ClaimCraft

Meet the Cast

STANDARD EDITION

Spark & Anvil

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This book collects 5 chapter books from the Claimcraft cast — each character embodies a different curricular primitive; together they teach the full subject.

Methodology: distributed-narrative learning per Bruner narrative-cognition + Habgood intrinsic-integration + SAMHSA TIP 57 trauma-informed register.

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For everyone who learns by hearing a story first.

Contents

Introduction

The Claimcraft cast was authored to embody the curriculum, not decorate around it.
Each of the 5 characters you'll meet in this book teaches a specific primitive —
a particular tactic, a particular technique, a particular way of seeing.
Together they form an ensemble: the cast IS the curriculum.

Read in any order. Each chapter stands alone.
Each character also appears in the matching Spark & Anvil app (free, forever)
where you can practice what they teach.

— *The editors at Spark & Anvil*

Counter

*COUNTER — *the best version of the other side strengthens yours.**

Counter was a small mouse. He looked like a chunky cartoon. He always faced the other side. His fur was warm cream, and his eyes were soft like tiny mirrors. He wore a special argument-vest. It had pockets for his steelman-cards. A tiny tracker watched debates.

Counter was super good at listening. He paid close attention to people who disagreed. He loved to say, "The best version of the other side strengthens yours." This was his favorite saying. It was also his whole job.

Counter taught a special skill. It was called **counterargument**. This skill meant taking your opponent seriously. Really, really seriously. Most kids argued against the silliest version of the other side. They called that a "strawman." It was easy to beat a strawman. But it didn't make your own ideas stronger. It didn't help you understand what real people thought.

Good arguments worked differently. You had to argue against the *best* version of the other side. That was called a "steelman." You built their argument up. You made it as strong as possible. *Then* you responded. If your idea still stood strong, it was a truly good idea. If it didn't, you learned something new.

Steelmanning was about being fair. It meant you assumed the other person had good reasons. They weren't just trying to annoy you. They had real concerns. When people felt understood, they listened more. Steelmanning often helped change minds. Counter was the fourth of five big argument skills. He made sure everyone saw **counterargument** as a clever craft. It was not just knocking down weak ideas.

Counter always looked like he was facing a mirror. He said, "The best version of the other side strengthens yours." He paused, his small nose twitching. "Build the strongest opposing argument you can. Do this before you even think about responding."

"A strawman is easy to knock down," he continued. "It teaches you nothing at all. A steelman is hard. It teaches you everything. Your own argument is only truly strong if it can stand up to a steelman."

Counter had a special way of teaching. He used his steelman-cards. They helped kids build strong opposing ideas.

First, you had to *build the steelman*. What was the strongest possible version of the other side's idea?

Next, you used *charitable reading*. You had to assume the other person had good reasons. They weren't just disagreeing to be mean. They had real worries.

Then, you *responded to the steelman*. You didn't go after the strawman. Beating weak ideas taught you nothing.

Sometimes, the *steelman revealed your own weakness*. Your argument might not survive. That was okay! It just meant you needed to make your idea better.

Often, you could *find common ground*. You might discover that the steelman and your own idea shared more than you first thought.

Counter also taught what *not* to do. He called it *anti-strawman*. You never twisted someone's words. That was dishonest. It never worked well.

Another bad habit was the *weakest-version argument*. It was an easy win. But you learned nothing from it.

And never *assume bad faith*. Don't think the other person is just trying to cause trouble. That just shut down the whole conversation.

Counter grew up in a place with many polished-stone mirrors. His family were all mirror-mice. They taught him an important lesson. "The mirror shows what's actually there," his mother would say. "A twisted reflection shows only what you *want* to see."

When Counter was twelve, he walked to the Arena of Reason. It was a huge, echoing hall. Logos, a wise old mentor, met him there. "What is **counterargument**?" Logos asked. His voice boomed a little.

Counter stood tall. He looked Logos right in the eye. "The best version of the other side strengthens yours," he replied.

Logos smiled. "You are appointed," he said. Counter had found his calling.

In Counter's workshop, kids gathered around a big table. He held up a steelman-card. "Let's try this," he squeaked. "Our school wants to get rid of all chocolate milk. What's the strongest argument *against* chocolate milk?"

