

Council of Experts

Grade Level: 4-9
Time: 45-90 minutes

Objectives:

- Identify personal assumptions regarding an issue.
- Research each issue for the truth underlying assumptions.
- Involve students in cooperative sharing and discussion.
- Encourage students to use evidence and research when considering an issue.

Curricular Connections: Civics

Materials/Resources: Chalkboard or flip chart paper

Procedure:

- 1) The team sits in a circle. Each team member takes two minutes to express his or her opinion on their chosen issue. Each issue should be presented as a simple statement such as: the water quality in our community's homes is bad. Students are not allowed to make comments about others' opinions, whether showing agreement or disagreement.
- 2) After all students have spoken, each opinion is open for a group discussion with the goal of answering two questions:
 - This opinion is true because (evidence of truth)
 - This opinion is untrue because (evidence of the contrary)
- 3) Once the group comes to a consensus, they research the issue to determine the "truth".

Reflection:

- Discuss assumptions they may have about an issue and their research findings.

Assessment:

1. Ability to communicate reasoning and identify assumptions.

Source: Adapted from Keystone Science School's Inquiry Workshop, May 2000