Public Speaking and Debate 2

Opening Statement

Opening Statement

In this lesson, we will have a look at how you can improve your skills when writing the **opening statement** given by the Prime Minister (PM) and the leader of the opposition. Most of these can also be applied to the speeches given during the closing phase of the debate.

We will cover the following:

- Adjudication criteria for opening statements
- Motion analysis
- Brainstorming.
- Argument building
- Language
- Examples

Adjudication criteria for opening statements

An opening statement serves to **present your house's claims** with respect to the motion, and you can use it to show off your strengths in terms of:

Definition:

1. Clearly state the topic you are going to discuss.
2. Clearly **explain** your arguments.
3. Make sure you explain how your claims **link back** to the motion.

Matter:

1. Use irrefutable **evidence** and impeccable **logic** to back up your claims.
2. Appeal to **emotions** that move your audience.

Manner:

1. Be **confident.**
2. Use persuasive **non-verbal communication** techniques to deliver your opening statement.

A World-Class Opening Statement

Watch a video of the opening statement given by Laalithya Vadlamani at the Oxford Union Society.

She is a competitive debater and in the video she represents the team opposing the following motion:

Social Media Corrupts Human Interactions

Note: Laalithyia is opposing the motion, so her house believes that **Social Media does NOT Corrupt Human Interactions** !

Motion Analysis

Understand

Before you can formulate any persuasive arguments about the motion*, it is imperative that you thoroughly **understand** it, and what **purpose** you want to achieve with your opening statement.

1. Make sure you really truly understand what the motion means to you, and **what you want to say** about it.
2. Decide which **emotions** you want to play (pathos) for example freedom, justice, fear, nationalism and so on (see also last semester's lesson on persuasive speeches).

*Technically, motions can be open or closed:

- Open motions only include a general topic and the PM should provide the definition of the actual motion that is going to be debated. Example: “This house believes that smoking affects society”.
- Closed motions include a position. Example: This house believes that smoking should be banned in all public places“.

Because open motions are not common, in this class we will assume that motions are closed.

Motion Analysis

Define

Your opening statement is a structured collection of **claims that support your position**.

What is a claim?

A claim is **a statement** that is not necessarily true, but **you present as the truth**.

What characterises a winning claim in a debate?

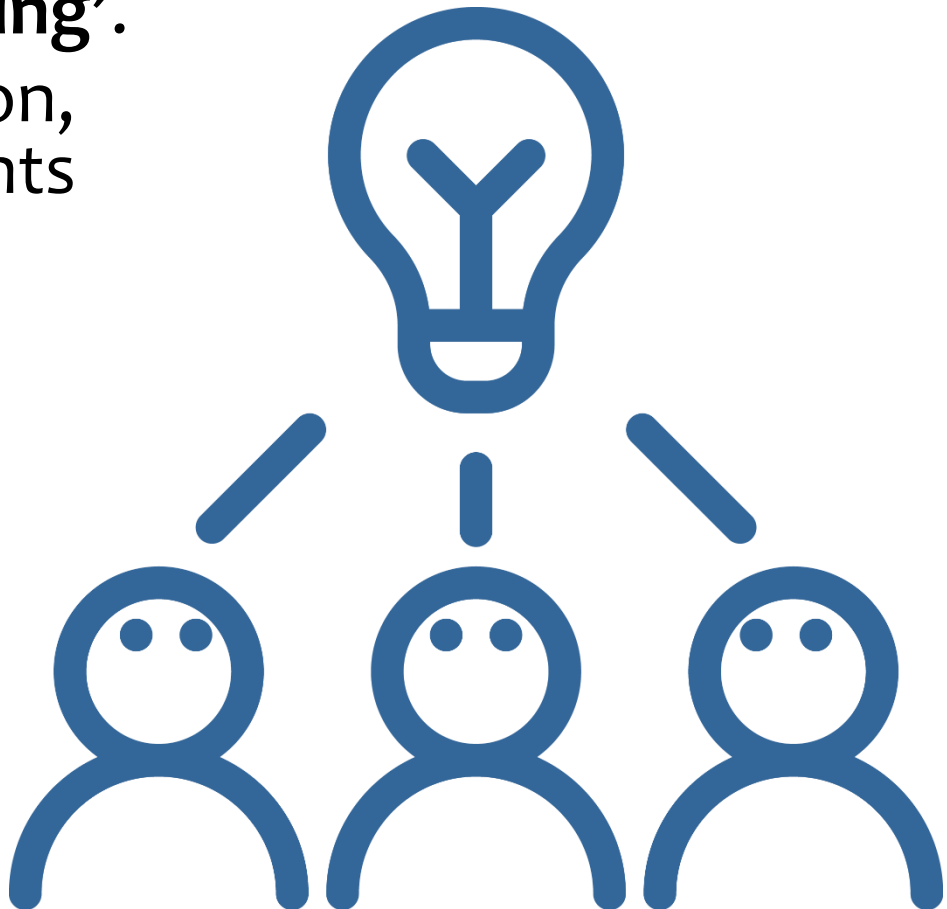
1. It **supports your position** on the motion in an obvious way.
2. It **appeals to an emotion** that moves the audience.
3. It is **backed up** by irrefutable **evidence** and **logic**.
4. It **links back** to a topic relevant to the motion.
5. It is **difficult to attack** by your opponent,

Brainstorming

You can identify claims by **exploring the knowledge you have** and **what you know to be true** about the motion. The best way is to freely discuss with your team anything you can think of in relation to the motion. No thought is too crazy! This is called **'brainstorming'**.

If you are **in favour** of the motion, brainstorm stories and arguments that **support** it.

If you are **against** the motion, brainstorm some stories and arguments that **conflict** with the motion.



Brainstorming

When brainstorming your opening statement, you should try to come up with the following two things:

- **Claims** (things you present as the truth)
  - Try to find claims that **confirm** (government) **or refute** (opposition) **the motion**.
  - Make sure your claims are clearly **linked to the motion**.
  - Try to find claims that reinforce the **emotions** you want to play.

- **Evidence** (facts, numbers, stories, anecdotes, …)
  - Try to **come up with** any **statistics**, **studies, news stories** or **anecdotes** that can support your claims. If you find related evidence but have no claim, formulate a new claim based on the evidence you found.
  - Make sure your evidence is **linked to the motion**.

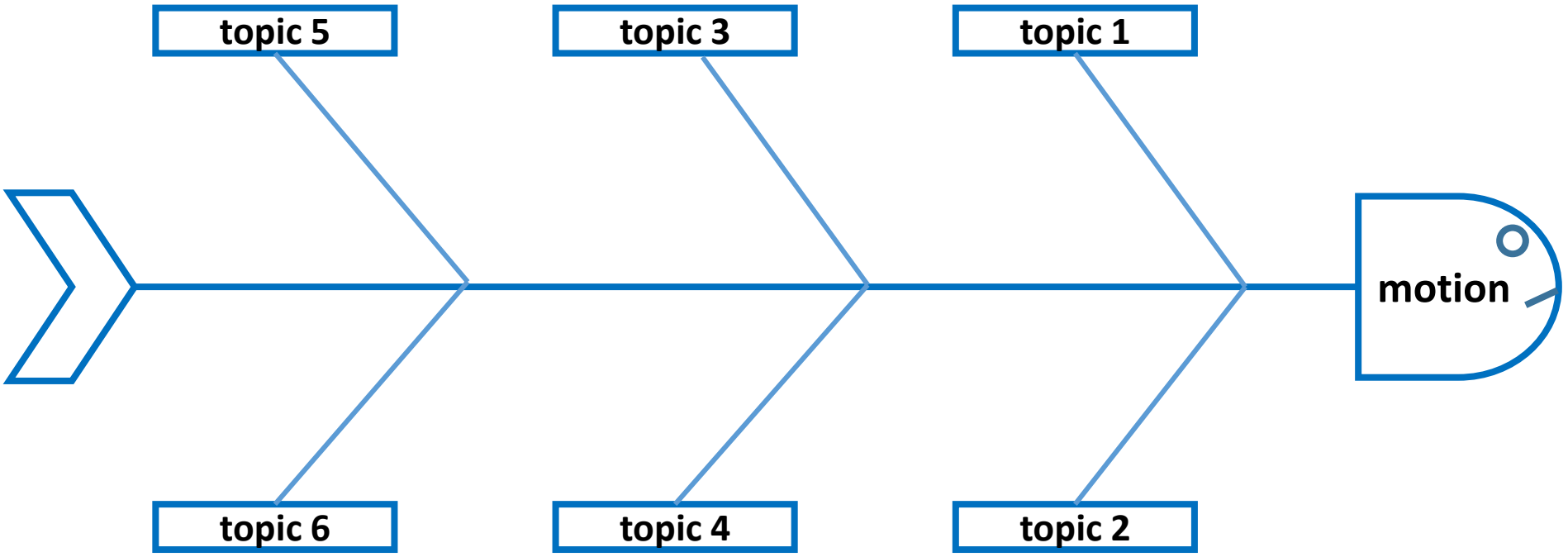
Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a predominantly **analytical** process, and there are several tools that can guide you in this activity. One of the most useful ones is a **dimensional analysis**.

