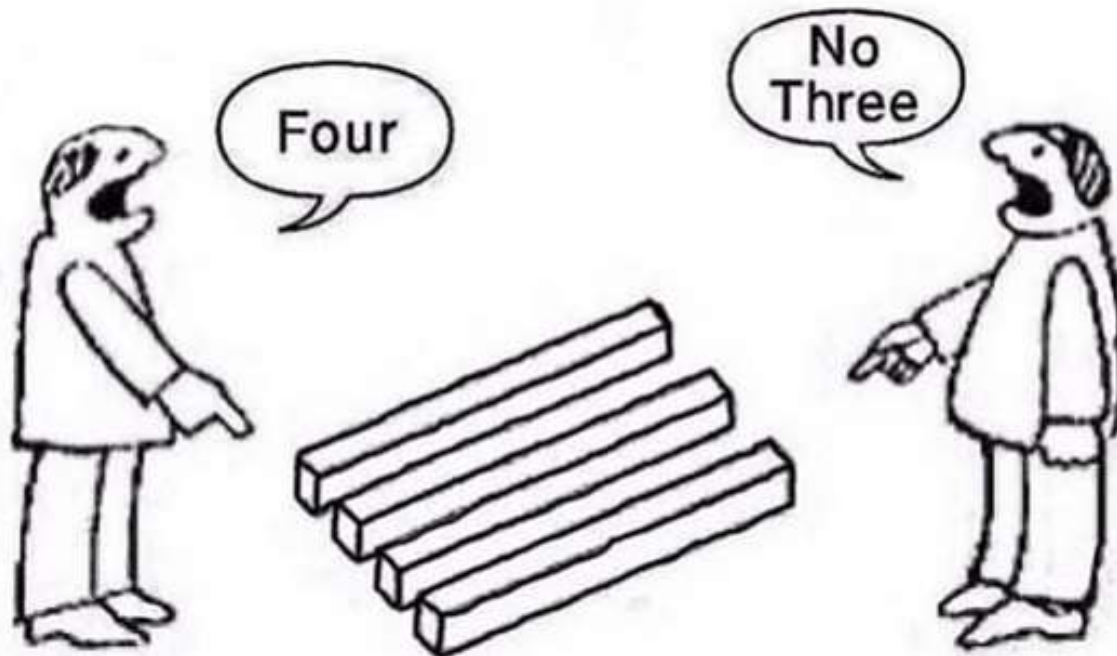
## Starter Task:

Work with a partner or on your own to respond to the following questions ...

1. What is effective teaching?
2. What makes teaching effective?
3. Can you think of an effective teacher?
4. Why were they effective? What did they do or say? How did they act?
5. Can you list all the qualities of an effective lesson?
6. Can you list all the qualities of an effective teacher?
7. How do you know this is the case?

# In our personal lives...

...we have the luxury of being able to argue and have opinions without necessarily having to provide evidence or authority ...



# However, in our professional lives...

- ...we don't have that luxury, so we have to develop critical argumentation skills
- The ability to argue critically helps us to:
  - Justify the decisions we make
  - Communicate effectively with colleagues
  - Strengthen the quality of our academic writing

In the teaching world... this also applies to Teacher's Standards 8:

- Part 1: fulfil wider professional responsibilities
- Part 2: personal and professional conduct – maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour

## A professional argument...

- Is a **conversation** about the literature/or a decision you have made between you and your readers/colleagues
- Involves **co-operation**, not coercion
- Results in your reader/colleagues **trusting** you
- Must be **coherent** and **organised** if it is to be effective



## 5 parts of planning a critical argument

*As a rule of thumb, you should aim to present each element of a critical argument within each paragraph*

1. Claim

2. Reasons

3. Evidence

4. Acknowledgement and response

5. Conclusions

# 1. Claim

- What you think...
- A debatable statement that forms the main part of an argument.
- A claim is your response to the reader who asks, 'What do you think?'
- A claim is a statement that readers are unlikely to accept without good reason. It is intended to make them think and/or act differently.
- A claim is always debatable and therefore must always be based on reasons.



## 2. Reasons

- Why you think that...
- Reasons are included to help support the claim.
- Reasons are your response to the reader who asks, 'Why do you think or say that?'
- Readers won't accept your claim simply because you said so. Reasons are statements that, taken together, give readers a basis for accepting your claim.
- Reasons should provide the logical basis for making a claim.
- Because reasons are debatable, they need to be supported by evidence.

