

PART 2

MAKING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

“I neither know nor think I know.”

OBJECTIVE:

Students develop the ability to make evidence-based claims through a close reading of the text.



ACTIVITIES

1- INDEPENDENT READING AND FINDING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Students independently read part of the text and use the Making EBC Tool to look for evidence to support a claim made by the teacher.

2- READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION

Students follow along as they listen to the same part of the text being read aloud and discuss a series of text-dependent questions.

3- FIND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IN PAIRS

In pairs, students use the Making EBC Tool to look for evidence to support additional claims about the text made by the teacher.

4- CLASS DISCUSSION OF EBCs

The class discusses evidence in support of claims found by student pairs.

5- FORMING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students use the Forming EBC Tool to make an evidence-based claim of their own and present it to the class.

ESTIMATED TIME: 1-3 days

MATERIALS:

Making EBC Tool
Forming EBC Handout
Forming EBC Tool
EBC Criteria Checklist I
TCD Checklist



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RI.9-10.1

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.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.9-10.2 RI.9-10.3 SL.9-10.1

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.

RI.9-10.3: Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

≡ ACTIVITY 1: INDEPENDENT READING AND ≡ FINDING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Students independently read part of the text and use the Making EBC Tool to look for evidence to support a claim made by the teacher.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students independently work on paragraphs 4-9 of Plato's "Apology." Depending on scheduling and student ability, students can be assigned to read and complete the tool for homework. Teachers should decide what works best for their students. It's essential that students have opportunity to read the text independently. All students must develop the habit of perseverance in reading. Assigning the reading as homework potentially gives them more time with the text. Either way, it might be a good idea to provide some time at

the beginning of class for students to read the section quietly by themselves. This ensures that all students have had at least some independent reading time.


Also depending on scheduling and student ability, some students might choose (or be encouraged) to read ahead. Instructional focus should follow the pacing outlined in the activities, but students will only benefit from reading and re-reading the text throughout the duration of the unit.

≡ ACTIVITY 2: READ ALOUD AND ≡ CLASS DISCUSSION

Students follow along as they listen to the same part of the text being read aloud and discuss a series of text-dependent questions.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students follow along as they listen to paragraphs 4-9 of the text being read aloud and discuss three text-dependent questions:

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- 1- What does Socrates think about the oracle's message?
 - 2- What does Socrates do in an attempt to test the truth of the oracle's prophecy?
 - 3- Why do Socrates' actions incite the anger of his peers?

Read the text aloud to the class while students follow along. Alternatively, students could be asked to read aloud to the class. Work through the text using the following three text-dependent questions.

≡ ACTIVITY 2: READ ALOUD AND ≡ CLASS DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

1- What does Socrates think about the oracle's message?

Socrates explains that a close friend of his, Chaerephon, went to the oracle and asked if there was anyone wiser than Socrates. The priestess answered that there is no one wiser than Socrates. When Chaerephon relayed this to Socrates, Socrates was confused and wondered, "what ever does the god mean?". Convinced of his own ignorance, but equally convinced of the infallibility of the oracle, Socrates concluded that the statement must be a riddle and set off to solve it. Emphasize that in ancient Greece, the oracle was thought to be a portal through which the gods spoke directly to people. The statements of the oracle were understood to be the word of god, and therefore never doubted. "He can't be telling a lie. That just wouldn't be right," Socrates reasons. If a statement was confusing or seemed incorrect, it was assumed to be a riddle. Therefore, when Socrates heard the oracle's statement that he was the wisest man in Greece, he took it as his life's calling to figure out the truth behind that statement.



2- What realization does Socrates come to while trying to prove the oracle wrong?

In order to "prove the oracle wrong," Socrates sought out Athenian citizens who were typically thought of as wise men. When he began to question their wisdom, Socrates found that not only were they not wise, but they were incapable of admitting their ignorance. Socrates comes to the conclusion that the wisdom he has lies in his ability to recognize what he does not know, which no one else seems willing to do: "I neither know nor think I know." This idea is a central theme of the text, and is worth emphasizing. Socrates points out that people simply assume he knows what he is talking about, when in fact he only reveals the others' own ignorance. Still on course to solving the oracle's riddle, Socrates states that the god must have meant that he is wise because he knows nothing (line 70). Discuss Socrates' irony with these statements, reminding students of what Socrates is accused of and how it compares to his revelation.

ACTIVITY 2: READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES



3- Even though he knows he has angered many people with his interrogations, how does Socrates turn the argument around to his own benefit?

