Evidence ID

Goal of Exercise:

To help students listen to evidence more carefully; to quickly identify and categorize evidence claims.

Description:

In front of class, read excerpts from news articles, or evidence that has been researched for the topic. Evidence can be from the current resolution, or any current events news. Ideally, the quotations should be new to the students.

Students will listen to each quotation (no more than 4-5 sentences long) one at a time. After each "card" of evidence is read, have the students identify what type of claim/argument the evidence/author is making. Then, students should explain how they would use such evidence in an actual debate round (Affirmative or Negative? Topicality, Significance, Inherency, Solvency, or Disadvantage? Etc.).

Example:

"India's trade to GDP ratio has increased from 15 percent to 35 percent of GDP between 1990 and 2005, and the economy is now among the fasted growing in the world." *World Bank, New York Times, Nov. 18, 2007*

"New Studies show that ethanol, when combined with gasoline, can help improve fuel efficiency and decrease pollution. Ratios are effective when ethanol…"

Teacher's Note:

Make sure you gather the evidence before class. Do a cursory reading to determine for yourself what types of arguments are being made, so you can guide the students should they get stuck.

Keep in mind: most articles/quotations can be used for multiple types of arguments -- encourage students to discover the many uses for a single "card" of evidence.

Being able to identify evidence claims quickly and accurately will help students evaluate their opponent's evidence in a debate round efficiently. In addition, when students see the multiple uses for evidence, they will be able to think far more creatively. For example, what may be Affirmative evidence in one round, could be used as Negative in the next round.

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