**MS Big Questions - Lesson #3**

**Unit Name**: Big Questions - Middle School - Exploring This Year’s Topic

**Topic**: Affirmative Arguments

Resolved: Humans are fundamentally different from other animals.

**Essential Questions**:

1. Question 1 - Why do views change over time and how do these changes affect society?
2. Question 2 - How do purpose and audience shape the content in a persuasive text?
3. Question 3 - How does research enhance the ability to persuade?

**Objectives**:

1. Objective 1 - Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
2. Objective 2 - Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual role as needed.
3. Objective 3 - Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

4. Objective 4 - Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

**Instructional Materials Needed**:

1. Group work folders from Days 1 and 2

2. At least one laptop or tablet (internet accessible) per group

3. Argument template indicating three parts of an argument (claim/warrant/impact)

**References** *(if applicable)*:

1. See bibliography at end of Topic Overview

2. Link provided to multiple other sources

**Overview of Lesson** *(general outline of what will be covered)*:

Students will use the discussions from the past two lessons to begin brainstorming affirmative arguments. By the end of the class period they should have 3-5 affirmative arguments to use in their cases. Case-writing will be covered in Lesson 5.

**Detailed Step-by-Step Lesson** *(be sure to include time allocation information)*:

Today’s directions assume that students have been exposed to structuring an argument; if that is not the case, there needs to be an overview on how to set up a debate argument. Essentially, any debate argument (not to be confused with “arguing” or having an “argument”) consists of three parts: a CLAIM, a WARRANT, and an IMPACT. To simplify: a CLAIM is the NAME of the point being made; the WARRANT is the WHY the point is true (the evidence and analysis); and the IMPACT is the WHY the point matters, why it is significant or important to the matter at hand. This simple structure will complement most expository writing in English and history classes with the warrant consisting of textual evidence and/or supporting facts. A teacher-provided template that has these three parts labeled is handy for students new to the process. As students mature, their arguments can be more complex and nuanced. A sample template is included at the end of this lesson plan.

1. 5-10 minutes - Begin by asking class Essential Question #2 - How do purpose and audience shape the content in a persuasive text? As students research, they should always ask themselves this question - who is the author’s audience and how does that shape the author’s purpose and material?

2. 40 minutes - Based on discussions from Lessons 1-2, students should brainstorm affirmative arguments. They can use the ideas presented in the Topic Analysis to get started, but they should also use their logic, experiences, and the devices at hand to research and come up with additional arguments. Each argument should be written down on its own sheet of paper with accompanying evidence and analysis to support the claim. At this point the arguments are independent of each other.

3. Each group should come up with 3-5 independent arguments, complete with supporting evidence. Evidence citations should be written down (decide on appropriate bibliographic citation format to use).

4. 5 minutes - Collect the folders and completed argument worksheets for the day.

**Informal Assessment Strategies**:

1. Teacher monitoring of group work to see if students are on task and fulfilling roles.

2. Collection of folders and review of argument recorded.

**Formal Assessment Strategies**:

1. Group folders and evaluations will be used at end of unit for formal assessment.

**Reflection/Review for Future**:

1. Teacher reviews folders for completion and determines if existing groups need any help with assigning roles or any redirection before Lesson #4.

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**Sample Argument Template** - have students write each argument ON ITS OWN PAGE. This allows the arguments to be “shuffled” to come up with the best order for presentation. This template is for students just beginning to work with argument structure. As they practice, the structure can become more developed and sophisticated with more analysis, more supporting material, etc.

Argument Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Claim - What is my point?

2. Warrant - Why is my point true? What is my proof? (Analysis, Evidence, and Citation)

3. Impact - Why does my point matter? What is the significance of this point?