Exploring Research Perspectives

As you learned in Task 1-6 and Task 1-7, the team will be presented with various perspectives of the problem throughout your research: social, ethical, environmental, and economic.

**Objective**

In this task, the team will explore these perspectives to understand them better.

This task only requires space for a continuous line (real or imagined) from one side of the room to the other.

1. Post one sign stating STRONGLY AGREE and one sign stating STRONGLY DISAGREE on opposite walls or corners of the room. The space between these two signs is the continuum. Put a sign in the middle of these two signs that states NOT SURE.

2. The team will hear a variety of statements.

3. After each statement, each team member should place themselves along the continuum based on how much they agree or disagree.

4. Go to the Task 1-8 folder to get the statements, additional instructions, discussion questions, and Ask the Team reading. Choose the FOOD A or FOOD B version of this task.

5. Go over the team norms together in the task folder.

6. Follow the instructions to play the Warm-Up Round.

7. As a team, discuss the warm-up discussion questions.

8. Follow the instructions to play four Perspectives rounds and questions.

9. As a team, discuss the Task 1-8 discussion questions.

10. Read the Ask the Team reading on what to do when the team does not agree. Learn about and discuss the ways their teams work through disagreements. Think about how your team can best work together to respect everyone’s ideas.

Hooray! You completed Task 1-8. Check it off the task list. Go to Task 1-9!
Task 1-8. Exploring Research Perspectives—FOOD A

Team Norms

- Recognize the benefits of listening to a range of different perspectives and viewpoints.
- Be open to new ideas and perspectives that challenge your own.
- Be willing to cooperate with others to change things for the better.
- Use active listening skills.
  - Face the person talking.
  - Look them in the eye.
  - Be attentive.
  - Keep an open mind.
  - Don’t interrupt.
  - Ask questions if you are confused.

Warm-Up Round Instructions

1. Here is the warm-up round statement.

   **Oranges are the best-tasting fruit.**

2. There are not necessarily any right or wrong answers, and everyone’s view will fall somewhere along the continuum, from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

3. Take a minute and let each team member think about their position on that statement. Explain the next step, so team members can choose where to stand along the continuum. Explain that relative location is also important; that is, standing closer to the strongly agree or disagree side of the room means you feel very strongly about this statement.

4. Once each team member is located along the continuum, direct the team members to begin explaining to those standing near them why they placed themselves as they did. Students should explain their reasoning for their location.

5. Based on these discussions with the people near them, they should be recalibrating with one another. This is the process of listening to other team members near them and determining whether they really think and feel more or less strongly about the topic. Encourage team members to move as necessary to accurately represent the continuum of opinion on the team.

Warm-Up Round Discussion Questions

- Can individual team members explain to the team the reasons for their position on the continuum?
- How many team members changed their position after talking to other team members around them on the continuum?
- How many team members changed their position after hearing people talk during the whole team discussion?
- What led you to change your mind?
Four Perspectives Rounds—Instructions and Questions

1. The line continuum setup for the next four rounds stays the same. The main difference is the team is now divided into groups of three to four team members.
2. Each group will negotiate their position along the continuum, based on the following statement.

   Ethical perspective: It is okay to eat animals.

3. Each group must determine as a group where they are located on the continuum.
4. Each group will send one representative to identify the place on the continuum line that best represents the group’s view.
5. Now the representatives from each group will explain to the whole team the reasons for their group’s position on the continuum. Members of the group speaking can support the representative at any time.
6. After each group has had a chance to share, each group should have a brief discussion about whether they would like to move their location on the continuum, based on the whole team discussion.
   - How many groups changed their positions after hearing people talk during the whole team discussion?
   - What led you to change your mind or not change your mind?
   - Conclude the discussion by asking team members on both sides of the issue to identify what they believe to be the strongest arguments and reasons they heard from the opposing side.
7. Repeat steps 2 through 6 for one statement from each of the following four perspectives.

   Economic Perspective
   - Sugary drinks should be heavily taxed.
   - Meat should be heavily taxed.
   - It is okay that healthy food is only available to people who can afford it.

   Ethical Perspective
   - Animals that are raised for food do not need the same treatment as animals that are raised as pets.
   - It is okay for food producers to use deceptive food advertising to sell you their products if the product does not lead to consumer harm.

