**Social Media and Its Impact on Relationships**

Creating Effective Arguments Through Meaningful Discussion and Countering



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**Rationale**

This demonstration, as part of the i3 Grant, is designed to help teachers in Douglas, Arizona teach argument writing. In particular, I am focusing on teaching students how to discuss a controversial issue and consider multiple perspectives, before taking a stance. As Graff and Birkenstein state in their book, *They Say, I Say,* “Writing well means entering into a conversation with others” (9). This book, which centers on teaching argument writing, acknowledges that while “writing is a social, conversational act, teaching students how to do this effectively remains a challenge” (9). Due to this, I have incorporated various strategies to scaffold reading and writing instruction.

The first activity I will facilitate is Philosophical Chairs.I learned about the Philosophical Chairs strategy during an AVID conference in Sacramento, California in 2010. AVID (Advanced Via Individual Determination) “is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities” (avid.org). AVID teaches skills for academic success, including reading comprehension, writing, inquiry, collaboration, and note-taking strategies. The population of students in Douglas, Arizona consists primarily of English Language Learners. Thus, I find incorporating these scaffolding techniques to be essential for their success.

Philosophical chairs, much like a debate, helps students enter a conversation about a topic of interest. It can be completed before or after reading a text, and unlike a traditional debate, allows students to change “sides” at anytime during the discussion.  This process is vital as, “learning happens when students use critical thinking to resolve subsequent conflicts, which arise when presented with alternative perspectives, ideas or contradictions to what they have previously learned or believed.” (*Using Philosophical Chairs*). The Philosophical Chairs technique teaches students to think critically, respond to the other side’s views and reflect on their beliefs.

Another focus of the demonstration is to scaffold the process of using countering in an argument. The i3 Grant requires the use of Harris Moves, argument techniques geared to help students use and challenge texts to prove a claim.Countering naturally fits into this demonstration because students are being asked to listen to the other side, respond, and pre-write before making their own conclusions. Knowing how to counter is essential to writing a strong, valid argument. In the article, *Moments of Argument: Agnostic Inquiry and Confrontational Cooperation,* Lynch, George, and Cooper confirm that “students have learned to argue vigorously and even angrily, but not to think about alternatives, or to listen to each other...or reconsider the position they began with, or even to make new connections across a range of disagreements.” Philosophical chairs not only encourages students to consider alternatives, but is an excellent tool for students who are undecided about an issue, or simply need more support.

Another support tool in my demonstration is the use of templates. While some scholars and educators may question the teaching of templates in the classroom, “templates might have the potential to open up and clarify academic conversation” (Graff, Birkenstein 11). Templates can help shape a student’s thoughts, in a way they never imagined possible. They allow students to acknowledge and summarize opposing claims, offer evidence for their views, frame quotations, and respond to counterarguments.They also address the bigger question: why the reader should care (Graff, Birkenstein 14). This leads to higher level thinking and consequently, deeper analysis. Rather than presenting the reader with an underdeveloped, narrow-minded view of an issue, students are encouraged to have a dialogue with the reader, which addresses varying interpretations. As students become more comfortable with templates, they are able to move away from them, rewriting them to fit their needs. Templates are like training wheels for the writer, intended to make the initial ride less daunting, so that they are one day able to explore the road on their own. Writing, like any other academic subject, needs to be scaffolded. Good writing, like anything else, comes with practice and guidance.

**Anticipatory Set: (5 minutes)**

Students will complete a quickwrite in which they counter the following claim:

The best way to pick up guys is to light your hair on fire.

Possible evidence for the above claim (students pick one or more statements to counter):

1.You will be sparkly, bright and absolutely radiating.

2. Your guy will feel like a knight in shining armor, when he rescues you.

3. The crisis will invoke such a deep sympathy for you that he will be unable to ever let you go.

4. You will be flaming hot!

Think Pair Share: Students will share responses with a partner.

Whole Class Share: Volunteers share their counter arguments with the class; class discusses importance of countering.

**Activity One: Quickwrite on Social Media (7 minutes)**

Teacher will play youtubevideo: “I forgot my phone.”

*\*\*Prior to watching the video: Inform students that the video portrays individuals using smartphones, but students should focus on the use of smartphones in terms of accessing social media.\*\**

After watching the video, students will complete a quickwrite which addresses the prompt:

Is social media helping or hurting our social relationships?

*Please note: For the purposes of this Demo, we will define social media as the collaborative, online communities: Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.*

**Activity Two: Philosophical Chairs (20 minutes)**

Students will debate the topic: Is social media helping or hurting our social relationships?

After discussion, students will complete a short reflection and the whole class will debrief on the process.

Student Rules:

1. Please stand when you wish to speak. You do not have to raise your hand.
2. Wait until the speaker is seated before responding, to be sure the last person is finished.
3. Repeat or rephrase what the last person said, before you respond.
4. You may not speak again, until at least two others have spoken.
5. One minute in the hot seat (for undecided participants).
6. You may change sides during the argument, if you are so compelled.