For a dimensional analysis, it is useful to draw a so-called **fishbone diagram:**

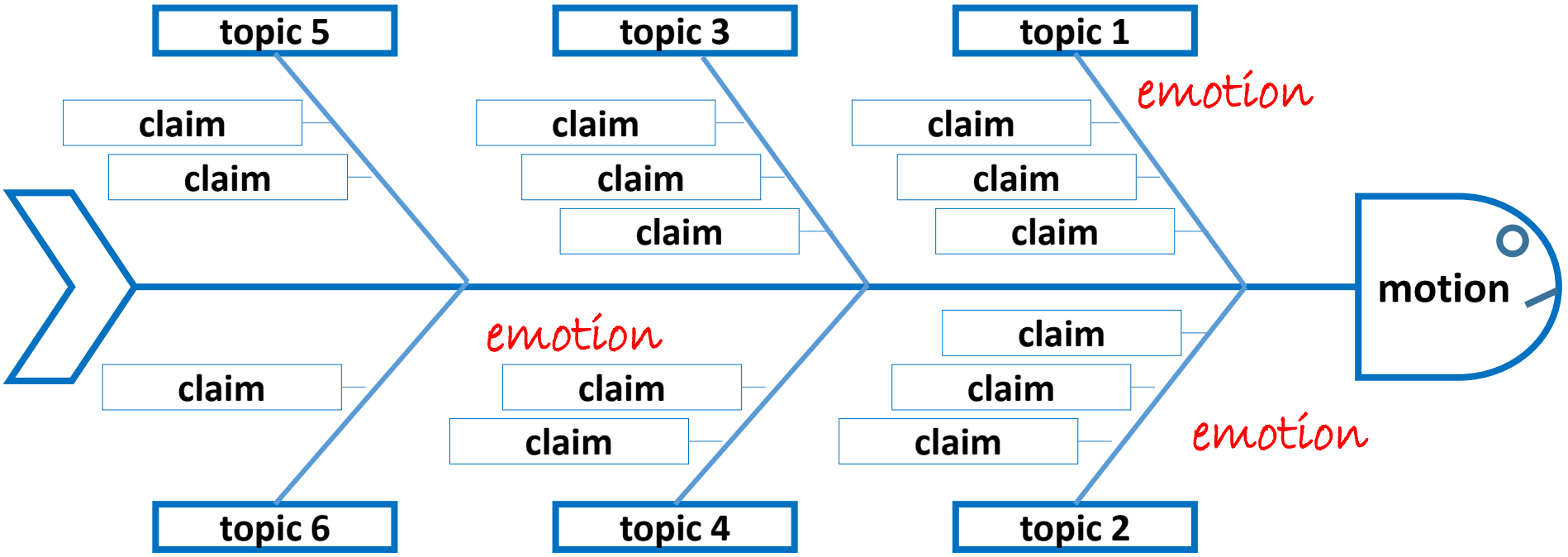
Brainstorming

For a debate, the head of the fishbone diagram is the motion and the primary bones are '**topics**' related to the motion.



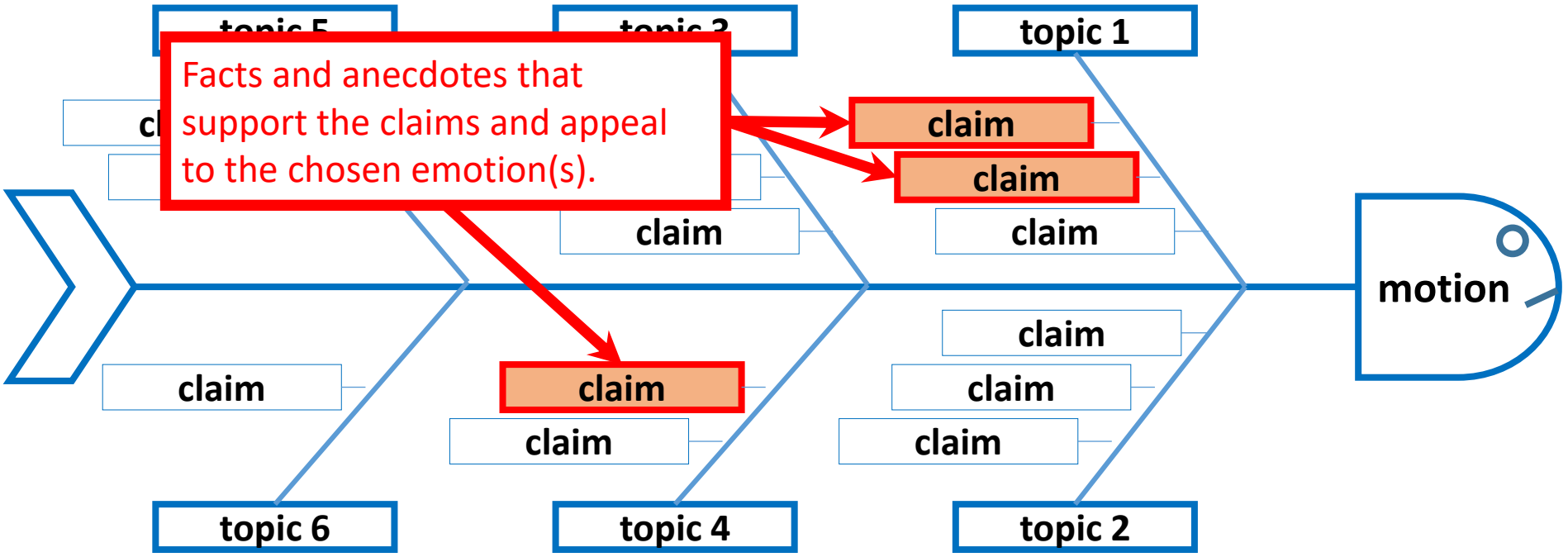
Brainstorming

When exploring the various topics, discuss which **emotion(s)** your claims reinforce.



Brainstorming

After generating lots of them, **select the best claims** (easiest to find evidence, hardest to attack and sharing emotions) and find **evidence** to back them up ('prove' they are true).



Brainstorming

Let's try it ourselves.

Motion: Smoking should be banned.

In favour of the motion.

Brainstorming

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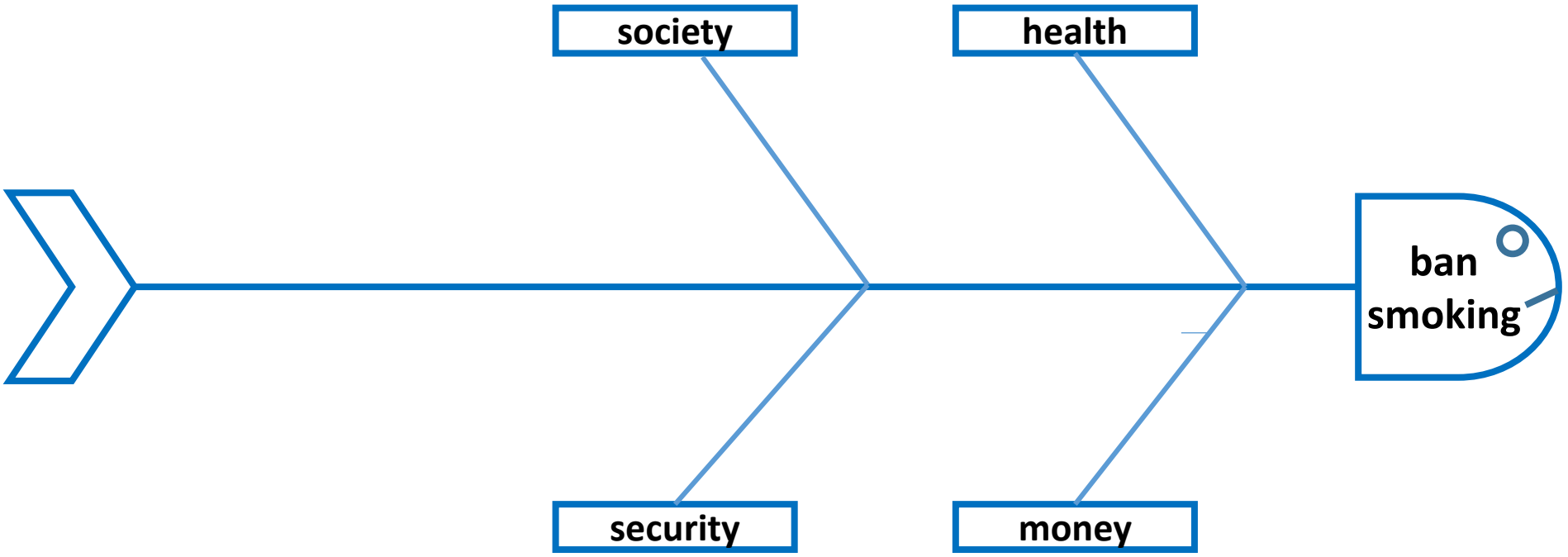
topics



