This activity asks students to quickly produce a list of multiple claims around a given topic, or multiple pieces of evidence in support of a claim. It can also be used to have students quickly think of as many questions as possible in order to critically analyze the strength of an argument. The competitive and fast-paced nature of the game motivates students to collaborate to develop multiple ideas in a short amount of time. This activity also asks students to work independently before sharing ideas, allowing the teacher to gauge how well each individual student is grasping the material.

To prepare for this activity, the teacher creates a claim to be posted on the board. Students should be divided into groups of 3-5. The teacher reviews the rules of the game and then posts the claim for the class to see. The timer is set for 5 minutes, during which time the students are to work in their groups to write down as many pieces of evidence as possible to support the claim. At the end of five minutes, the teacher calls time and asks all students to stop brainstorming. A student representative from each group shares their pieces of evidence one at a time with the whole class. Each piece of evidence is discussed by the class with the goal of determining if it is a good piece of evidence that relates to the claim. If the class determines it deserves credit, every group that had that piece of evidence gets 1 point. If a piece of evidence is determined to be worthy of credit, and is also something no other group thought of, that group gets 2 points. The teacher may choose to cap the pieces of good evidence at a certain number if time is a concern. Otherwise, go through all of the evidence that each group has and judge its relevance to the claim. At the end of the game, award or recognize the accomplishment of the winning group.

The Brainstorm Game helps students understand that there are multiple ways to defend a claim. It reinforces the idea that evidence, while factual, is not always related to a specific claim, and may not be helpful in making a persuasive argument. This activity also helps students work on their public speaking and persuasive oral argumentation skills as they defend or attack pieces of evidence.

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| **Step** | **Teacher Move** | **Student Move** |
| **1** | Before class, prepare a claim or argument on a given topic |  |
| **2** | Divide students into groups of 4-5 |  |
| **3** | Share the claim/argument… and give students 5 minutes to brainstorm in their groups | Students should write down the claim/argument and rapidly brainstorm as many ideas as possible in five minutes |
| **4** | Call time and stop all individuals from further brainstorming |  |
| **5** | Ask one student representative from Group 1 to share their first idea | Student shares idea, rest of class listens carefully |
| **6** | Facilitate discussion on whether idea is “deserves credit” | Raise hands to participate in discussion about whether idea presented “deserves credit” |
| **7** | Award 1 point to every group with accepted piece of evidence and 2 points for every accepted piece of evidence that only one group thought of and nobody else had | Agree on whether or not idea deserves credit. |
| **8** | Repeat steps 5-7 until all ideas have been discussed. (Limit # of ideas that “deserve credit” to 5, 10, etc. if time is a concern.) | Repeat steps 5-7 until all ideas have been discussed. |
| **9** | Repeat steps 5-8 for all remaining groups. | Repeat steps 5-8 until all groups’ ideas have been discussed. |
| **10** | Reward winning group |  |