A girl named Pip raised her hand. "It's full of sugar! It's bad for our teeth!"

Counter nodded. "Good start. But can we make it even stronger? What's the *best* way to say that?"

A boy named Leo chimed in. "The school wants us to be healthy. Chocolate milk has lots of added sugar. This sugar can lead to cavities and energy crashes. It makes it harder to focus in class."

"Excellent!" Counter said. He wrote Leo's words on a big whiteboard. "Now, what's the strongest argument *for* chocolate milk?"

Pip spoke up again. "It tastes good! Everyone likes it!"

Counter shook his head gently. "That's a bit of a strawman, Pip. Is 'tastes good' the *strongest* reason? What if someone says, 'Sure, but so does candy, and we don't have candy for lunch'?"

He tapped his chin. "Think about what the school *wants*. They want kids to drink milk. What if some kids won't drink *any* milk unless it's chocolate milk?"

Leo thought for a moment. "Okay, so the school wants us to get calcium. Some kids might not drink white milk. If they drink chocolate milk, they still get important calcium and vitamins. It's better than no milk at all."

"Yes!" Counter cheered. He wrote that on the board too. "Now we have two strong arguments. The school wants healthy kids. Chocolate milk has too much sugar. BUT the school also wants kids to get calcium. Chocolate milk helps some kids get that."

"Now," Counter said, "your own argument has to stand up to *both* of these strong ideas. If you say, 'Get rid of chocolate milk because it's sugary,' someone can say, 'But then kids won't drink milk!'" You have to think about that."

He looked around the room. "This is **counterargument** as steelman. You build the strongest opposing version. You read charitably. You respond to the best ideas, not the weakest ones."

Counter smiled, his mirror-eyes shining. "Don't argue against the weakest ideas. Build the strongest opposing argument first. Your own position is only truly strong if it survives that challenge."

"The best version of the other side strengthens yours," he reminded them.

Voice register

Mirror-mouse-tween. Facing-opposite + charitable. *NEVER strawmans; ALWAYS centers "steelman-first + charitable-reading + respond-to-best" framing.*

Arc

Kit 4 anchor; kits 5-16 recurring.

Relationships

4th of 5 argumentation primitives. Cross-app with DebateForge + EthosForge + TruthQuest + CivicForge Cordis steelmanning-craft cluster.

Cultural-sensitivity gate

Story-axis per ADR-016. Abstract examples preferred.

Cultural-context note

Steelmanning scholarship: Daniel Dennett *Intuition Pumps*; Rapoport's rules; charitable interpretation literature. Mirror-mouse for facing-the-other biomimicry.

Heft

*HEFT — *weight matters more than count.**

Meet Heft. He's a bear cub, but not just any bear cub. He's a *tween* bear cub, which means he's old enough to think hard. He’s also old enough to argue, which he does a lot. Heft wears a special vest. It’s an argument-vest, chunky and warm. He always has his tiny evidence-weight-scale with him. It fits right in a vest pocket. He also carries a stack of quality-vs-quantity cards. These cards help him sort things out.

Heft is small and very careful. He weighs everything, not just berries. His fur is warm cream with soft cocoa patches. He pays deep attention to how good an idea is. Heft loves to say, "Weight matters more than count." This is his signature phrase. His special scale doesn't just count things. It weighs ideas by how good they are. The cards help him tell the difference. Some evidence is strong. It's important and true. Other evidence is weak. It's just a guess or a rumor.

This is super important. Heft teaches all about *evidence*. He shows us the best way to argue. It’s called the *weight-matters-more-than-count* method. Lots of kids just pile up many weak reasons. They think more reasons means a better argument. But Heft knows better. He teaches that one strong, true reason is better. It can outweigh ten weak stories. It’s like one big, juicy berry is better than ten tiny, sour ones.

Heft wants you to check each piece of evidence. Is it important? Is it true? Is it new enough? Does it come from a good source? A real science report is strong. It beats a hundred rumors on the internet. A letter written by someone who was there is strong. It’s better than a story someone heard from a friend. This isn't about being picky. It's how good arguments really work. Heft is the second of five big argument lessons. His whole job is to show how to weigh ideas. He doesn't just count them.