   Social Perspective
   - It is okay that food labels do not provide complete information about the product.
   - Food producers should have the power to decide what information to give consumers about the food they produce.
   - The responsibility for food safety lies with the government.
   - The responsibility for food safety lies with the individual consumer.
Environmental Perspective

- It is okay for food producers to destroy the environment in an effort to keep food prices low.
- It is okay to pollute the environment now to provide food for people in need.

Discussion Questions

As an entire team, discuss the following questions.

Remind the team that you will now engage in a discussion. When engaging in any type of meaningful discussion as a team, you must respect your team. Use the meaningful conversation starters in your discussion to respect your other team members.

Meaningful conversation starters used in the language of argumentation:

- I agree with ___________ because . . .
- I disagree with ____________ because . . .
- I’d like to go back to what ______________ said about . . .
- I’d like to add . . .
- I noticed that . . .
- Another example is . . .
- So, what you are saying is . . .
- Do you think that . . .?
- Couldn’t it also be that . . .?
- Why do you think that?
- Can you explain what you mean?
- Can you tell me more?
- Can you give me an example of that?

- How did your group arrive at your decisions?
- What decision-making methods did your group use (consensus, voting, etc.)?
- How were your decisions influenced by the values, attitudes, prejudices, aspects of identity of people in your group?
- How were disagreements and conflicts handled?
- What are some benefits to listening to a range of different perspectives and viewpoints on the team?
- Is it helpful to be open to new ideas and perspectives that challenge your own? Why or why not?
- Is there anything you learned in this task that would be useful when thinking about the problem question: How do we ensure good nutrition for all?
Task 1-8. Exploring Research Perspectives—FOOD B

Team Norms

- Recognize the benefits of listening to a range of different perspectives and viewpoints.
- Be open to new ideas and perspectives that challenge your own.
- Be willing to cooperate with others to change things for the better.
- Use active listening skills.
  - Face the person talking.
  - Look them in the eye.
  - Be attentive.
  - Keep an open mind.
  - Don’t interrupt.
  - Ask questions if you are confused.

Warm-Up Round Instructions

1. Here is the warm-up round statement.

   **Oranges are the best-tasting fruit.**

2. There are not necessarily any right or wrong answers, and everyone’s view will fall somewhere along the continuum, from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

3. Take a minute and let each team member think about their position on that statement. Explain the next step so team members can choose where to stand along the continuum. Explain that relative location is also important; that is, standing closer to the strongly agree or disagree side of the room means you feel very strongly about this statement.

4. Once each team member is located along the continuum, direct the team members to begin explaining to those standing near them why they placed themselves as they did. Students should explain their reasoning for their location.

5. Based on these discussions with the people near them, they should be recalibrating with one another. This is the process of listening to other team members near them and determining whether they really think and feel more or less strongly about the topic. Encourage team members to move as necessary to accurately represent the continuum of opinion on the team.

Warm-Up Round Discussion Questions

- Can individual team members explain to the team the reasons for their position on the continuum.
- How many team members changed their position after talking to other team members around them on the continuum?
- How many team members changed their position after hearing people talk during the whole team discussion?
- What led you to change your mind?
• Conclude the discussion by asking team members on both sides of the issue to identify what they believe to be the strongest arguments and reasons they heard from the opposing side.

Four Perspectives Rounds—Instructions and Questions

1. The line continuum setup of the next four rounds stays basically the same—but with some differences that are described in the step 3.
2. Present the following statement to the entire team.

**Ethical perspective: It is okay to eat animals.**

3. Have each person individually place themselves along the continuum.
4. Next, create groups of three to four team members with the team members that are nearest to you on the continuum.
5. Have each group work together to develop an explanation of the reasons for their group’s position on the continuum. Share these explanations with the entire team.
6. After each group has had a chance to share, each group should have a brief discussion about whether they would like to move their location on the continuum, based on the team discussion.
   • How many groups changed their position after hearing people talk during the whole team discussion?
   • What led you to change your mind or not change your mind?
   • Conclude the discussion by asking team members on both sides of the issue to identify what they believe to be the strongest arguments and reasons they heard from the opposing side.