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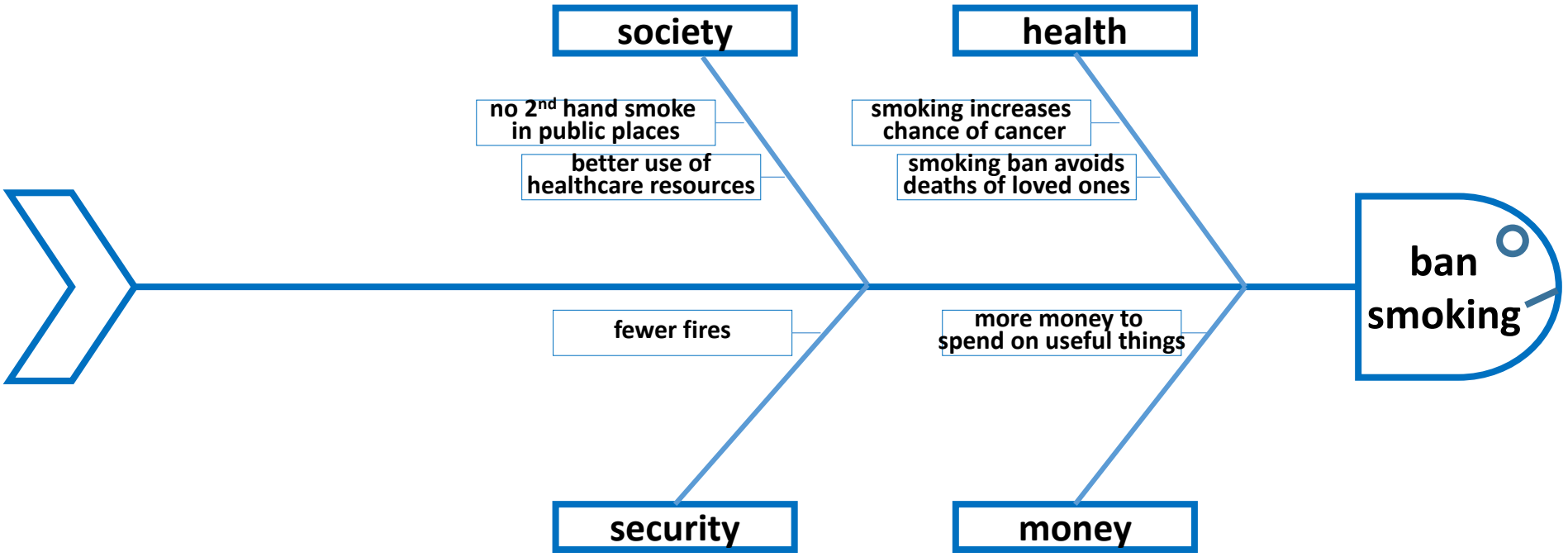

Brainstorming

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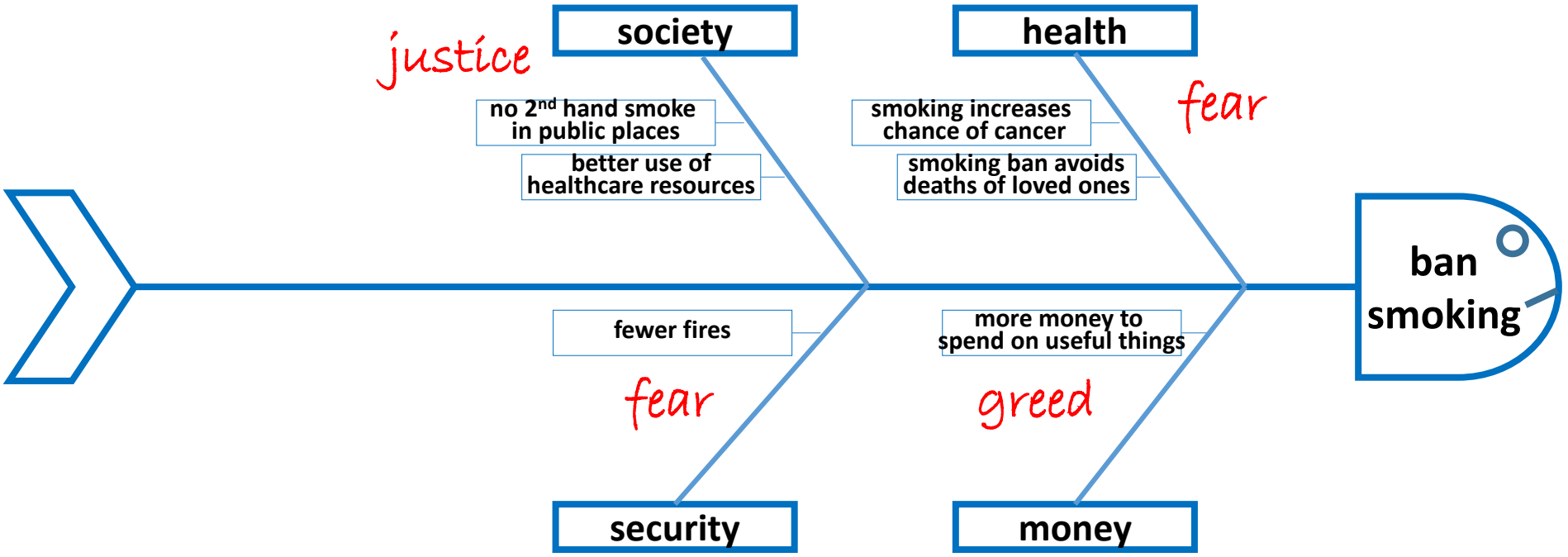
Emotions



