

ELEMENTS OF AN ARGUMENT

GRADES 6 - 12

Center(s)

Reading Together, Speaking & Listening

Skills

Students practice identifying claims and recognizing supporting facts in either written texts or oral (spoken-word) presentations.

Overview and Tips for Classroom Implementation

It's been said that students have to recognize arguments before they can be expected to make arguments. In this activity, students begin by engaging in close reading or attentive listening. Then they complete a graphic organizer by identifying the author or speaker's claim, supporting facts, and/or premises.

Tip: It's important for students to gain experience listening to arguments as well as reading them. But sometimes it's difficult to find relevant, age-appropriate examples of *spoken* arguments that relate to your content. If you can't find any, consider recording your own. Read passages from the textbook or supplemental reading material aloud. Students can listen to the recordings at the Literacy & Learning Center.

Center Prep

- A printed or recorded (depending on if you want a reading or listening activity) passage that consists of one claim and a few supporting facts.
- Print the Elements of an Argument graphic organizers. Print enough copies so that each student will have a choice of which organizer to use.
- Writing implements (pens, pencils)
- Timer (optional)
- Written center instructions

Mini-Lesson

Model the activity using a separate printed or recorded passage. Remind students that the ability to identify and then address the other side's claims and supporting facts is an important step in winning any debate. Adolescents love to argue, so they're likely to respond positively.

Optional – To Increase the Rigor

Challenge students to identify the claim and supporting facts without the use of a graphic organizer. They can record their findings in an outline form or as simple notations.

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Name _____ Date _____

Who is talking? _____



Write the claim in your own words here:

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Name _____ Date _____

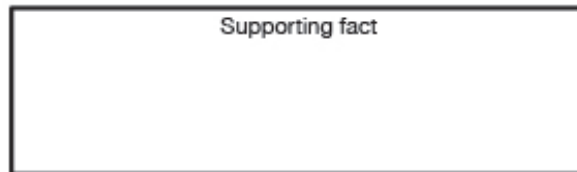
Who is talking? _____

In this passage, a person is making a claim and supporting it with facts. Record the claim and the supporting facts in the boxes. **Write them in your own words.**

