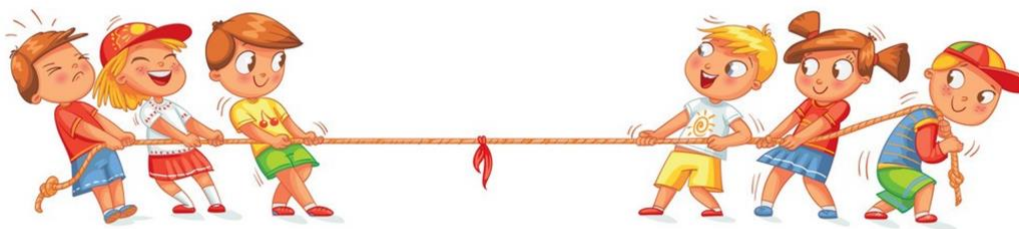


Fay Lowe:

When I was invited to join the RE Argument Group, it was clear that it would support me in two ways. The first in my own teaching of evaluation skills for the GCSE 15 mark evaluation questions, in the Eduqas Religious Studies syllabus, and secondly in my own research into how a locally agreed syllabus can be used to counter the influence of far-right extremist attitudes within RE lessons. As a department we were already using a structure which I felt linked very well with this group's research into how Toulmin's 'The Uses of Argument' could support developing these skills. Using a tug of war metaphor pupils could better visualise or understand how to place their ideas into a coherent argument structure.



20/01/2021 "We need to prove the existence of God"

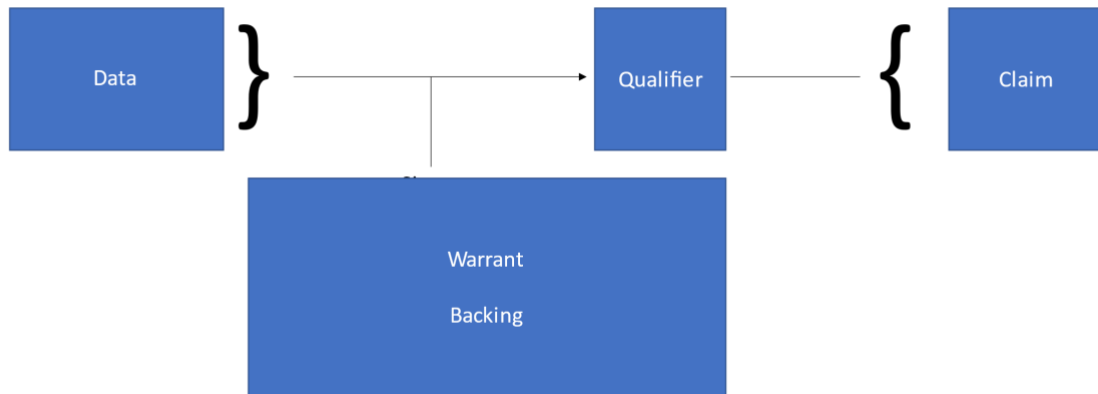
Tug of War

1. Choose your team
2. Identify which side of the rope they will go
3. Use evidence to decide where on the rope they will be placed.
4. Play tug of war.
5. Decide which side is stronger and why

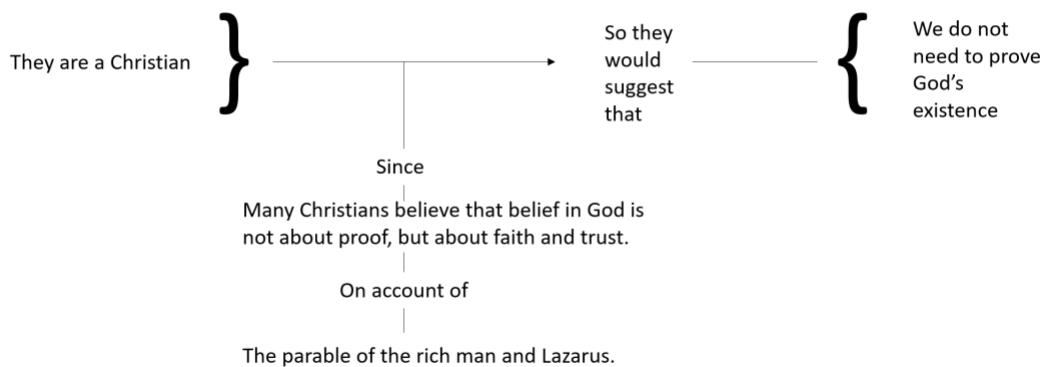
1. Choose your beliefs
2. Identify which side of the argument they will go - for or against.
3. Use evidence to present the belief fully.
4. Play each argument off against each other.
5. Decide which side is stronger and why.

20/01/2021

Someone might disagree with this statement and say we do not need to prove God's existence



Someone might disagree with this statement and say we do not need to prove God's existence



The Toulmin structure enhanced what we were originally doing in that it gave pupils access to the concept of 'data' which meant that they would have better understanding of which side of the 'rope' to put their ideas on. Warrants and backing encouraged pupils to go further than simply listing basic reasons for and against, which limited their achievement in light of the mark scheme. The discussion of the strength and placements of the warrants and backing helps pupils to order their paragraphs and assess their validity.

In reference to my own research, when considering the construction of Far-Right wing narratives, they are designed by far-right extremist groups to influence the individual (including school pupils) in such a way as to force them to question their beliefs and worldviews. Groups can then take advantage of the vulnerability that is caused by the above by suggesting 'new alternative' ideas. I would suggest that critical RE, which allows engagement with controversial issues and develops pupils' evaluation skills can support pupils to have a structure to allow them to fully consider the truth claims they are being presented with and help counter some of the influence they are under from such groups.