***Philosophical Chairs Evaluation/Reflection (5 min)***

1.What did you and your peers do that made Philosophical Chairs effective?

2. What will you do differently during the next Philosophical Chairs to make it more effective?

3. If Philosophical chairs was done BEFORE reading: What predictions can you make about the reading based on what was discussed?

4.If Philosophical Chairs was done AFTER reading: What connections can you make between the ideas presented during Philosophical Chairs and the reading? Think about how the discussion affects your understanding of or raises questions about the reading.

5.Explain how your viewpoint was strengthened, weakened, or changed altogether.

**Activity Three: Reading Jigsaw (20 min)**

Students will work in pairs to read and discuss the texts, “Facebook Makes Us Sadder and Less Satisfied, Study Finds” and “The upside of selfies: Social media isn't all bad for kids.”

**During Reading**

Students will choose one of the texts to read and annotate. As they read, they will:

* Highlight/underline 3-4 points the article is making
* Write a brief 1-3 sentence summary of their text in the margin.

**After Reading**

After students read their assigned text, they will discuss the reading with their partner and write down a summary of their partner’s section in the margin of the text. They may also want to highlight/underline the points their partner highlighted in the text, so they can refer to them later, if they wish.

Possible discussion questions to consider, as they exchange ideas about the texts:

\*Students may record responses on their text or on the graphic organizer.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Topic |  |
| What is said about the topic |  |
| Purpose |  |
| Main Idea |  |
| Evidence cited in the text | \*Share highlighted sections with partner and mark them on the text |

\*Adapted from 2013-2014 AVID Path,Writing Middle School/High School Handouts

**Activity Four: Writing a Claim (5 min)**

After students have been exposed to the texts (the video, “Facebook Makes Us Sadder and Less Satisfied, Study Finds” and “The upside of selfies: Social media isn't all bad for kids.” ) they will write a claim which addresses the writing prompt:

Is social media helping or hurting our social relationships?

**Claim Template** (This is just an example. Students do not need to use this)

**As a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I am writing an argument to convince \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**Examples:**

As a seventh-grade student, I am writing an argument to convince readers that the government should do more to protect our online privacy.

As a Facebook user, I am writing an argument to convince the government to protect my privacy from advertisers that are tracking my posts

As a teen internet user, I am writing an argument to convince my legislator that I don’t need the government to protect my online privacy.

**Other template examples:**

While some argue \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ about social media, I contend that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Social media has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ effect on social relationships because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Draft claim in the space below:**

**Activity Five: Flash Draft (20 min)**

Using the two texts about social media and their claim, students will begin to draft an essay, which addresses the writing prompt:

Is social media helping or hurting our social relationships?

**Activity Six: Graphic Organizer- (15 min)**

Review Definition of Countering: To counter is to “push back” against the text in some way (disagree with it, challenge something it says, or interpret it differently.)

Students will practice countering by filling in the graphic organizer below, with information from one of the texts.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name a persuasive claim the other side is making** | **Identify a piece of evidence or reason they might use to support their claim** | **Help us think differently about that piece of evidence** |
| **Example:** *All teachers should be required to obtain 15 hours of interpretive modern dance instruction.*  | *“Due to technological difficulties and other unforeseen circumstances, teachers must improvise 50% of their lessons. It is imperative that they know how to creatively entertain the class, until such issues are resolved.”* | *I disagree with this view because it’s true that teachers should creatively entertain a class, but modern dance is really boring, so teachers should learn stand-up comedy instead.* |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Activity Seven: Drafting (15 min)**

Using the graphic organizer as a guide, students will add countering to their flash draft.

**Activity Eight:** **Sharing (10 min)**

Students will share their drafts with a partner. Partner will highlight examples of countering in their peer’s draft. If time, have students share their examples of countering with the class.

**Academic Standards**

**Writing**

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/9-10/1/)

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1.A](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/9-10/1/a/)

Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1.B](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/9-10/1/b/)

Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1.C](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/9-10/1/c/)

Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

**Reading**

Key Ideas and Details:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RI/9-10/1/)

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RI/9-10/2/)

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

**Bibliography**

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Lynch, Dennis A., Diana George, and Marilyn M. Cooper. “Moments of Argument:Agnostic Inquiry and Confrontational Cooperation” *College Composition and Communication, Vol 48, No. 1.* National Council of Teachers of English. 61-85.Web.February 1997. <links.jstor.org>.

***Philosophical Chairs Evaluation/Reflection (5 min)***

1.What did you and your peers do that made Philosophical Chairs effective?

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Example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Topic | Wolves |
| What is said about the topic | Communicate by howling and using body language |
| Purpose | To show that wolves are social animals |
| Main Idea | Wolves communicate by howling and using body language, which shows that they are social animals. |

Your Reading-Title:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
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**Evaluation**

Thank you for participating in my teaching demonstration! Please provide your feedback below.

1.What went well in the demonstration?

2.How, if at all, has this demonstration changed your view about teaching argument?

3. How would you adapt this demonstration for use in your classroom?

4.Comments/Suggestions for improvement