

Claim Checker: Video Games & Learning

Mission: Online, people make claims all the time. As a fact-checker, test six pieces of "evidence" for the claim that some video games help students learn. Which would convince a skeptical principal?

Big question: How do we tell well-supported claims from weakly supported ones?

★ Warm-up: Convince the principal

Which would convince a principal more? Why?

"Everyone says it works" or "A study found a 12% increase"? ✓ **The study.**

Is "My friend said so" strong evidence? ✓ **No.**

Key vocabulary

Data	Numbers and measurements collected in research.
Anecdote	A personal story.
Skeptical	Doubtful; needs proof.
Credible	Believable and trustworthy.

1 Box 1

Check the evidence

In the simulator: Place every card on the meter correctly.

What did you notice?

2 Box 2

Anecdotes

Why is "My brother plays video games and he is smart" weak?

☐ It is one person's story and doesn't prove games caused it ☐ It is a lie ☐ It is too long

✓ **It is one person's story and doesn't prove games caused it**

3 Box 3

Fact-check report

Write a fact-check report on the claim.

Verdict

Look for: Gives a verdict; at least 6 words

Best evidence

Look for: Uses strong evidence; a number from the simulator; at least 12 words

What to ignore

Look for: Names weak or irrelevant evidence; at least 10 words

4 Box 4

Legend: limits Legend only

Even strong evidence has limits. What question would you ask about the 2020 study before trusting it completely?

Look for: Asks a good research question; at least 12 words



Exit ticket: answer the big question in your own words

How do we tell well-supported claims from weakly supported ones?

Look for: The strongest support uses research, data, and specific examples with results. Personal stories (anecdotes) and opinions are weak. Popularity or unrelated facts do not support a claim at all.

Completion codes

Students see a code like **ABC-I3** when they finish. The first part must match below. The letter is the level (E = Explorer, I = Investigator, L = Legend), and the number at the end is how many stars they earned.

Level	Code starts with
 Explorer	189-E
 Investigator	1TN-I
 Legend	15N-L



Watch for these misconceptions

- "A strong argument just needs strong feelings." Arguments need evidence.
- "Statistics always prove a claim." Evidence must be relevant and from a reliable source.
- "The central idea is the topic." The central idea is a full statement about the topic.