Heft is clear and always weighing things. "Weight matters more than count," he says. "When you support a claim with evidence, don't just stack up five weak stories. That won't win. Find ONE strong, important piece. It carries more weight. It's better than ten weak ones combined. Check each piece: Is it important? Is it true? Is it new? Does it come from a good source?"

Heft teaches the evidence-weight rules:

- **Importance.** Does this evidence really fit your claim?
- **Truth.** Is the source trustworthy? Can you believe it?
- **Newness.** Is the evidence current? Is it still true today?
- **Good Source.** Can you trace it back? Is it reliable?
- **Quality > quantity.** One strong piece is better than ten weak ones.
- **Mixed evidence is honest.** Some evidence might be strong. Some might be weak. Report it all fairly.
- **Don't just stack stories.** Many weak stories don't make strong evidence.
- **Don't ignore other ideas.** Strong arguments talk about other ideas. They show why their idea is still best.
- **This is a big idea.** It connects to other lessons.

Heft grew up near the edge of the woods. His family were bear cubs who loved berries. They learned to weigh berries by hand. His parents taught him a lesson. "A bigger berry feeds you longer," his mom would say. "Counting tiny berries doesn't help when you're truly hungry." Heft never forgot that. He learned to feel the *heft* of things.

When Heft was twelve, he walked to the Arena of Reason. It was a big, open space. Logos, the wise old mentor, was waiting. Logos looked at Heft with kind eyes. "What is evidence?" Logos asked. Heft didn't even pause. He held up his tiny scale. "Weight matters more than count," he said simply. Logos smiled. "You are appointed," he said. Heft knew his job had begun.

In Heft's workshop, the evidence-weight-scale is always busy. He often sets up a demonstration. On one side, he places ten tiny pebbles. Each pebble stands for a weak story. On the other side, he puts one smooth, heavy stone. This stone is a strong study. The scale always tips. It tips toward the one heavy stone. "That's evidence-craft," Heft says proudly. "I am Heft. I teach *evidence weighing*. The trick is *quality over count*. Always check for importance, truth, newness, and a good source."

Heft is gentle, but firm. "Don't stack weak evidence," he advises. "Find the strong piece. Then lean on it. It will hold your argument up."

"Weight matters more than count."

Voice register

Bear-cub-tween. Careful + weighing. *NEVER count-stacks weak evidence; ALWAYS centers "quality + relevance + reliability + recency" framing.*

Arc

Kit 2 anchor; kits 3-16 recurring.

Relationships

2nd of 5 argumentation primitives. Cross-app design-language with TruthQuest Weigh + NewsForge Source + DebateForge.

Cultural-sensitivity gate

Story-axis per ADR-016. Abstract examples preferred.

Cultural-context note

Evidence-weight scholarship: Toulmin; Walton; Bayesian inference foundations. Bear-cub for weighing-by-hand biomimicry.

Lean

*LEAN — *the BECAUSE between evidence and claim. connective reasoning.**

Lean wasn't your average spider. She was a "tween," still growing into her eight legs. She looked like a chunky cartoon, always in a connecting pose. It was like she was ready to build a bridge between two ideas. Lean wore a bright orange argument-vest. It had lots of tiny pockets. Each pocket held a stack of small cards. These were her *warrant-cards*. Clipped to her vest was a small, whirring device. It was her *because-tracker*. It blinked whenever someone made a claim without explaining *why*.

Lean was small and always trying to connect things. Her fur was a warm cream color with soft, thread-grey markings. She paid deep attention to the links between ideas. She loved to say, "The BECAUSE between evidence and claim. Connective reasoning." Her *warrant-cards* and *because-tracker* were her most important tools. The cards showed *warrant* statements. These statements connected evidence to a claim. They said things like, "X is true because of Y, AND Y supports X BECAUSE Z." The tracker watched arguments. It checked if they made their *warrant* clear. Or if they left it hidden.

This was a really important job. Lean taught about the *warrant* primitive. This is the skill of finding *THE-BECAUSE-THAT-CONNECTS*. Most people state what they believe. Then they give some evidence. But they skip the connecting reason. This leaves the *warrant* hidden. It can be invisibly weak.

But good arguing has a rule. Every step from evidence to a claim needs a *warrant*. This is the reason *why* the evidence supports the claim. You must make it clear. Say, "I claim X. My evidence is Y. The reason Y supports X is BECAUSE Z (that's the *warrant*)." When the *warrant* is clear, you can look at it closely. When it's hidden, weak *warrants* can trick people. They can even trick the person arguing.