Let's try it ours

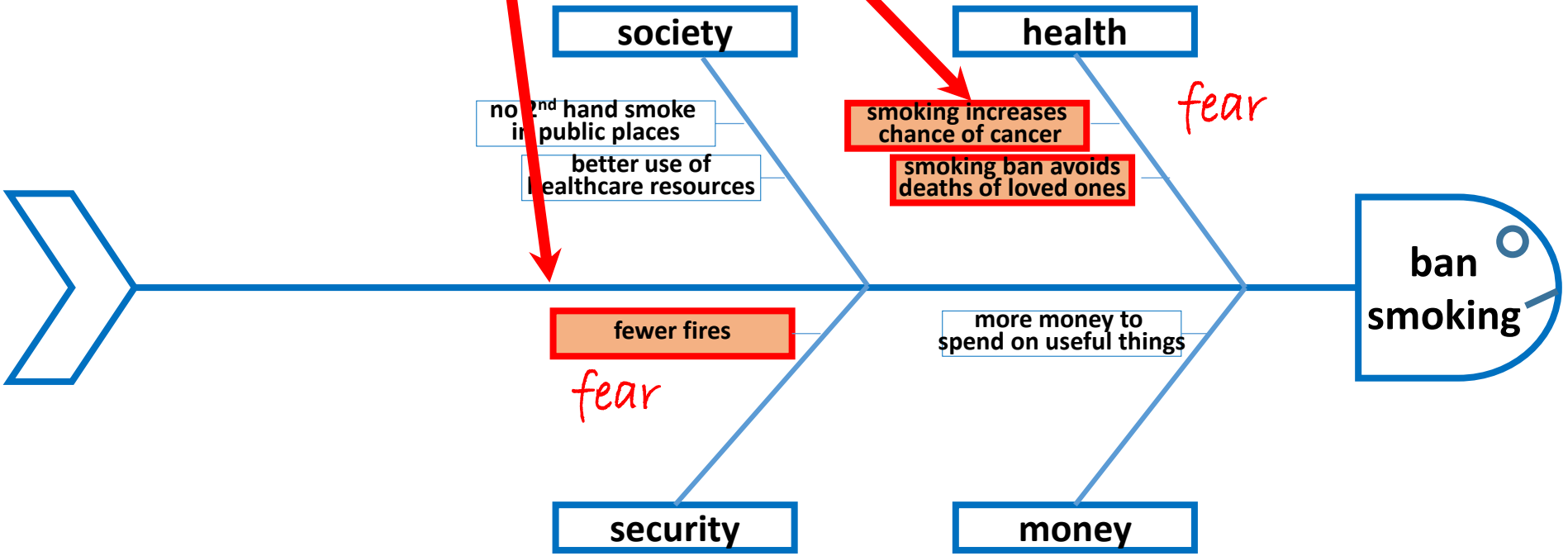
Motion: Smokir

In favour of the

Evidence

(Facts and anecdotes that support pathos fear: You will probably die from it if you do.)

- *"A few years ago, a good friend of mine died from lung cancer, …"*
- *"Last month, a family of four died in a fire after the husband fell asleep while smoking in bed."*
- Lung cancer is the **third most common cancer** in the United States. 20.4% of cancer deaths, **highest death rate** of all cancers.
- People who smoke are **15 to 30 times more likely to get lung cancer** than non-smokers.
- ..



Brainstorming

Let’s try it ourselves.

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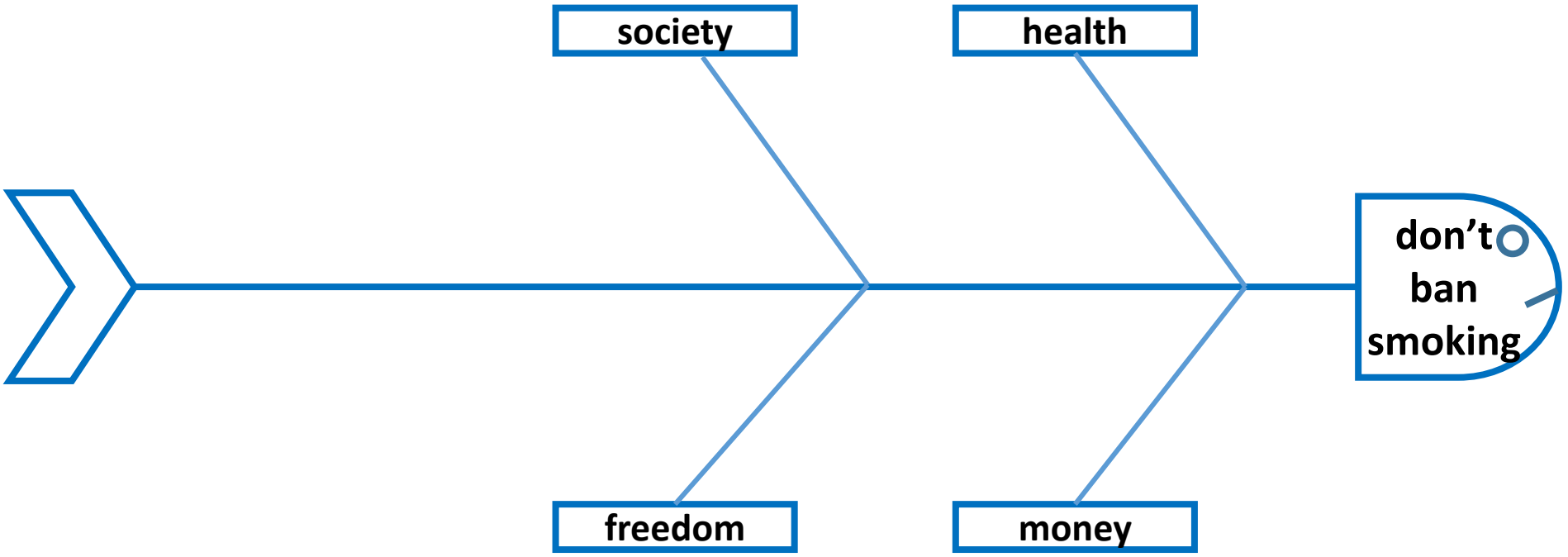

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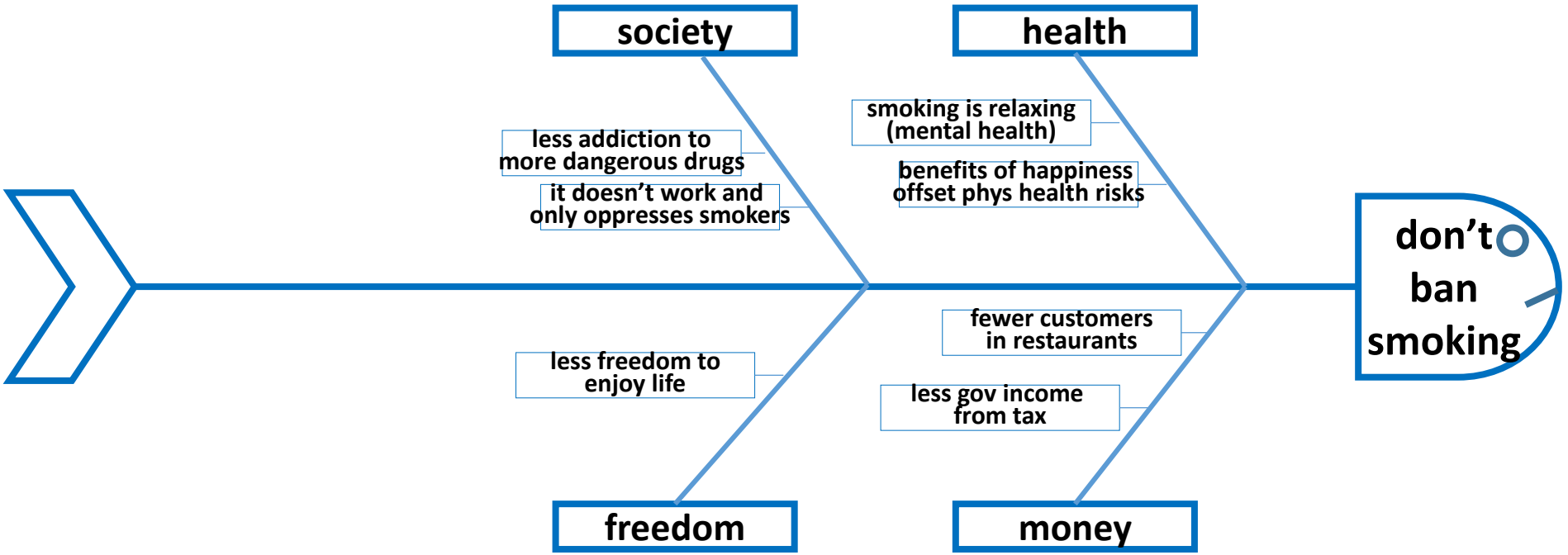