7. Repeat steps 2 through 6 for one statement from each of the following four perspectives.

**Economic Perspective**

• Sugary drinks should be heavily taxed.
• Meat should be heavily taxed.
• It is okay that healthy food is only available to people who can afford it.

**Ethical Perspective**

• Animals that are raised for food do not need the same treatment as animals that are raised as pets.
• It is okay for food producers to use deceptive food advertising to sell you their products if the product does not lead to consumer harm.

**Social Perspective**

• It is okay that food labels do not provide complete information about the product.
• Food producers should have the power to decide what information to give consumers about the food they produce.
• The responsibility for food safety lies with the government.
• The responsibility for food safety lies with the individual consumer.
Environmental Perspective

- It is okay for food producers to destroy the environment in an effort to keep food prices low.
- It is okay to pollute the environment now to provide food for people in need.

Task 1-8 Discussion Questions

As an entire team, discuss the following questions.

Remind the team that you will now engage in a discussion. When engaging in any type of meaningful discussion as a team, you must respect your team. Use the meaningful conversation starters in your discussion to respect your other team members.

Meaningful conversation starters used in the language of argumentation:

- I agree with ___________ because . . .
- I disagree with ___________ because . . .
- I’d like to go back to what ___________ said about . . .
- I’d like to add . . .
- I noticed that . . .
- Another example is . . .
- So, what you are saying is . . .
- Do you think that . . .?
- Couldn’t it also be that . . .?
- Why do you think that?
- Can you explain what you mean?
- Can you tell me more?
- Can you give me an example of that?

- How did your group arrive at your decisions?
- What decision-making methods did your group use (consensus, voting, etc.)?
- How were your decisions influenced by the values, attitudes, prejudices, aspects of identity of people in your group?
- How were disagreements and conflicts handled?
- What are some benefits to listening to a range of different perspectives and viewpoints on the team?
- Is it helpful to be open to new ideas and perspectives that challenge your own? Why or why not?
- Is there anything you learned in this task that would be useful when thinking about the problem question: How do we ensure good nutrition for all?

Go back to the Research Guide
Ask the Team

FOOD! Task 1-8. Exploring Research Perspectives

What do you do when the team does not agree?

ANDREA the ANTHROPOLOGIST

National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

We talk it through. Each side makes her case, using as much evidence (past experience, data knowledge, even citations of published work) as she can. We listen, discuss, and if necessary, we step back to reflect before discussing again. We’re on the same team, so it’s easy to remember that everyone just wants the best for the project, and so far I’ve really seen that model be effective. You don’t win every time, but you feel considered no matter what.

ASHLEY the HISTORIAN

National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

As a junior colleague, my default is to listen and try to understand the reasoning of a senior colleague who may disagree with me. However, if after trying to understand their point of view I still disagree, I invest time in building my argument. I may conduct extra research to bolster my argument and/or practice my rebuttal. Then I will ask for another meeting and present my case. Often, when I come back and present a more fully formed idea, my senior colleagues are willing to listen and incorporate my ideas.

CARLOS the GLOBAL HEALTH MANAGER

Johnson & Johnson, São Paulo, Brazil

We vote and opt for the best ideas from the majority.
FOOD! Task 1-8. Exploring Research Perspectives

What do you do when the team does not agree?

MIKE the ZOO NUTRITIONIST
Smithsonian National Zoological Park and Conservation Biology Institute

Typically, we try to base nutrition decisions on science. We will look to the peer-reviewed literature to support decisions. We also want to be sure to apply a reasonable amount of skepticism and critical thinking to the information that we find. Often, when the science is critically evaluated and shared across nutritionists, veterinarians, and animal managers, there is agreement in terms of approach. In cases when there is not, we end up digging deeper to find more information or we do a risk assessment, given the variables in approach, to arrive at a solution.

SABRINA the CURATOR
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

You identify the problem, discuss options, and decide on actions as a team, usually in person at meetings or sometimes on the phone or over e-mail.

JENNIFER the MUSEUM CURATOR
National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution

We frequently have disagreements about the way to interpret history to tell the public a story about spaceflight. The best suggestion I’ve found to getting past situations like this is to take a breath, lean back, and make sure I’m listening to everyone who has an opinion at the table. As the team leader, I am ultimately responsible for the decision, but I try to make sure I’m also taking all the thoughts into consideration and thanking each person for trying to come up with solutions.