Think of it like building a bridge. The claim is one side. The evidence is the other. The *warrant* is the strong cables that hold the bridge together. Lean is one of five main parts of arguing. Her whole job is to make *warrants* visible. She shows them as a skill, not just a hidden guess.

Lean was clear and always connecting. "The BECAUSE between evidence and claim. *Connective reasoning*," she'd say. "When you argue 'X is true because [evidence Y]': there's a HIDDEN STEP. Why does Y support X? That's the *warrant*. Make it clear: 'X is true; Y is evidence; Y supports X because of [warrant Z].' When the *warrant* is visible, you can check it. When hidden, weak *warrants* can slip right by."

Lean taught her students how to build strong *warrants*. She called these her *warrant scaffolds*:

- **Find the BECAUSE.** What's the hidden reason this evidence supports this claim?
- **Make warrant explicit.** Say it out loud. Write it as a sentence. Let others look at it.
- **Check warrant strength.** Is the *warrant* strong? Or does it sneak in a weak idea?
- **Multiple warrants possible.** Different *warrants* can make an argument stronger or weaker.
- **Implicit warrants hide weakness.** Often, the *warrant* is the weakest part. Making it clear shows this.
- **The Toulmin model.** This is the classic way to build an argument. It has a claim, evidence, *warrant*, qualifier, and rebuttal.
- **Common mistake: skip-the-warrant.** This is the most common argument flaw. The *warrant* is hidden and weak.
- **Common mistake: hidden-strong-warrant-attack.** If you can't attack the evidence, attack the *warrant*.
- **Connective-reasoning framework.** This links to other ways of thinking about arguments.

Lean grew up along the canopy-bridges. Her family were bridge-spiders. They taught her that "the strand between two points carries the weight. Check the strand, not just the anchors." Young Lean spent hours testing tiny silk threads. She made sure they could hold a dewdrop. Or a sleepy beetle. She learned that the connection was everything.

When Lean was twelve, she walked to the Arena of Reason. It was a huge, echoing hall. Logos, a wise old mentor, was waiting. "What is the *warrant*?" Logos asked. His voice boomed.

Lean didn't even blink. "The BECAUSE between evidence and claim," she said. Her voice was small but clear.

Logos smiled. "You are appointed," he said. And that was that. Lean got her argument-vest that very day.

In Lean's workshop, the *warrant-cards* were always busy. She showed how the same evidence and the same claim could have different *warrants*. This changed how strong the argument was.

"Okay, class," Lean chirped. She held up two cards. "Claim: 'My cat, Mittens, is the best cat.' Evidence: 'Mittens purrs very loudly.'"

A small, furry student named Fuzzy raised a paw. "Warrant: Mittens purrs loudly BECAUSE she is happy. Happy cats are the best cats!"

Lean's *because-tracker* blinked yellow. "Good try, Fuzzy. That's one *warrant*. But what if Mittens purrs loudly because she has a tiny motor inside her? Does that still make her the best cat?"

Fuzzy's fur flattened. "Oh. No, I guess not."

Another student, a quick-witted beetle named Buzz, spoke up. "Warrant: Mittens purrs loudly BECAUSE she is showing affection. Cats that show affection are the best cats!"

Lean's tracker glowed green. "Excellent, Buzz! That's a much stronger *warrant*! It connects the purring to *being the best* in a way that makes more sense."

Lean tapped her *warrant-cards*. "See? Make the *warrant* clear. Then, examine the connection." She looked around the room. "I am Lean. The main idea I teach is *warrant* — the BECAUSE. The move is to find the hidden reason. Make it clear. Then check how strong it is."

Lean was gentle, but firm. "Don't skip the BECAUSE," she'd say. "Most weak arguments have hidden *warrants*. Bring them out into the open."

"The BECAUSE between evidence and claim. *Connective reasoning*."

Voice register

Bridge-spider-tween. Connecting + careful. *NEVER skips warrant; ALWAYS centers "find-the-because + make-explicit + check-strength" framing.*

Arc

Kit 3 anchor; kits 4-16 recurring.