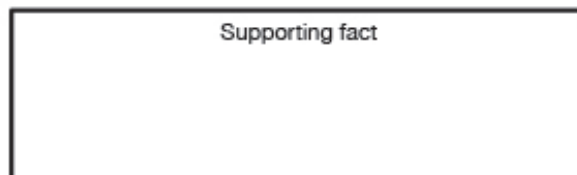
Claim



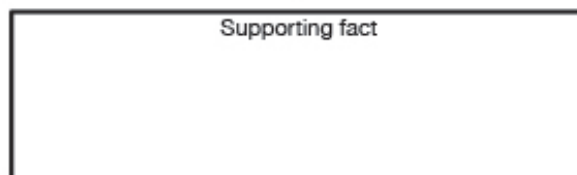
Supporting fact



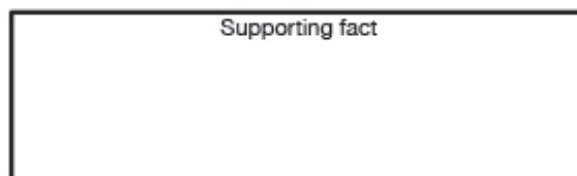
Supporting fact



Supporting fact



Supporting fact



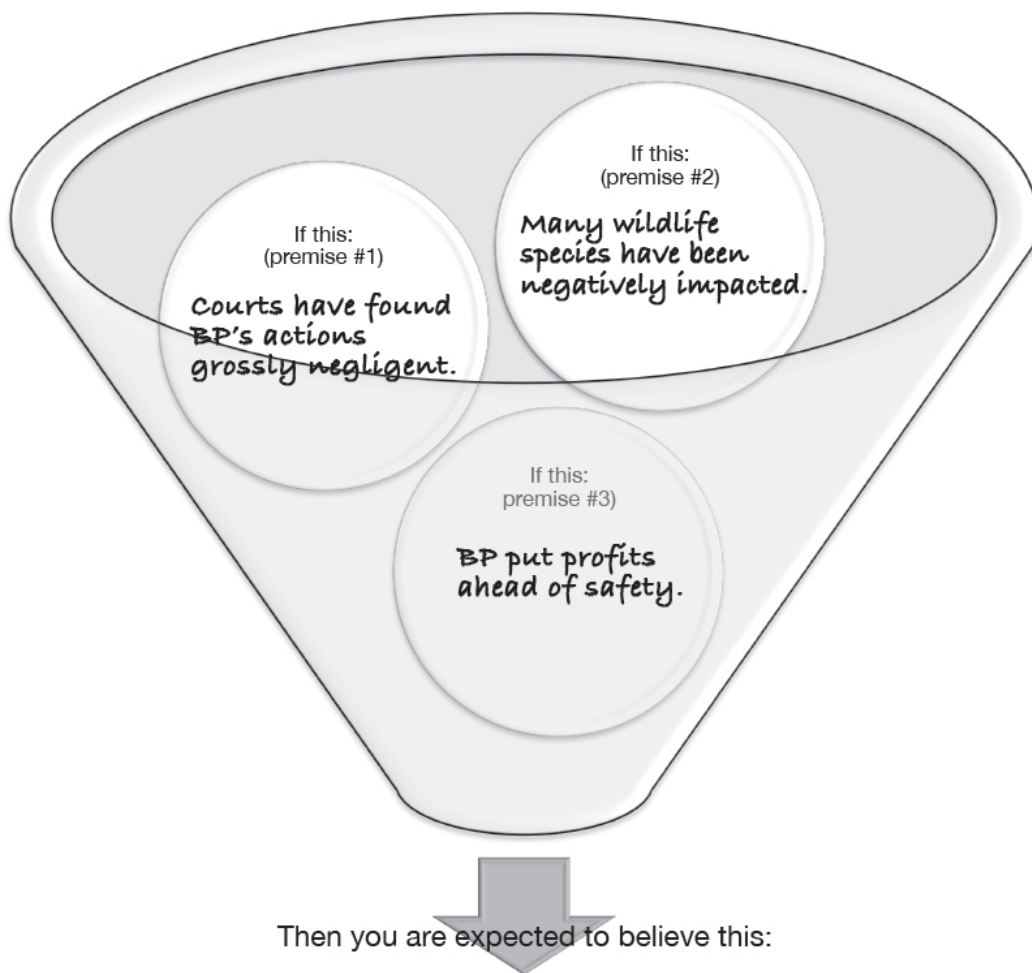
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Name Terri Cruz Date 11/19/15

Who is talking? Collin O'Mara - President & CEO of National Wildlife Federation

Source: www.NWF.org "The Gulf Has Waited Long Enough"



Write the claim in your own words here:

BP has been found guilty so we should get the money and start cleaning up the mess they made!

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Name Paul Midlum Date 4/2/16

Who is talking? American History textbook - chapter 9

In this passage, a person is making a claim and supporting it with facts. Record the claim and the supporting facts in the boxes. Write them in your own words.

Claim

Herbert Hoover was NOT laissez-faire.



Supporting fact

Deficits increased under Hoover.



Supporting fact

He championed central planning of the economy.



Supporting fact

Federal spending increased 1929-1932.



Supporting fact

He asked business leaders to keep wages high as the economy fell.

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Sample Center Instructions

Provide written instructions at the center. Your instructions may look something like this sample. Feel free to adapt this to suit your classroom's needs.

1. Listen closely to the recording. (2 minutes)
2. **Work as a team** to identify the speaker's claim. (What do they want you to believe?) What facts do they offer to support their claim? You can listen to the recording as many times as you need to. (6 minutes)
3. **Individually** choose a graphic organizer and fill in the claim and supporting facts. (6 minutes)
4. **Bring your completed graphic organizer to the Teacher-led Center.**
We'll discuss your work.