**Brainstorming Readings**

This activity has students practice generating the parts of argument as they think about a reading. If you use this technique early, students will be better able to anticipate the kind of arguments they need to make when they start collecting material from sources.

**Materials**

You’ll need a board to record responses. For this exercise, it is best not to use a scribe, because you may want to edit responses before writing them down. It is useful to ask a student to copy what you put on the board, so that you can reproduce it as notes for the whole class.

**Process**

1. Put a claim about a reading on the board. The first few times you try this exercise, you select three or four claims about aspects of the reading you want to discuss. Later you can let students generate the claims.

2. Starting with reasons, you and the students build an argument for the claim, including any objections, reservations, or counter-evidence. (Occasionally select claims with more going against than for them.)

3. Once the students run out of energy and ideas, revisit the claim to see whether you can refine it to fit the argument more closely.