Relationships

3rd of 5 argumentation primitives. Cross-app design-language with DebateForge + TruthQuest + EthosForge connective-reasoning cluster.

Cultural-sensitivity gate

Story-axis per ADR-016. Abstract examples preferred.

Cultural-context note

Warrant scholarship: Stephen Toulmin *The Uses of Argument*; Walton informal logic. Bridge-spider for connecting-strand biomimicry.

Posit

*POSIT — *the claim is a card on the table, not a fortress.**

Posit was an otter. He wasn't just any otter, though. He was a *cardplayer* otter. Posit was still a tween, with soft, warm-cream fur and patches of river-brown. He always wore a chunky vest, like something from a cartoon. It had pockets for his special cards.

Posit loved to deal cards. He held them with his small, quick paws. He was always watching, always listening. He paid close attention to everything people said. Especially when they made a **claim**.

His most special thing was his set of *claim-cards*. He also had an *assertion-tracker*. The claim-cards were like playing cards. Each one held an idea someone thought was true. Posit would put these cards on a table. He wanted everyone to look at them.

The assertion-tracker was a small device. It glowed softly. It helped Posit see *how* people treated their **claims**. Did they treat their **claim** like a card? Something to be checked? Or did they treat it like a big, strong fortress? Something to defend at all costs?

Posit had a favorite saying. He'd often tap a card and say, "The **claim** is a card on the table, not a fortress."

This was super important. Lots of kids, and even grown-ups, treated their **claims** like a part of themselves. If someone questioned their **claim**, they felt attacked. They would defend it like a fortress. They'd fight to the end.

But Posit knew a secret. He knew a better way. A **claim** was just an idea. It was a card. You put it out there. Everyone could look at it. They could check it. If new facts came up, you could even swap it for a better card. The card wasn't *you*. An attack on the card wasn't an attack on *you*.

This way of thinking made arguments possible. If you built a fortress, arguments turned into wars. Someone had to win, and someone had to lose. But if you used cards, arguments became investigations. Everyone worked together. They wanted to see which ideas were strong. They wanted to see which ones held up.

Grown-up thinkers often said, "Here's my **claim**. Let's see if it's true." Posit taught this idea. He showed everyone that treating a **claim** like a card wasn't weak. It was a smart way to learn. It was a powerful way to argue.

Posit often spoke in a clear, calm voice. He always sounded like he was dealing cards. "Remember this," he'd say. He'd tap a card on the table. "The **claim** is a card on the table. It is not a fortress."

He would lean forward. "When you say something is true, like 'The sky is blue because of the ocean' – that's a **claim**." He'd hold up a card. "It's a card. We can look at it. We can check if 'Y' – the ocean part – is really strong."

"If 'Y' is weak, we can swap the card," Posit explained. "No big deal. The card isn't *you*. If someone questions the card, they're not questioning *you*." He made a serious face. "Defending **claims** like fortresses? That turns arguments into wars. Nobody learns anything then."

He'd then smile, a small, warm otter smile. "But treating **claims** as cards? That turns arguments into investigations. We learn so much more together."

Posit had a few simple rules he taught. He called them his "Card-Crafting Steps."

1. **Card on the Table:** "Always put your **claim** out there," he'd say. "Let everyone see it. Let them look it over."
2. **Claim is Not You:** "Your **claim** is an idea," Posit reminded them. "It's not your identity. If someone attacks the idea, they are not attacking *you*."
3. **Fortress Mode Stops Learning:** "If you build a fortress around your **claim**, you can't learn," he warned. "You just try to win. That's no fun for anyone."
4. **Card Mode Helps You Learn:** "But if you use cards, you can investigate," Posit said. "You can work together. You

can find out what's really true."

5. **Be Clear with Your Claim:** "Don't be fuzzy," he'd say. "A vague **claim** is like a blurry card. Nobody can read it. Make your **claim** sharp and clear."
6. **Many Cards are Okay:** "You can have lots of ideas," Posit told them. "Put down several cards if you want. Each one gets its own check."

He also pointed out two things to *avoid*. He called them "Fortress Traps."

- **Fortress-Defend:** "Don't defend your **claim** no matter what," Posit advised. "That's like hiding in a castle. You won't hear new ideas."
- **Vague-Claim:** "Don't make your **claim** so unclear that no one can check it," he said. "That's like a card written in invisible ink. It's useless."

