



## Identifying arguments, opinions and points of view

We all encounter the opinions of individuals in reports on scientific developments. This activity gets the students to think about the arguments that different people might make for and against animal experiments.

### Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- make predictions of the opinions held by different individuals
- identify arguments made by individuals to support their points of view
- identify new information learned during the activity.

### Time required

Allow 50-60 minutes (could be shortened if required).

### Outline of the activity

1 This activity can be used for any scientific development which is controversial in terms of its risks and benefits or its perceived moral status. The resource to support this activity presents a range of stakeholder's opinions in the debate about animal experiments.

2 Get the students into pairs or small groups. Write the title of the topic on the board and list the stakeholders whose opinions are going to be considered. Issue briefing sheet 1 and explain that the first task for the students is to write down each person's likely views on the issues, and to give one or two arguments that person might use to support their point of view.

3 Issue students with the video clips showing the range of opinions. At the end, issue briefing sheet 2 for the students to fill in.

4 Close the activity with a whole class discussion related to their responses on briefing sheet 2.

### Tips and strategies



Encourage discussion in step 1 of the activity - this will give students an opportunity to develop their own opinions. It may even lead to a debate, with students expressing opinions and trying to convince their peers that their view is correct. These are useful skills that will be beneficial in future.

As an extension activity, students could find media items (articles, YouTube videos etc) displaying different opinions on the same or a different topic.



## Identifying arguments, opinions and points of view: briefing sheet 1

In this activity, you will consider the points of view of a range of people who have opinions about animal experiments.

1 Write down the name and occupation of each person involved in the debate about animal experiments. Say whether you expect them to be for or against. Try to give a few of the arguments you think each person might use to support their point of view. (You might find this difficult to do this for all the individuals, but do your best.)

### Person 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Do you expect them to be for or against? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

What arguments do you think they might use?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Person 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Do you expect them to be for or against? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

What arguments do you think they might use?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Identifying arguments, opinions and points of view: briefing sheet 1

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Person 3

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Do you expect them to be for or against? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

What arguments do you think they might use?

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Person 4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Do you expect them to be for or against? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

What arguments do you think they might use?

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## Identifying arguments, opinions and points of view: briefing sheet 2

After finding out about the points of views of individuals, complete this briefing sheet.

### Person 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Were they for or against? \_\_\_\_\_ Was your prediction correct? \_\_\_\_\_

Did they use the arguments you thought they would? Did they use any arguments you didn't expect? What did you learn from them? Make notes:

### Person 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Were they for or against? \_\_\_\_\_ Was your prediction correct? \_\_\_\_\_

Did they use the arguments you thought they would? Did they use any arguments you didn't expect? What did you learn from them? Make notes:



## Identifying arguments, opinions and points of view: briefing sheet 2

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### Person 3

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Were they for or against? \_\_\_\_\_ Was your prediction correct? \_\_\_\_\_

Did they use the arguments you thought they would? Did they use any arguments you didn't expect? What did you learn from them? Make notes:

### Person 4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Were they for or against? \_\_\_\_\_ Was your prediction correct? \_\_\_\_\_

Did they use the arguments you thought they would? Did they use any arguments you didn't expect? What did you learn from them? Make notes:

2 Summarise in notes the features of making a strong argument to support a position in a scientific debate. Discuss this with your group.

3 What did you learn about the topic that you didn't already know? (List any key points.)