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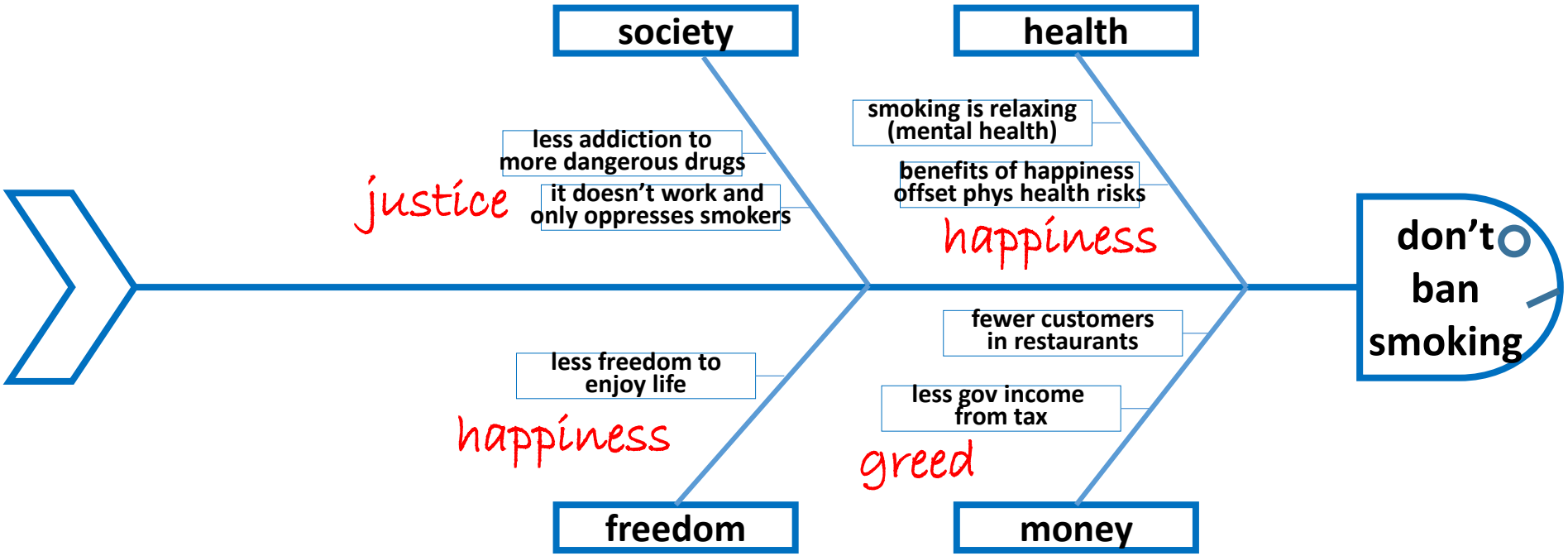


Brainstorming

Let's try it ou

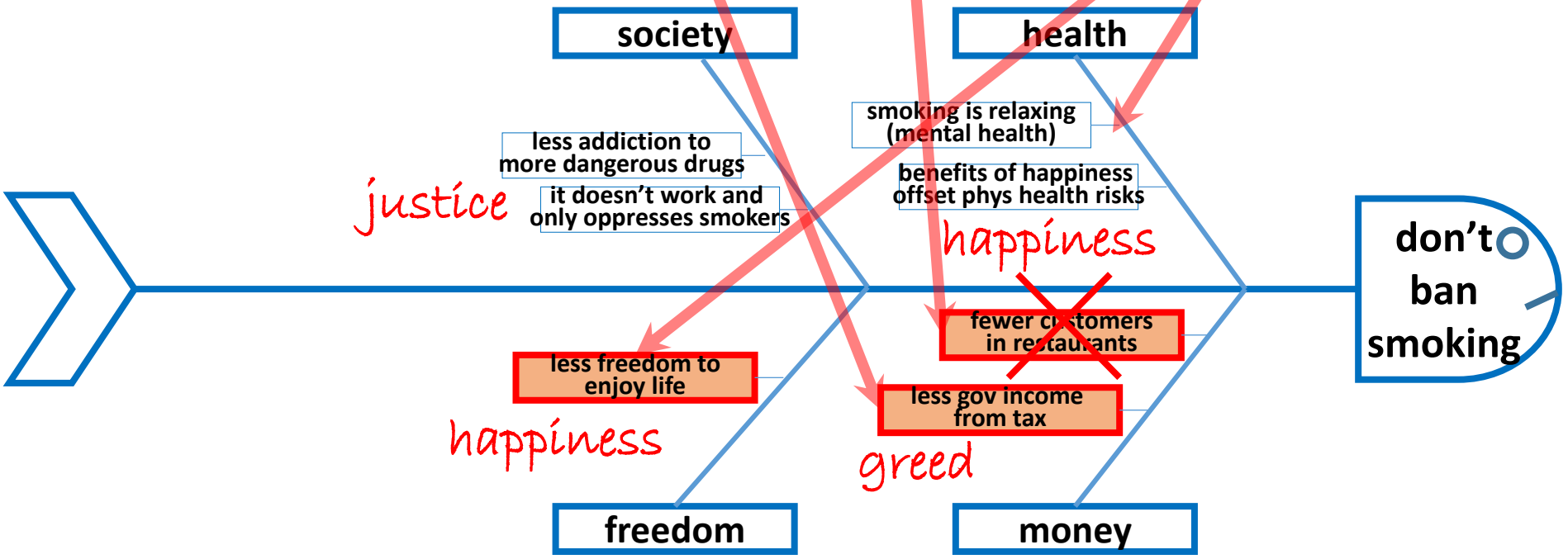
Motion: Smol

Against the n

Evidence

Facts and anecdotes that support pathos happiness and greed.

- Smoking releases stress, allows us to enjoy our lives more > Fewer mental health problems > Healthier students and lower healthcare costs.
- Loss of tax income 11 bn in US > cannot be spent on healthcare and social security.
- Study found no adverse effect on restaurant business, so reject this claim!!



Build your opening statement

Now you have the following:

- **Topics** that link back to the motion.
- **Claims** resorting under these topics.
- **Evidence** that ‘proves’ those claims are valid.

These are the building blocks for your opening statement.

An opening statement is essentially a structured **collection of 'proven' claims** that inexorably lead to the conclusion that your position is correct and/or your opponent’s position is wrong.

Build your opening statement

Structure of an opening statement:

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1. Introduction: State the **motion** and your **position.**
2.
3.
4.
5.

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1. Introduction: State the **motion** and your **position**.
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Structure of an opening statement:

1. Introduction: State the **motion** and your **position**.
2. Take a **topic** from your fishbone diagram and demonstrate **the conflict** raised by the motion in a story that appeals to the emotions of your audience.
3. Present a **claim** that explains why the story happened that way:
   - **State** your claim, making sure it evokes the emotion you want to play.
   - Present **evidence** and use **logic** to 'prove' that your claim is true.
   - Give an **example**.
   - Explain how the claim **links back** to the motion.

   Repeat 3 for **each claim** in your argument.
4
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   Repeat 3 for **each claim** in your argument.
4. Repeat 2-3 for **each topic** from your fishbone diagram.
5. End with a final **conclusion** (title close; 'opera' ending).

Language considerations

Stating what you are going to talk about

Take a look at language you can use to define what you are going to talk about.

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Take a look at language you can use to define what you are going to talk about.
Always start your opening statement with your position (and nothing else!):

- *"Good <time of day> ladies and gentlemen, [I'm delighted to present the position of the government/opposition with respect to the motion for this debate.]* ***This house believes that …"***

Language considerations

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Take a look at language you can use to define what you are going to talk about.
Always start your opening statement with your position (and nothing else!):

- *"Good <time of day> ladies and gentlemen, [I'm delighted to present the position of the government/opposition with respect to the motion for this debate.] This house believes that ..."*

Then, present **each topic in turn**, beginning with what it's about:

- First topic:
  "I would like to begin with talking about..." <story> <claim> <evidence> <example>; <claim> <evidence> <example>; ...
- Continued topics:
  - *"Next, I would like to continue with talking about..."*
  - *"To confirm an additional point, I would like to talk about ..."*
- Last topic:
  "Finally, I would like to talk about ..."

Language considerations

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Then, present **each topic in turn**, beginning with what it's about:

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  "I would like to begin with talking about..." <story> <claim> <evidence> <example> <claim> <evidence> <example> ..."
- Continued topics:
  - *"Next, I would like to continue with talking about..."*
  - *"To confirm an additional point, I would like to talk about ..."*
- Last topic:
  "Finally, I would like to talk about ..."

After you finished the last topic, optionally, provide a very short summary of your entire speech, and end with a short **conclusion**. Make sure you **link back to the motion**, but there is no need to stress the message. My advice: use a **title close**, where the title is the motion:
"In conclusion, I think you will all agree that our arguments [short summary] clearly show that: <title close>. Thanks for your attention."

Language considerations

Grabbing the attention

Take a look at language you can use to present **grab the attention of the audience.** Tell a story and make sure it is extremely emotional.