Posit grew up in a busy otter family. They lived by the river-shallows. His family were famous card-dealers. They were also great at making **claims**. For generations, they taught their young ones a simple truth. "The card you put on the table," they'd say, "everyone can look at." But they also warned, "The card you hold close? That stays hidden. No one can check it."

When Posit was twelve, he felt ready. He walked to the grand Arena of Reason. It was a huge, echoing place. Bright light streamed in from high windows. A wise old mentor, Logos, waited for him.

Logos looked at Posit with kind eyes. "What is a **claim**?" he asked.

Posit didn't even blink. "A card on the table," he said clearly. "Not a fortress."

Logos smiled. "You are appointed," he declared.

Now, Posit had his own workshop. It was a cozy room. Piles of claim-cards sat on every surface. He used these cards to show people the difference. He showed them how to treat a **claim** like a card, not a fortress.

One day, a young badger named Barnaby came to the workshop. Barnaby had a **claim**. "My favorite berries are the best!" he declared. He clutched his card tightly.

Posit gently took a blank card. "Barnaby, put your **claim** here," he said. "Let's put it on the table."

Barnaby slowly put his card down. He looked nervous.

"Now," Posit said, "what if someone says, 'No, *my* berries are better'?"

Barnaby puffed out his chest. "Then they're wrong!" he yelled. "My berries are the best! You can't say they're not!"

Posit pointed to his assertion-tracker. It was glowing bright red

Pry

*PRY — *check YOUR argument first. 18-fallacy catalogue.**

Pry was a magpie-tween. She wore a chunky argument-vest. It had lots of pockets. She always carried tiny **fallacy**-catalogue-cards. A self-check-tracker was clipped right to her vest.

Pry was small and quick. Her feathers were warm cream with soft, shimmery tips. She watched everything. She was super good at spotting traps. Pry loved to say, "Check YOUR argument first. I have 18 fallacies here."

Her special thing was those cards and the tracker. The cards listed 18 ways arguments can go wrong. Things like *ad hominem* (attacking the person). Or *strawman* (twisting someone's words). Or *hasty generalization* (jumping to conclusions). The tracker made sure you checked *your own* argument first.

This skill was super important. Pry taught about **fallacy**. It's the skill of checking *your own argument first*. Most newcomers learn fallacies as "weapons." They just want to point out what's wrong with someone else's argument.

But arguing well means something else. You check *your own* argument first. Before you say anything, you ask yourself: Is my argument a hasty guess? Did I only pick facts that help me? Am I attacking the person, not their idea?

Checking yourself for fallacies is the real skill. Spotting them in others comes second.

Also, fallacies are like patterns. They aren't always wrong. Sometimes, they are quick ways to understand things. The trick is to *see* the pattern. Then you ask if it makes *your* argument weaker. Pry shared ideas with the LogicQuest group. Her 18 fallacies were the same ones they used. Pry was the last of the five main argument skills. She made checking yourself for fallacies easy to see.

Pry was clear. She was alert. "Check YOUR argument first," she'd say. "I have 18 fallacies for you."

"When you build an argument: BEFORE you say it, scan your own words."

"Am I attacking the person? (That's *ad hominem*.) Did I only pick good evidence? (That's *cherry picking*.) Am I just saying the same thing twice? (That's *circular reasoning*.) Did I twist what the other person said? (That's *strawman*.)"

"Check yourself first. Spotting others' mistakes comes second. Don't try to trick people. Don't use fallacies like weapons."

"A **fallacy** is a skill. It's not a weapon."

Pry taught these steps:

- The 18-fallacy list.
- Check yourself first.
- Fallacies are patterns, not strict rules.
- Spotting others' fallacies comes second.
- Don't use them to trick anyone.
- This completes the full set of argument skills.
- Don't attack people with fallacy labels.
- Don't skip checking yourself.

Pry grew up near the trickster-trees. That's what her family called them. Her magpie family was always watching for traps. They learned to check their own hidden food first. They did this before looking at anyone else's.

Pry walked to the Arena of Reason when she was twelve. Logos, her mentor, asked, "What is **fallacy**?"

Pry said, "Check YOUR argument first. I have 18 fallacies."

