



Ranking Evidence

Instructions: After you have gathered lots of evidence and you have verified that it is credible, it's time to start thinking about which pieces of evidence you want to prioritize in your argument – what are your strongest pieces of evidence?

1. Jot down your claim (so it's always at the forefront of your mind) or your topic if you do not yet have a firm claim.
2. Write down each piece of evidence that you have determined is credible. (You can always add additional rows as you need them!)
3. Now, ask yourself a few questions about each piece of evidence to help you decide which pieces of evidence are strongest:
 - Would this evidence actually persuade a skeptical audience?
 - Will my audience be able to understand this evidence?
 - Does this piece of evidence support my exact claim?
 - If I could only keep three pieces of evidence, which ones would I fight to keep?
 - Between these two pieces, which one would survive someone actively trying to argue against it?
 - Which of these needs the least explaining to make its connection to my claim obvious?
 - Would this evidence actually convince someone who disagrees with me, or does it only work on someone already on my side?
 - Which is more specific and concrete – a name, number, date, or direct quote – versus which is more general or vague?
 - Which piece would I put first in my paragraph, and which would I treat as backup support?
 - If a reader only remembered one piece of evidence from this section, which one do I want it to be?
4. Finally, based on your reflection, rank your pieces of evidence with #1 being your strongest evidence.



My Claim/ Topic:

Evidence	Rank



Building Evidence-Based Arguments

Student Activity

