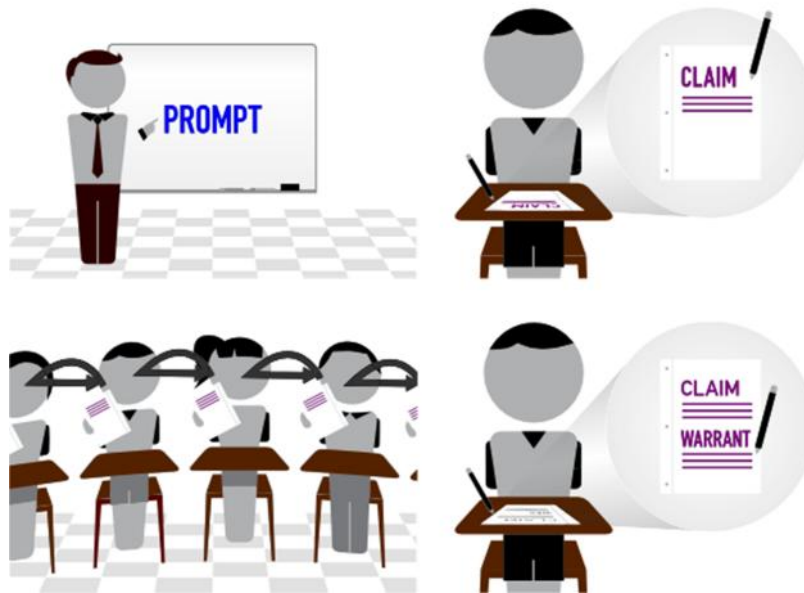


# Claim-Warrant Game



In this activity, the entire class sits in a circle and each student writes a controversial statement, or claim, and passes it to her neighbor, who must write a warrant for the claim she was just passed. (Optionally, the next student in line can then evaluate the warrant to decide whether it provides valid support for the original claim.) All students engage simultaneously: while person C is writing a warrant to support person B's claim, person B is writing a warrant to support person A's claim, and so on. The teacher should provide a general theme to which every claim must relate.

The Claim-Warrant Game helps students distinguish between the parts of an argument by assigning each part to a different person. It also builds community by asking each student to argue in support of a classmate's claim rather than her own. So, a teacher might ask students to write a claim about the Harlem Renaissance. Students can be creative and come up with a variety of different claims, such as "during the Harlem Renaissance, artists reflected on the role of race in America" or "literature from the Harlem Renaissance is still influential today." The next student has to be ready to support any potential claim about the Harlem Renaissance, encouraging creative thinking.

Like all EBA activities, the Claim-Warrant game may be used for a variety of purposes. The written claims and warrants generated from that game could even be saved and revisited with a "re-play" at the end of the unit to review what has been learned. The activity could also be centered on a homework problem from the night before. In this case person A might make a claim about the problem, person B identify a passage or rule from the textbook to support that claim, and person C explain how the quotation acts as a warrant for the claim.

This game can be customized in a variety of ways. For example, once students understand the basics of the game, they might split into small groups to continue it on their own. Or, if complex

arguments are the goal, students might pass the same piece of paper more than once, with each person adding one warrant to the ones already there and the last person giving a short speech stating the claim and all warrants that have been provided for it. (This would be a low-stakes exercise since the content of the speech would not be the speaker's own.) Finally, the game's writing component may vary from quickly jotted notes to full, formal paragraphs and even (putting multiple warrants together) whole sequences of paragraphs.

Step	Teacher Move	Student Move
1	Prepare a prompt to guide students' claims.	
2	Seat students in a circle, each with a piece of paper and pen or pencil.	
3	Remind students that a claim is a controversial statement, and explain that every claim they make during this activity must relate to the assigned topic or text. Then instruct them to...	Write a claim about the provided prompt on your piece of paper. Then pass the paper to the person on your left.
4	Remind students that a warrant is a reason a claim is true. Then instruct them to...	On the paper you receive, write a warrant to support the claim. Even if you disagree with the claim, do your best to find an argument supporting it.
5	Either have students pass their papers once more to the left, or collect the papers to shuffle and redistribute them randomly. Then invite or call on a student to...	Read aloud the claim and warrant on the paper you're holding.
6	Ask the class to critique the claim and warrant just shared. Depending on their skill level and your purposes, they might be required to...	Discuss one or more of the following: whether (a) the claim and warrant are actually a claim and a warrant; (b) the warrant supports the claim; (c) the warrant is strong or weak; (d) you can think of better warrants for the same claim; or (e) you can think of warrants to refute the claim.
7	Repeat steps 3-6 as desired.	Repeat steps 3-6 as required.