

## Lesson Plan

### Underlying Assumptions

**Book:** *The Debate about Playing Video Games*

**Series:** Pros and Cons

**Level:** Voyager

### Objective

To help students examine how particular sentences are used by an author to support an argument, identifying and evaluating the assumptions that are part of the author's argument.

### Supplies

- *The Debate about Playing Video Games*
- Underlying Assumptions Guided Reading Assignment (attached)

### Before the Activity

Have students read *The Debate about Playing Video Games*. Divide students into small groups of three or four. Print one Underlying Assumptions GRA for each group.

### Activity

In *The Debate about Playing Video Games*, several of the arguments for or against video games relate to the way video games may impact the rest of a gamer's life. In particular, Chapter 3 ("PRO: Video Games Increase Ethical Awareness") and Chapter 5 ("CON: Violent Video Games Promote Aggression") focus on how playing video games can affect a person's decisions and character qualities. Explain that when authors write persuasively, their arguments tend to include more than just facts. Authors also include assumptions about what those facts mean or how they could be interpreted. Today, students will explore how these assumptions are embedded in the text.

Give students a few minutes to read both chapters again. Then have them gather in their small groups and discuss the quotes and questions on the Underlying Assumptions GRA. After giving students several minutes to discuss, come back together as a large group. Choose five students to share something interesting that someone in their group said.

### Evaluation

Could students answer the questions about the author's assumptions? Were they able to discuss the ideas politely in their groups, even with students who held different opinions?

**Standards**

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading informational texts standards, grade 8 (RI 8.5; RI 8.6), speaking and listening standards, grade 8 (SL 8.1; SL 8.3), and reading standards for literacy in history/social studies, grades 6–8 (RH 6–8.8), as well as the National Council for Social Studies Standard 4.

# Underlying Assumptions GRA

## Chapter 3

### **PRO: Video Games Increase Ethical Awareness (pp. 15–19)**

- Page 15 says, “Stories shape the way people see themselves, each other, and the world.” Have you ever read a book or watched a movie that changed how you thought about yourself or others? What about the story inspired that change?
- Page 15 says, “In video games, a player’s choices affect how the story turns out.” This statement implies that the interactive element makes playing video games feel different than watching a movie or reading a book. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Page 17 says, “Players may be asked to lie or steal in order to help someone.” This statement implies that these situations can help players learn how to make good ethical decisions. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Page 18 says, “Uncooperative behavior has negative results.” This statement implies that gamers will be motivated to cooperate with one another. Do you agree? Why or why not?

## Chapter 5

### **CON: Violent Video Games Promote Aggression (pp. 27–30)**

- Page 27 says, “Players can become numb to violence.” Have you ever done or seen something that seemed unusual or scary at first but that you later got used to after doing or seeing it many times? Why do you think that can happen?
- Page 27 says, “Instead of just showing players the violence, these games actively involve the player.” This statement implies that playing violent video games feels different than watching a violent movie. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Page 29 says, “Violent games may make risk-taking seem appealing.” This statement implies that gamers may want to be like the characters in the games they play. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Page 30 says, “In many games, violence is the quickest way to solve a problem.” This statement implies that gamers will take strategies that they use in the game and apply those strategies to the rest of their lives. Do you agree? Why or why not?