### 3. Evidence

- How you know that's true...
- Personal experience, external authority (experts in the field), research, statistics, data etc. that support your reasons.
- Evidence is your response to readers who ask, 'How do you know?'
- Evidence provides the logical basis for your reasoning; it consists of facts that lend concrete support to your claim.

## 4. Acknowledgement and Response

- But what about...?
- You may need to acknowledge and respond to possible counter- arguments.
- Acknowledgement recognises the counter claims. You respond by indicating the extent to which you disagree (or have taken on board) any counter claims.
- Acknowledgement and response is how you respond to readers who ask, 'What other claims could be made?'

## 5. Conclusion or Warrant

- Why you think your reasoning is good...
- This is the general principle that forms the bridge between the claim and the evidence it is based on.
- It is logical reasoning that connects the evidence to the claim.
- It moves from step to step in a clear, developmental manner.

# Let's have a go...

- Taking this question from the starter task:

What is effective teaching?

- You are going to work with a partner or on your own to write a response ...
- You will need to find some evidence – books / journals / website to help...
- Work through the five parts to complete your argument for what effective teaching is...
- Be prepared to produce your work to the group...

# How did you do?

- Now look at your 5 points to each step – what do you notice?

1. Claim
2. Reasons
3. Evidence
4. Acknowledgement and Response
5. Warrants

# Your habits of mind



Look at the 16 habits on the next slide...



Think about them in relation to you



Consider your strengths and possible areas of development



Reflecting on this will help you to know what you do well but also what you need to focus on in your learning

# Learning and leading with habits of mind: 16 essential characteristics for success

 <p><b>1. Persisting</b> <i>Stick to it!</i> Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused; looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.</p>	 <p><b>2. Managing Impulsivity</b> <i>Take your time!</i> Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberative.</p>	 <p><b>3. Listening with understanding and empathy</b> <i>Understand others!</i> Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts and ideas; Make an effort to perceive another's point of view and emotions.</p>	 <p><b>4. Thinking flexibly</b> <i>Look at it another way!</i> Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, consider options.</p>
 <p><b>5. Thinking about your thinking</b> <i>(Metacognition)</i> <i>Know your knowing!</i> Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.</p>	 <p><b>6. Striving for accuracy</b> <i>Check it again!</i> Always doing your best. Setting high standards. Checking and finding ways to improve constantly.</p>	 <p><b>7. Questioning and problem posing</b> <i>How do you know?</i> Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed &amp; developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve.</p>	 <p><b>8. Applying past knowledge to new situations</b> <i>Use what you learn!</i> Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.</p>
 <p><b>9. Thinking &amp; communicating with clarity and precision</b> <i>Be clear!</i> Strive for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding over-generalizations, distortions, deletions and exaggerations.</p>	 <p><b>10. Gather data through all senses</b> <i>Use your natural pathways!</i> Pay attention to the world around you. Gather data through all the senses. taste, touch, smell, hearing and sight.</p>	 <p><b>11. Creating, imagining, and innovating</b> <i>Try a different way!</i> Generating new and novel ideas, fluency, originality</p>	 <p><b>12. Responding with wonderment and awe</b> <i>Have fun figuring it out!</i> Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.</p>
 <p><b>13. Taking responsible risks</b> <i>Venture out!</i> Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one's competence. Try new things constantly.</p>	 <p><b>14. Finding humor</b> <i>Laugh a little!</i> Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at one's self.</p>	 <p><b>15. Thinking interdependently</b> <i>Work together!</i> Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations. Team work.</p>	 <p><b>16. Remaining open to continuous learning</b> <i>Learn from experiences!</i> Having humility and pride when admitting we don't know; resisting complacency.</p>



# To Finish...

- 16 habits...
- Plato's Cave...
- Metacognition - Thinking about your own thinking...
- Developing and learning... You don't know what you don't know ... AND THAT IS OK! 😊

# References

These slides were created with the help of worksheets from  
<http://faculty.virginia.edu/schoolhouse/WP/ArgumentHandouts.html>

They draw from two recommended books:

Booth, W. C. Colomb, G. G. and Williams, J. M. (2008) *The Craft of Research*, University of Chicago Press.

Colomb, G. G. and Williams, J. M. (2003) *The Craft of Argument*. Longman.