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Useful **patterns:**

- *"Recent reports in the media about the shocking developments in …"*

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Useful **patterns:**

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- *"Recently, I was appalled to find out something I had never believed to be possible before: …"*

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Useful **patterns:**

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- *"Recently, I was appalled to find out something I had never believed to be possible before: …"*
- *"Recently, a good friend of mine was devastated when …"*

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Useful **patterns:**

- *"Recent reports in the media about the shocking developments in …"*
- *"Recently, I was appalled to find out something I had never believed to be possible before: …"*
- *"Recently, <name>, a good friend of mine was devastated when …"*
- *"Most of us will have heard about …. I think you will agree with me that this represents a shocking turn of events."*
- *…*

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Language considerations

Grabbing the attention

Some examples:

- **Motion: Smoking should be banned.**
- Position: In favour.
- Claim: Smoking causes avoidable deaths of loved ones.

Language considerations

Grabbing the attention

Some examples: fear

- **Motion: Smoking should be banned.**
- Position: In favour.
- Claim: Smoking causes avoidable deaths of loved ones.

Language considerations

Grabbing the attention

Some examples: fear

Motion: Smoking should be banned (in favour).
Position: In favour.
Claim: smoking ban avoids deaths of loved ones.

"I would like to begin with talking about the health implications of smoking. I don't smoke myself, but nevertheless, I recently experienced the ill effects of smoking first-hand when Giorgios, the son of a good friend of mine died of ***smoking-induced*** *lung cancer. The first sign of his illness was a small tumour in his lungs. After this diagnosis, his mother, Katharina, a dear acquaintance of mine, immediately went into a panic, and her anxiety strongly affected everyone around her, including myself. I tried to comfort her as best I could, but unfortunately her fear proved to be justified when, months later, the cancer had spread to his spinal cord and his brain, and he died soon after. The devastating effect the protracted period of uncertainty and suffering, and ultimately his death, had upon his wife, his little daughter and his parents will be felt for years to come. [pause] Unfortunately, I am not the only one with a story like this. Smoking is an* ***established cultural phenomenon*** *in many societies around the world, and although situations like those in my story are* ***completely avoidable by an outright smoking ban****, I think that* ***most of you have probably experienced*** *or heard of something similar in your social circle.* ***Let's have a look at some lung cancer statistics****. …"*

Language considerations

Grabbing the attention

Some examples:

- **Motion: Combating global warming is more important than fostering economic development.**
- Position: In favour.
- Claim: More money is lost from the effects of global-warming-induced extreme weather events that is gained from local economic incentives.

Language considerations

Grabbing the attention

Some examples: justice

- **Motion: Combating global warming is more important than fostering economic development.**
- Position: In favour.
- Claim: More money is lost from the effects of global-warming-induced extreme weather events that is gained from local economic incentives.

Language considerations

Grabbing the attention

Some examples: justice

Motion: Combating global warming is more important than economic development.
Position: In Favour.
Claim: Damage from extreme weather events is larger than benefits from tax money spent on economic incentives.

*"I would like to begin with talking about the effect of **global warming** on the severity of **extreme weather events**. Reports in the media have shocked us with how **global warming** was directly linked to a worsening of the devastating effects of recent **floodings** in Spain. In addition, the wide-ranging protests against the authorities made it clear that the latter are not properly prepared to support the people they are responsible for. This time, more than 200 people died in Spain, and more than 500 million euros of damage was done to infrastructure. Disgracefully, investigations have shown that much of this could have been avoided if the authorities had taken reports of extreme weather events more seriously and had used tax money to take measures to protect the city against the kind of extremely torrential rain that hit the area instead of subsidising a new liquor factory. **Let's have a look at the current trend** with respect to the damage done by extreme weather events, and **plot it against the evolution** of the main causes of global warming."*

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Take a look at language you can use to present **evidence.**

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Useful **patterns:**

- *"A study published by … in [the year] … indicates that …"*

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- *"A study published by … in [the year] … indicates that …"*
- *"A new statistical analysis of … published last week on … revealed that …"*

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- *"A new statistical analysis of … published last week on … revealed that …"*
- *"Most of us are probably aware of the news that …"*
- *"I think that most of us who heard on the news that … were shocked by …"*
- *"It is easy to find data to support this claim. For example, a quick check on … indicates that …"*

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Some examples:

- *"A study published by Cambridge University Press in the year 2017 indicates that by 2100, ice could melt at a rate of 5% over that measured in 2000."*
- *"Data published by the CDC shows that in 2022, 131,888 Americans died from lung cancer."*
- *"Most of us are probably aware of the news that the Chinese space mission has successfully launched from the space centre in Gansu."*
- *"It is easy to find data to support this claim. For example, a quick check on ourworldindata.org indicates that globally, agriculture is the fourth-largest source of CO_2 emissions."*

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

To strengthen its persuasiveness, **clearly state the source of any evidence:**

- *A study **published by UCL** last year indicates that …*
- *As some of you may have seen on the **national news** last week …*
- *I clearly remember a story **my grandfather** once told me about …*

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

To strengthen its persuasiveness, **clearly state the source of any evidence:**

- *A study **published by UCL** last year indicates that …*
- *As some of you may have seen on the **national news** last week …*
- *I clearly remember a story **my grandfather** once told me about …*

Avoid statements that **obscure the source:**

- ***As we all know** …*
  Instead say: *"Last year, the scientific community reached a consensus on …"*
- ***It is well known** that …*
  Instead say: *"Most of us are aware of the recent proliferation of news stories about …"*

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Avoid sweeping statements (generalizations):

- ***Women are more emotional than men.***
  Instead say: *"A survey carried out by a group of psychology students of Harvard University indicated that on average, women tend to attach more importance to emotional considerations than men."*
- ***Cars are a major contribution to pollution.***
  Instead say: *"A quick check on statista.com indicated that In 2020, passenger cars were accountable for 3 billion tons of CO_2 equivalent emissions worldwide, which is in the same order of magnitude as agriculture, for example, which accounted for 5.8 billion tons."*

Language considerations

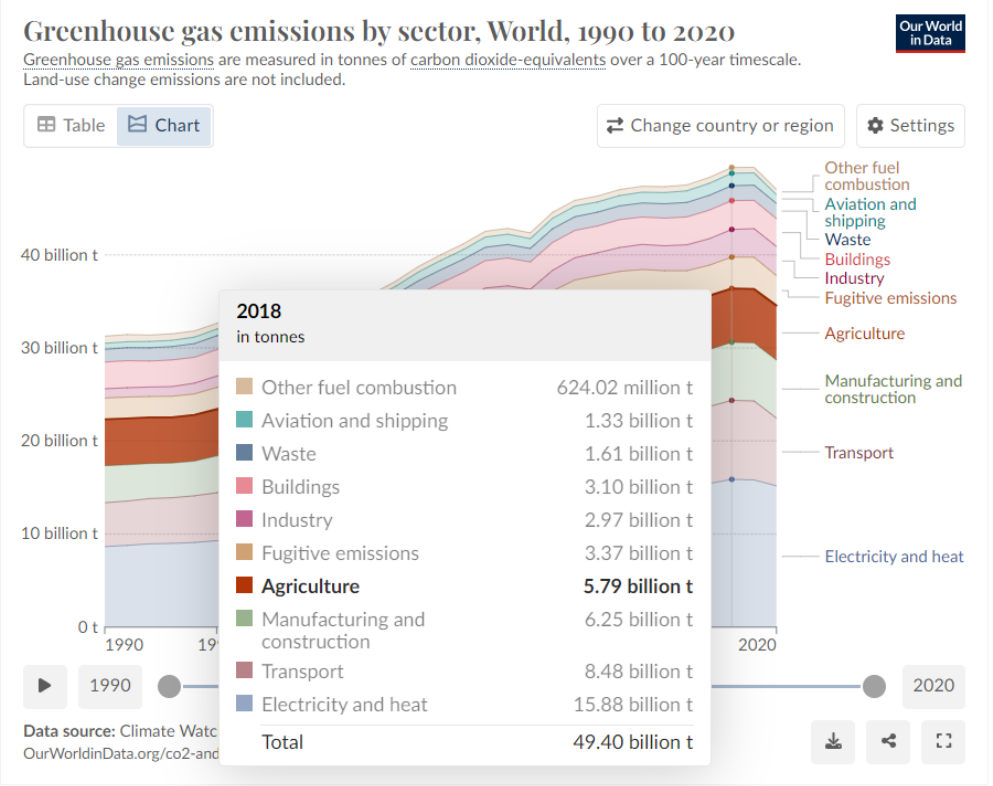
Presenting evidence

Be clear and avoid unnecessary details.

