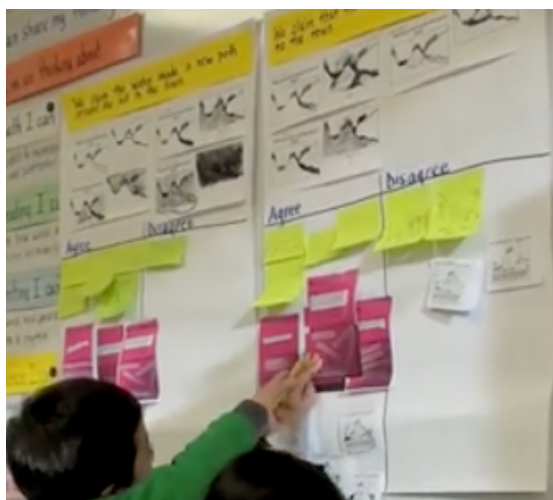# Primer: Facilitating a Synthesis Discussion

This primer describes key steps and decision-points for revisiting the T-charts at the end of the unit to determine which claims are most and least supported by available evidence. This can be challenging! We share a possible approach here but invite experimentation and improvement.

Steps and Decisions:

1. Tell students that as a class, you will use the evidence you've collected across the unit to decide which claim(s) are most supported – which you agree with most based on the available evidence.

2. Ask students to think, turn-and-talk, then share out about the following question: "How can we tell which claim(s) are most supported by evidence? What might we look for on our T-charts?" Or you could have students think about most *and* least supported, as contrasts can sometimes be helpful for sparking thinking. Below are generative responses we've heard or would anticipate from students:

"Most Supported"	"Least Supported"
➢ Lots of evidence under "Agree" ➢ Not much evidence under "Disagree" ➢ Both of the above happening together ➢ Multiple kinds of evidence under "Agree" (e.g., from personal experiences, experiments, and books) ➢ "Strong" evidence under "Agree" (e.g., data from experiments we did together)	➢ Not much evidence under "Agree" ➢ Lots of evidence under "Disagree" ➢ Both of the above happening together ➢ Evidence from only one source (e.g., a personal experience, a mention on a video)

From this point, try one of the following approaches that you think might work best for your class, or experiment with a new approach:

<u>Approach 1</u>: Considering each T-chart in turn

1. Pick one T-chart. Ask students if they think the claim is well-supported by evidence, and why or why not.
   ➢ Tip: Strategic turn-and-talks can help students consider multiple reasons and feel more confident in participating.

2. As different students share out, invite students to agree or disagree: "I agree/disagree with _____ because _____."

3. Continue discussing until you reach general consensus on how well-supported the claim is.

4. Ask students if they want to change anything about the claim to make it more clear or in better agreement with available evidence.

5. Repeat steps 1-3 for other T-charts.

<u>Approach 2</u>: Arguing for which is most supported

1. Display all T-charts. Have students work in partners or small groups to decide which claim(s) they think are most supported and why.

2. As different groups share out, invite others to agree or disagree: "We agree/disagree with _____ because _____."

3. Continue discussing until you reach general consensus on which claim(s) are most supported by available evidence.

4. Ask students if they want to change anything about the identified claim(s) to make them more clear or in better agreement with available evidence.

Other approaches?