

Do musical artists argue with each other (over whether hip hop glorifies violence promotes misogyny, whether rap music exposes racial injustice and empowers the black community, or cultural appropriation of music)?

During the class discussion, try to instill in students a recognition that arguing crosses all walks of life. Arguments occur in the sciences and the arts.

Arguments take place in face-to-face settings, in scholarly journals, online via social media, and through news media.

Additional Teaching Resources

Peeples, J. A., Hall, B. J., & Seiter, J. S. (2012). The Flipper debate: Teaching intercultural communication through simulated conflict. *Communication Teacher*, 26(2), 87-91. doi: 10.1080/17404622.2011.643806

Objective: This activity can be used to underline Chapter 1's point that arguing is contextual and is situated in a particular culture. After watching excerpts from the Oscar-winning documentary, *The Cove*, students participate in a debate. One side takes a "Western Filmmaker" view, which frames dolphins as friendly and heroic, while the other side takes a "Japanese fisher" perspective, which frames dolphins as pests to be killed.

Sample Multiple-Choice Test Questions for Chapter 1

Note: The correct answer is indicated with an asterisk.

1. At its core, argument is based on:
 - a. Persuasion
 - b. Reason-giving*
 - c. Deduction
 - d. Logic
 - e. Hostility
2. According to the authors, the ability to argue is
 - a. A necessary evil
 - b. Less important in a post truth society
 - c. A valuable communication skill*
 - d. A last resort, after other methods of communication have failed
 - e. A negative form of social interaction
3. A person says, "If I understand you correctly, you're saying that vegans should not eat honey, because it harms bees." The person is using:
 - a. Partial agreement
 - b. Perception checking*
 - c. Verbal aggression
 - d. Identification
 - e. Shared values

4. A back-and-forth process of arguing, that involves asking and answering questions, is known as:
 - a. The Socratic method*
 - b. Perception checking
 - c. Paraphrasing
 - d. Formal logic
5. According to the text, which of the following should be done prior to entering into an argument?
 - a. Offer partial agreement
 - b. Use paraphrasing
 - c. Use perception checking
 - d. Ask questions
 - e. Identify shared goals*
6. According to Gass and Seiter, when it comes to arguing, there are no childhood geniuses. This is because:
 - a. Children are completely irrational
 - b. Children are verbally aggressive
 - c. Skill at arguing is a developmental process*
 - d. Children have not learned formal logic
 - e. Children spend too much time on social media
7. The ability to see things from another person's point of view is known as:
 - a. Theory of mind*
 - b. Dialectical method
 - c. Risking the self
 - d. Fairness principle
8. Telling another person, "You make a good point," or, "You raise an important question," are ways of demonstrating:
 - a. Assertiveness
 - b. Partial agreement
 - c. Respectfully disagreeing
 - d. Ingratiation
 - e. Respect and tolerance*
9. An arguer who asks, "Just so I'm clear, are you saying...?" or, "To clarify, is your point that...?" is using:
 - a. Perception checking*
 - b. Respect and tolerance
 - c. Identification and empathy

d. Shared goals and common values

10. According to the authors, arguing is:

- a. A form of verbal aggressiveness
- b. A form of communication competence*
- c. An unfortunate feature of everyday life
- d. Generally destructive to relationships

11. Summarizing another person's argument to their satisfaction is known as:

- a. Partial agreement
- b. Paraphrasing*
- c. Perception checking
- d. The Socratic method
- e. Compromising

12. According to the authors, arguing:

- a. Can be an enjoyable intellectual exercise*
- b. Should be a last resort
- c. Is generally destructive to relationships
- d. Tends to lead to verbal aggression
- e. Is the opposite of cooperating

13. Which of the following is the most effective way of expressing disagreement?

- a. "Let me stop you right there..."
- b. "Wrong, wrong, wrong..."
- c. "With all due respect, I disagree..."*
- d. "If I sound like an idiot, it's because I want you to be able to understand me."
- e. "Kindergarten scissors are sharper than you are."

14. Which of the following statements about arguing and culture is most accurate?

- a. Western cultures tend to favor direct disagreement over indirect disagreement.*
- b. Verbal aggression is valued in Western cultures, but not in Asian cultures.
- c. The value attached to arguing as a form of conflict management is the same across all cultures.
- d. A rational argument remains rational, regardless of the audience or context in which it is made.

15. When a person responds to an argument by saying, "Just because," or, "Whatever..." or, "because of reasons..." the person is using:

- a. Dialectic
- b. Faux argument*
- c. Deduction
- d. Verbal aggression

16. Which of the following represents a positive form of argument?
- a. Appeal to the crowd
 - b. Hasty generalization
 - c. Faux argument
 - d. Dialectic*
 - e. Verbal aggression
17. Which statement best reflects the view of argument held by the authors?
- a. Arguing demonstrates disrespect for another's intelligence.
 - b. Arguing avoids or suppresses conflict.
 - c. Arguing is a prosocial activity that signifies relational equality.*
 - d. Conversations and discussions are good for relationships, but arguing is bad for relationships.

Sample Short-Answer Essay Questions for Chapter 1

1. Why are there no child prodigies in arguing, as there are in math, music, and chess?
2. Select one of the six functions of arguing and explain it clearly in your own words.
3. Identify two specific strategies for reducing defensiveness in another person with whom you are arguing.
4. Why do the authors maintain that arguing is a prosocial activity?
5. Provide a specific example of how an arguer might establish common goals or shared values on a specific topic or issue.
6. What does it mean to say that something is epistemic? Why is arguing epistemic?