Retrofitting Problems

In this activity, students learn how to recast their problem when the argument they make does not resolve the problem they started with.

Materials

At least three or four well-written papers without introductions but with complete conclusions.

Process

1. Assign students to read each paper, picking out the claim and major reasons. You can have them fill out Argument Boxes.

2. Put the class in groups to formulate a problem for each paper, including both the condition and its costs or consequences.

3. Reconvene the class to share the problem statements. Each group should explain how the problem anticipates the paper and, conversely, how the argument in the paper resolves the problem.