In his “task of helping god,” Socrates exposes the wise as unwise, which he does with apparent lack of satisfaction – he is, after all, simply trying to figure out the god's riddle. As he was doing this, Socrates was aware of the fact that his peers were angry with him, but he felt that he was responsible to try to understand the oracle’s message. Ask students to focus on the specific words and phrases Socrates chooses to build his irony and innocence. Socrates says he is “sad and fearful” because he has to do this unpleasant work for the god – it is not his fault that he must reveal these peoples’ lack of wisdom, but the fault of the oracle. In fact, he has gone so far to accept a “poverty-stricken” life due to his sense of obligation to help the god. Socrates paints himself as a victim of the oracle, rather than benefiting from it. Have students focus on other areas in the Apology where Socrates does the same: turns apparently negative aspects of the trial into positive ones for him, or “makes the worse case look better” as his accusers put it.

ACTIVITY 3: FIND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

In pairs, students use the Making EBC Tool to look for evidence to support additional claims about the text made by the teacher.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Once the class has reached a solid understanding of the text, connect it to the skill of making claims and supporting them with evidence by presenting a few main claims. Pass out the tools and have students work in pairs to find evidence to support the claims.

Collect each student’s Making EBC Tool with the evidence they found for the first claim. These should be evaluated to get an assessment of where each student is in the skill development. Students should use their tools for their work in pairs—repeating the first claim and refining their evidence based on the read aloud and class discussion. Even though students are not finding the evidence independently, they should each fill in the tools to reinforce their acquisition of the logical structure among the ideas. Students should get into the habit of using quotation marks when recording direct quotes and including the line numbers of the evidence.

The instructional focus here is developing familiarity with claims about texts and the use of textual evidence to support them. Students should still not be expected to develop complete sentences to express supporting evidence. The pieces of evidence should be as focused as possible. The idea is for students to identify the precise points in the text that support the claim. This focus is lost if the pieces of evidence become too large. The tools are constructed to elicit a type of “pointing” at the evidence.

One approach for ensuring a close examination of claims and evidence is to provide erroneous claims that contradict textual evidence and ask students to find the places that disprove the claim. Students could then be asked to modify it to account for the evidence.



ACTIVITY 4: CLASS DISCUSSION OF EBCs

The class discusses evidence in support of claims found by student pairs.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

After students have finished their work in pairs, regroup for a class discussion. Have pairs volunteer to present their evidence to the rest of the class. Discuss the evidence, evaluating how each piece supports the claims. Begin by modeling the evaluation, referring to the checklist, and then call on students to evaluate the evidence shared by the other pairs.

They can offer their own evidence to expand the discussion. Carefully guide the exchanges, explicitly asking students to support their evaluations with reference to the text.

These constructive discussions are essential for the skill development. Listening to and evaluating the evidence of others and providing text-based criticism expands students' capacity

to reason through the relationship between claims and evidence. Paying close attention to and providing instructional guidance on the student comments is as important to the process as evaluating the tools and creates a class culture of supporting all claims (including oral critiques) with evidence.

Using the Text-Centered Discussion Checklist is one way of talking about and supporting student participation in class and pair discussions, especially if students are already familiar with the TCD checklist from previous units. If not, time can be taken (if desired) to introduce them to some or all of the criteria of effective text-centered discussions.



ACTIVITY 5: FORMING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students use the Forming EBC Tool to make an evidence-based claim of their own and present it to the class.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Once the claims and evidence have been discussed, students return to the pairs and use the tool to make an evidence-based claim of their own. Pairs should make a single claim, but each student should fill in his or her own tool. Regroup and discuss the claims and evidence as a class. Pairs can use their tool to present their claims and evidence orally.

Talk through the process modeled in the tool, including the nature of the details that stood out to students, the reasoning they used to group and relate them, and the claim they developed from the textual evidence.

Draw upon the Forming EBC Handout and EBC Criteria Checklist I to help guide discussion.



INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITY

Students read paragraphs 10-17 of Plato's "Apology" and use the Forming EBC Tool to make a claim and support it with evidence. This activity overlaps with the first activity of Part 3 and can be given as homework or done at the beginning of the next class.



ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Making EBC Tools should be evaluated to assess the development of the student's grasp of the relationship between claims and textual evidence. They should show progress in the relevance and focus of the evidence. The Forming EBC Tools are students' first attempts at making their own claims with the help of a peer. Basic claims are fine at this point. Use the EBC Criteria Checklist to structure the evaluation and feedback to students. Evaluation should focus on the validity and clarity of the claim and the relevance of the evidence. Recording the "thinking" part of the tool is important in order to strengthen the student's reasoning skills as well as provide them with the academic vocabulary to talk about them.

Evidence should be in quotation marks and the reference recorded. Using quotation marks helps students make the distinction between quotes and paraphrases. It also helps them to eventually incorporate quotes properly into their writing. Recording references is critical not only for proper incorporation in writing, but also because it helps students return to text for re-evaluating evidence and making appropriate selections.

The Text-Centered Discussion Checklist can be used to evaluate student participation in discussions for formative and diagnostic information. Teachers and students can get a sense of areas where development in speaking and listening skills are needed.