Motion: To combat climate change, the agriculture sector should be forced to engage in carbon capture.

In about 20 seconds, I managed to find a nice chart I want to use as evidence for the **claim**:

The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO_2 emissions.

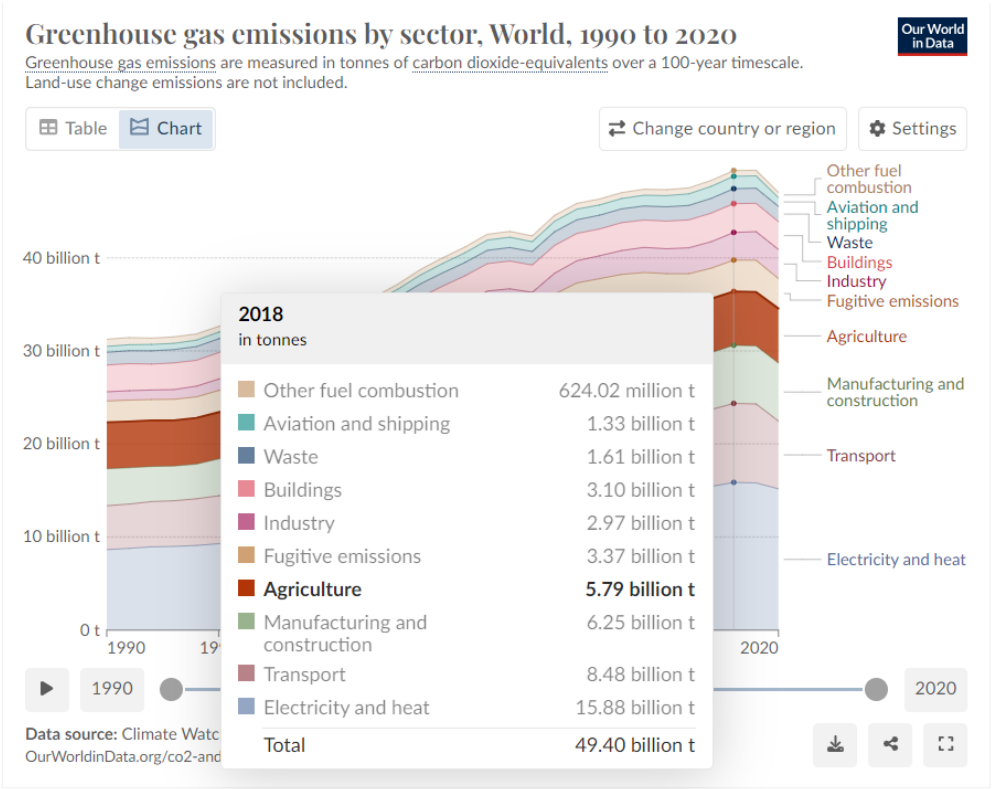


Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO2 emissions.

Statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that, although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agriculture emits 6 bn tons of CO_2 per year, and therefore it is safe to say that agriculture is a significant contributor to climate change caused by the human population in this world.



Language considerations

Presenting evidence

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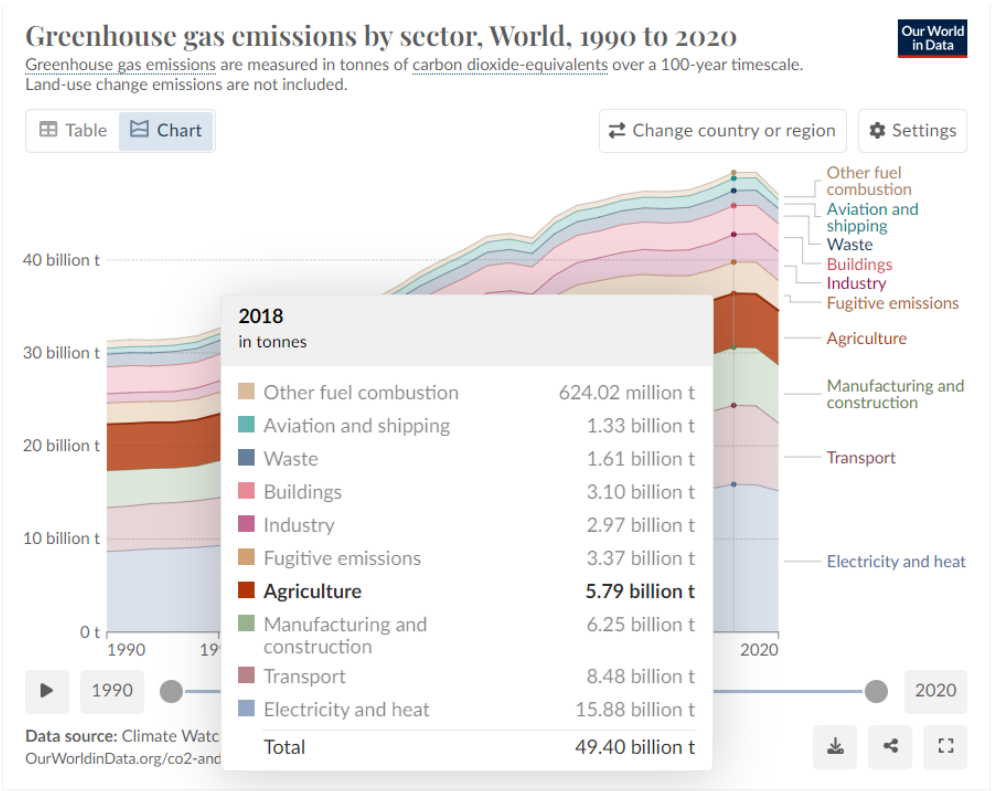

Language considerations

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Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO2 emissions.

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Let's try to make it better by **editing** it: applying some basic grammatical rules and removing unnecessary details.

Ask yourself:

- What are we talking about? What is the main actor? > Subject
- What is the action you want to express? What is a good verb to express it? > Verb
- What is a clear and concise description of the result? > Object.
- What details are unnecessary?
- Do we need any introductory phrases or other adverbial phrases to make the description more precise?

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO2 emissions.

*Statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that, although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agriculture emits 6 bn tons of CO_2 per year, and therefore it is safe to say that **the agriculture sector** is a significant contributor to climate change caused by the human population in this world.*

Ask yourself:

- What are we talking about? What is the **main actor**? > **Subject** "**the agriculture sector**"

Note: The motion uses "the agriculture sector" so better to use this than just "agriculture".

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO2 emissions.

Statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that, although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agriculture emits 6 bn tons of CO_2 per year, and therefore it is safe to say that the agriculture sector ~~*is a*~~ ***significantly contributes*** ~~**or**~~ ***to*** *climate change caused by the human population in this world.*

Ask yourself:

- What are we talking about? What is the main actor?
- What is the **action** you want to express? What is a good verb to express it? > **Verb** "**Contributes to".** Note: The original said "is a contributor to" but "contributes" to is more direct and therefore clearer. Then, it's good use some of the emotive modifier used in the original: **"significant"**; We can simply move the adjective **"significant"** from **"contributor"** to **"contributes"**, but of course that makes it an adverb, resulting in: **"significantly contributes to"**.

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO2 emissions.

Statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that, although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agricult subject *f CO_2 per year, and therefore it is safe to say that the agriculture sector ~~is a~~ significantly contributes~~s~~ ~~or~~ to **anthropogenic climate change** ~~caused by the human population in this world~~*

verb | predicate

Ask yourself:

- What are we talking about? What is the main actor? > Subject
- What is the action you want to express? What is a good verb to express it? > Verb
- What is a clear and concise description of the **result**? > **Predicate**
  The result we are looking for is what the agriculture sect contributes to, and it is "**climate change**". Again, to reflect the original we can modify this by adding a modifier, this time an adjective. Note that we can replace the entire phrase "*caused by the human population in this world*" with one carefully chosen word: "***anthropogenic***" (if this word is too difficult say "human-induced") and say: "***anthropogenic climate change***".

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO2 emissions.

*Statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that, ~~although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agriculture emits 6 bn tons of CO_2 per year~~, and therefore it is safe to say that the agriculture sector **is the fourth-largest source of global CO2 emissions**, ~~a~~ significantly contributes to anthropogenic climate change ~~caused by the human population in this world~~.*

Ask yourself:

- What is the action you want to express? What is a good verb to express it?
- What are we talking about? What is the main actor?
- What is a clear and concise description of the result?
- What details are **unnecessary**? We don't need the absolute numbers because only experts know if '6 bn tons' is a lot so they only confuse the issue. Also, we are not talking about emission source like power generation. But we need to 'prove' the emissions are significant. Our chart says that the agriculture sector is the 'fourth-largest source of global CO_2 emissions'; that is usable. Note: we cannot claim that agriculture is the fourth-largest contributor to **climate change** because our evidence concerns **global CO_2 emissions**, which is not the same. So by using this we use the link with 'climate' change.

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO_2 emissions.

*Statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that, ~~although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agriculture emits 6 bn tons of CO_2 per year~~, and therefore it is safe to say that the agriculture sector is the fourth-largest source of global CO_2 emissions, **and therefore** significantly contributes to anthropogenic climate change ~~caused by the human population in this world~~.*

Ask yourself:

- What is the action you want to express? What is a good verb to express it?
- What are we talking about? What is the main actor?
- What is a clear and concise description of the result?
- What details are **unnecessary**? 'To fix this, we should realize we are now saying two things that have a causal connection: **'it is the fourth-largest source…'** which suggests **'it significantly contributes'**, so **"and therefore"** will work: "**Agriculture is the fourth-largest source of global CO_2 emissions and therefore significantly contributes to climate change".**

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Claim: The agriculture sector generates a lot of CO2 emissions.

Recent statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that~~,~~ ~~although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agriculture emits 6 bn tons of CO_2 per year~~, and therefore it is safe to say that the agriculture sector is the fourth-largest source of global CO2 emissions, and therefore a significant contributor to anthropogenic climate change ~~caused by the human population in this world~~.

Ask yourself:

- What is the action you want to express? What is a good verb to express it?
- What are we talking about? What is the main actor?
- What is a clear and concise description of the result?
- What details are unnecessary?
- Do we need any introductory phrases or other adverbial phrases to make the description more **precise**? **Yes, to say where we got the information. A good choice here is the pattern used in the original text which we can just plug in front of what we have. I only added "Recent …" to show the data is valid.**

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Be clear and avoid unnecessary details:

- ~~*Statistics published on ourworldindata.org show that, although it is not the largest source of CO_2 emissions (which is power generation and heating at 15 bn tons), agriculture emits 6 bn tons of CO_2 per year, and therefore it is safe to say that the agriculture is a significant contributor to climate change caused by the human population in this world.*~~

  Instead say: "*Recent statistics published by ourworldindata.org indicate that the agriculture sector is the fourth-largest source of CO_2 emissions, and therefore significantly contributes to anthropogenic climate change.*"

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Take a look at language you can use to compare data.

Useful **patterns**:

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Take a look at language you can use to compare data.

Useful **patterns**:

- Comparing quantities:

- Comparing proportions:

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Take a look at language you can use to compare data.

Useful **patterns**:

- Comparing quantities:
  - *"The … is <higher/lower/greater/smaller…> than …"*

- Comparing proportions:

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

Take a look at language you can use to compare data.

Useful **patterns**:

- Comparing quantities:
  - *"The … is <higher/lower/greater/smaller…> than …"*
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Language considerations

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  - "The <quantity> *amounts to more/less than … percent* ***of the total …***"

Language considerations

Presenting evidence

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Useful **patterns**:

- Comparing quantities:
  - *"The … is <higher/lower/greater/smaller…> than …"*
  - *"Compared with … the … is <higher/lower/greater/smaller…>."*
- Comparing proportions:
  - "The <quantity> *amounts to more/less than … percent* ***of the total …***"
  - "The <descriptor> *accounts for/causes/gives rise to more/less than … percent* ***of the total***."

Language considerations
Presenting evidence

Some examples:

- Comparing quantities
  - *"According to statistics published on ourworldindata.org, CO_2 emissions from agriculture are lower than those from transportation."*
  - *"Compared with the transportation sector, the agriculture sector generates fewer CO_2 emissions."*
- Comparing proportions
  - *"CO_2 emissions from agriculture amount to more than 10 percent of global CO_2 emissions."*
    "Agriculture gives rise to more than 10 percent of global CO_2 emissions."

Language considerations

Presenting logical arguments

Take a look at language you can use to express logic.

Useful **patterns**:

Language considerations

Presenting logical arguments

Take a look at language you can use to express logic.

Useful **patterns**:

- Positive causality:

- Negative causality:

Language considerations

Presenting logical arguments

Take a look at language you can use to express logic.

Useful **patterns**:

- Positive causality:
  - *"Considering … it is obvious that …"* (persuasive)

- Negative causality:

Language considerations

Presenting logical arguments

Take a look at language you can use to express logic.

Useful **patterns**:

- Positive causality:
  - *"Considering … it is obvious that …"* (persuasive)
  - *"If … it must also be true that …"* (deduction)

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Language considerations

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- Negative causality:
  - *"Although … it does not necessarily follow that …"*

Language considerations

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  - *"If … we cannot automatically assume that …"*

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  - *"It might be true that … but this doesn't mean that …"* (counter)

Language considerations

Presenting logical arguments

Take a look at language you can use to express logic.

Useful **patterns**:

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  - *"Considering … it is obvious that …"* (persuasive)
  - *"If … it must also be true that …"* (deduction)
  - *"If … it is safe to say/assume that …"* (conclusion)
- Negative causality:
  - *"Although … it does not necessarily follow that …"*
  - *"If … we cannot automatically assume that …"*
  - *"It might be true that … but this doesn't mean that …"* (counter)
  - *"My opponent claimed that …. However, a study published by … clearly indicates that this is a <name of logical fallacy>."* (attack)

Language considerations
Presenting logical arguments

Some examples.

Motion: Agricultural enterprises should engage in CO_2 capture.

- Positive causality:
  - "*Considering the magnitude of CO_2 emissions from agricultural activity, it is obvious that the proposed measures would be a significant step on the way to meeting the emission targets agreed in the Paris accord.*"
  - "*If farmers would capture 50% of their CO_2 emissions, it is safe to say that it would be significantly easier to meet global emission targets than if they didn't.*"
- Negative causality:
  - "*Although CO_2 capture would help to meet emission targets it does not necessarily follow that this can be implemented at every farm in the world, especially those in developing countries.*"
  - "*My opponent claimed that CO_2 capture in the agricultural sector would make it easy to meet global emission targets. However, a study published by Cambridge University Press clearly indicates that this is a hasty generalization.*"

Language considerations

Concluding your speech

Take a look at language you can use to state a conclusion based on evidence:

Useful **patterns**:

- "*Based on the evidence I presented before, it is clear to see that <claim>.*"

Language considerations

Concluding your speech

Take a look at language you can use to state a conclusion based on evidence:

Useful **patterns**:

- *"Based on the evidence I presented before, it is clear to see that <claim>."*
- *"Now that I have explained that … I think you will agree that <claim>."*

Language considerations

Concluding your speech

Take a look at language you can use to state a conclusion based on evidence:

Useful **patterns**:

- *"Based on the evidence I presented before, it is clear to see that <claim>."*
- *"Now that I have explained that … I think you will agree that <claim>."*
- *"The facts I presented in this opening statement inevitably lead to the conclusion that <claim>."*

Language considerations

Concluding your speech

Some examples:

- "*Now that I have explained that agricultural CO_2 production cannot be avoided, I think you will agree that encouraging the agricultural sector to engage in CO_2 capture will mitigate climate change.*"
- "*The facts I presented inevitably lead to the conclusion that encouraging the agricultural sector to engage in CO_2 capture is the only way to have a chance to meet global emission targets.*"

A World-Class Opening Statement

Watch a video of the opening statement given by Laalithya Vadlamani at the Oxford Union Society.

She is a competitive debater and in the video she represents the team opposing the following motion:

Social Media Corrupts Human Interactions

Note: Laalithyia is opposing the motion, so her house believes that **Social Media does NOT Corrupt Human Interactions** !

Summary

To create an **opening statement**:

1. Brainstorm topics you can discuss, and generate associated **claims** and **evidence**.
2. **Select** the claims you have the best evidence for, you can most easily talk about and are most difficult to attack.
3. **Build your arguments**, structured as follows:
    - New topic: Start with a **story** to evoke emotions you want to play.
    - Make a **claim**.
    - Back up the claim with **evidence**.
    - Give an **example**.
    - **Repeat** for each topic.

Intermediate assignment

Write an opening statement for a debate and record it.

(For details, please refer to separate PDF)