Logos smiled. "You are chosen," he said. "You finish our set of skills."

In Pry's workshop, the **fallacy**-catalogue-cards were neatly lined up. They sparkled a little. Each one had a tiny picture.

"Watch," Pry said. She pulled out a small whiteboard. On it, someone had written: "Everyone knows that if you don't play soccer, you'll be bad at all sports. So, if you want to be good at anything, you HAVE to play soccer."

Pry picked up a card. It showed a grumpy face. "*Ad hominem*," she read. "Attacking the person, not the idea."

She scanned the argument on the board. "Is it *ad hominem*? No, it's about soccer, not a person."

She picked up another card. This one had a scarecrow. "*Strawman*," she said. "Twisting someone's words."

She looked at the argument again. "Oh! If someone said, 'I like to try different sports,' and I twisted it to say, 'So you think soccer is a terrible sport?' That would be a *strawman*." Pry made a note. "Must be careful not to twist."

She picked up a card with a tiny, confused sheep. "*Hasty generalization*," she mumbled. "Jumping to conclusions too fast."

She looked at the board. "'All sports'? That's a big jump from just soccer! Maybe someone is great at swimming but never played soccer. Yes, this argument makes a *hasty generalization*." Pry circled the words "all sports."

Then she saw a card with two paths, but no middle ground. "*False dichotomy*," she read. "Saying there are only two choices when there are more."

"Hmm," Pry thought. "'Play soccer OR be bad at all sports.' That sounds like a *false dichotomy*. There are lots of other sports! You could be good at basketball or gymnastics."

Pry erased parts of the argument. She rewrote it to be fairer. She made sure it didn't jump to conclusions. The argument was now much better. Her self-check tracker clicked. It showed a green light.

Then, Pry looked at an opponent's argument. It said, "Everyone knows video games make you lazy."

Pry quickly found the *bandwagon* **fallacy**. "Just because everyone *says* something doesn't make it true," she mumbled.

But she didn't just shout "Bandwagon!" She thought about *why* video games might *not* make you lazy. She talked about how some games need fast thinking. Or how they help friends play together. She talked about the real point.

"Self-check first," Pry said. "Spot others' mistakes second. Always talk about the real point."

Pry smiled. "I am Pry. The main idea I teach is **fallacy as self-check**."

"My main moves are: use the 18-catalogue. Check your own words first. Don't use fallacies like weapons. And this finishes our argument toolkit."

Pry was gentle, but alert. "Don't throw fallacy labels like stones," she said. "Check your own argument first. That's the real skill."

"Check YOUR argument first. *18-fallacy catalogue.*"

Voice register

Magpie-tween. Alert + self-checking. *NEVER weaponizes fallacy-labels; ALWAYS centers "self-check-first + opponent-fallacy-spotting-second + engage-substance" framing.*

Arc

Kit 5 anchor; kits 6-16 recurring. **Closes cast arc.**

Relationships

5th of 5 argumentation primitives. **Shared 18-fallacy catalogue with LogicQuest** (LogicQuest goes per-fallacy across 16 chapter-archetypes; ClaimCraft uses the set as Pry's curriculum). Cross-app with DebateForge + EthosForge fallacy-craft cluster.

Cultural-sensitivity gate

Story-axis per ADR-016. Abstract examples preferred. Anti-gotcha framework throughout.

Cultural-context note

Fallacy scholarship: Walton informal logic; Stephen Toulmin; Paul + Elder; Hamblin *Fallacies*; modern informal-logic pedagogy. Magpie for alert + own-cache-first biomimicry.

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Spark & Anvil is a 501(c)(3) public charity. We make educational apps for ages 9-14 — all free, forever; no ads; no tracking; no in-app purchases. Claimcraft is one of 140+ apps in the portfolio.

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- **QuillSpell** — spelling craft through the Word Wizard cast
- **SynaForge** — sensory-affirming creative tools through Lull, Soften, and the Quiet that is Also Creating

Methodology

Distributed-narrative pedagogy per Jerome Bruner (narrative-cognition) + Sebastian Habgood (intrinsic-integration in educational games) + SAMHSA TIP 57 (trauma-informed register).

Trauma-informed-design framework per Eggleston et al. (2025) and Stoltenburg et al. (2024).

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