

CLAIM TESTING – WHAT ARE THE CLAIM TESTERS?

Preparation

- Cut out the Claim Testers and Supporting Statement Cards (last page of this PDF). Note: We suggest printing enough sets to have one per group of 3-4 students.
- Print and display the [BHP Claim Testing Poster](#)

Purpose

Claim testing is one of the essential practices that students develop in BHP. Claim testing helps students decide what to believe, and it also helps them become more skillful in evaluating others' claims. Learning this skill will enable students to support their own claims in both writing and speaking. In this activity, one in the claim-testing progression of activities, students will categorize supporting statements into the four claim tester types as a way to begin understanding the different ways in which claims can be supported.



Practices

Reading, writing

Being well-versed in claim testing will help students be critical consumers of what they read. When students use claim testing to construct essays, it strengthens their speaking and writing skills. We suggest being explicit with students about the ways in which claim testing can be used in reading, interpreting, discussing, and producing historical accounts and interpretations.

Process

You and your students have probably watched the video, *How Do We Decide What to Believe?* before starting this activity. If not, we suggest hitting the pause button and watching the video before kicking off this activity!

Okay, now you've watched it! Remind students about the claim testers that were introduced in that video by pointing out the claim testing poster that you have displayed in your classroom. Then, review each claim tester as a class:

- **Intuition** – We look for intuition to test some claims. Intuition is often a gut feeling, when the support for the claim just seems right.
- **Authority** – This is when we accept information or data from a credible or believable source.
- **Logic** – Sometimes we test claims by carefully thinking about something to see if it make sense.
- **Evidence** - That's when we're gathering up available information about the world. Remember, *evidence* is an interesting word because *evidence* comes from *evident*: to be able to see something.

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Now, tell students that you want to make a claim that was once highly controversial, but then eventually came to be known as fact. However, in some circles—such as in the group called “Flat Earthers”—the claim has become controversial.

The claim: **The Earth is round.**

Tell students you are going to provide them with a bunch of supporting statements for “The Earth is Round.” Their job, working in groups, will be to determine which statements match which claim tester. Before handing out the cards to each group, work through one example with your students by giving them the following supporting statement:

“When looking at pictures that astronauts have taken of the Earth after landing on the Moon, the Earth appears round.”

Ask students which claim tester is being used as part of this statement. They will probably come up with “evidence” as the answer for this one, but if they don’t, remind them of the connection between *evidence* and *evident*, and that if something appears to be round in a picture, we can count that as observable evidence.

Group your students (we recommend 3-4 per group) and hand out the supporting statements. Then, ask them to sort the cards into the four claim testing categories. Make sure they discuss their categorizations as a group, as they will be asked to defend their categorizations at the end of the activity.

Once students are done, review each statement, one by one, as a class to gain a sense of how well they are understanding each of the claim testers. Note, some of the answers are debatable – this is a great opportunity for students to begin to respectfully discuss why a statement may fall into one category or another.

Once you’re done, tell students they will be practicing claim testing ALL THE TIME in this class. They should refer to the poster on the wall and use the language of claim testing whenever possible.

CLAIM TESTING – WHAT ARE THE CLAIM TESTERS?

Preparation

- Print and cut out the Claim Testers and Supporting Statement Cards

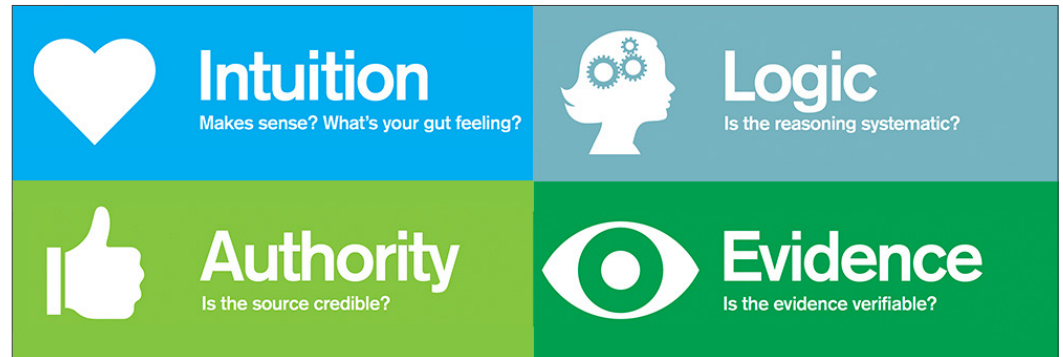
Purpose

Claim testing is one of the essential practices that you will develop in BHP. Claim testing helps people decide what to believe, and it also helps them become more skillful in evaluating the claims of others. Learning to use claim testers will enable you to support your own claims when writing and speaking. In this activity, you will categorize supporting statements into the four claim tester types as a way to begin understanding the different ways in which claims can be supported.

Practices

Reading, writing

Being well-versed in claim testing will help you be a critical consumer of what you read . If you use claim testers to construct essays, your speaking and writing skills will improve.



Process

You've probably watched the video, *How Do We Decide What to Believe?* before starting this activity. If not, hit the pause button, and watch the video before kicking off this activity!

Okay, now you've watched it! Remember the claim testers that were introduced in that video? If not, look at the claim testing poster on the wall, and get ready to review each claim tester as a class.

Now, let's practice testing a claim. The claim you will test was once hotly debated, then eventually came to be known as fact. However, in some circles—such as the group called “Flat Earthers”—the claim has become controversial again.

The claim: **The Earth is round.**

You are going to get a bunch of statements that support the claim, “The Earth is Round.” Your job will be to determine which statements match which claim tester. Before starting, think about the following example with your class:

“When looking at pictures that astronauts have taken of the Earth after landing on the Moon, the Earth appears round.”

What claim tester do you think is being used here? Discuss your answer with the class.

Now that you've practiced as a class, get into groups and sort the cards into the four claim testing categories. Make sure to discuss your categorizations with the group—you will be asked to defend your categorizations at the end of the activity.

Keep in mind that you will be practicing claim testing ALL THE TIME in this class. You should refer to the poster on the wall and use the language of claim testing whenever possible.

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Intuition	Evidence	Logic	Authority
Everyone says the Earth is round	My science teacher said the Earth is round.	Earth's shadow on the Moon during a lunar eclipse is round.	This feels right because a lot of things I see in nature are round.
Ships that sail off into the sea "sink" off the horizon instead of "falling" off the edge.	Aristotle showed that when you look at a lunar eclipse, the shadow on the Moon is curved and not flat.	I've never heard of anyone falling off the edge of the Earth, so it might be round.	I've seen so many pictures from spacecrafts that show the Earth is round.
If you look up at the stars from the same location on different nights, the stars aren't always in the same spot!	As you go higher in elevation, you can see more. So, if you climb a tree, you can see more than if you were on the ground. If the Earth were flat, you would see the same thing at all heights.	The Moon and other planets all look round when observed through a telescope, so the Earth is probably round, too.	If the Earth were flat, the Sun would rise and set at the same time everywhere and we wouldn't need time zones.

