

Claim, Support, Question

A routine for reasoning with evidence.

Drawing on your investigation, experience, prior knowledge, or reading:

- Make a claim about (or give an explanation for, or offer an interpretation of) the topic
- Identify support (things you see, feel, know) for your claim
- Ask a question related to your claim or the supports. What isn't explained?

PURPOSE

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine supports reasoning by having students form claims, explanations, or interpretations and support them with evidence. Questioning claims helps students see reasoning as an ongoing process.

APPLICATION

When and where can I use it?

Statements of fact or belief are presented everywhere. This routine is designed to help students take notice of claims and thoughtfully examine them. Use the routine with any topic, work of art, piece of text, poem, etc. to invite careful reasoning and evaluation.

LAUNCH

What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

This routine can work well for individuals, small groups, and whole groups. Begin by modeling the routine in the whole group: Identify a **claim**, ask the group for evidence that **supports** the claim, then invite students to question the claim or any of the evidence that has been offered to support it.

As you process each step of the routine, document students' comments in a way that is accessible to all students. For example, you may want to write the claim on chart paper, then draw two columns, one for **supports** and one for **questions**. Once students have practiced the routine in the whole group, they can use the routine individually or in small groups, documenting their responses in a journal or in a way that can be displayed within their small groups.

You may want to return to the whole group discussion and invite individuals or small groups to share their **claims**, **supports**, and **questions** with the whole group. Leave time for the other students to respond with additional **supports** for the claim or to raise additional **questions**. If there's time, reflect on the activity: What new thoughts do students have about the topic? Keep in mind that students are often in the habit of simply agreeing or disagreeing with claims. You might need to slow down and give students time to think as they generate **supports** and **questions** about a **claim**.

You may need to encourage deeper thinking by asking: What are some other questions you might want to ask about this claim? Can you think of reasons why this might be true? Why might it not be true? Thoughtful questions that challenge the plausibility of a claim often lead to a deeper understanding of the topic and the reasoning process.

This thinking routine was developed as part of the Visible Thinking project at Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Explore the full PZ Thinking Routine Toolbox at pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines.