



## Philosophy - Unit 1 - Epistemology

### Unit Focus

The first unit seeks to answer the guiding epistemological question, how do we know? We will first explore methods of forming logical arguments. This concept will be based on analysis of cause and effect statements (syllogisms), the art of forming an argument (rhetoric) and debate strategy. We will then apply these means of examination to competing schools of thought with an emphasis on the nature/nurture argument, also classified as rationalism vs. empiricism. We will then consider the extension schools of positivism, which emphasizes certainty of knowledge, and its opposite, skepticism, with doubt of proof as its underlying premise. At each turn, students will be encouraged to examine their societal assumptions in their own lives, specifically world religions and belief systems, through these philosophical lenses. Throughout the unit, students will keep a journal in which they reflect on key questions related to epistemology.

### Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)	Transfer
<b>C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards</b> <i>Social Studies: 10</i> 921845 <i>Dimension 1. Developing Questions &amp; PLANNING INQUIRIES</i> 921846 <i>Constructing Compelling Questions</i> 921847 <i>INDIVIDUALLY AND WITH OTHERS, STUDENTS CONSTRUCT COMPELLING QUESTIONS, AND ...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D1.2.9-12. Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.</li> </ul> 921950 <i>Dimension 3. Evaluating Sources &amp; USING EVIDENCE</i> 921955 <i>Developing Claims and Using Evidence</i> 921956 <i>INDIVIDUALLY AND WITH OTHERS, STUDENTS...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D3.4.9-12. Refine claims and counterclaims attending to precision, significance, and knowledge conveyed through the claim while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.</li> <li>• D3.3.9-12. Identify evidence that draws information directly and substantively from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.</li> </ul> 921959 <i>Dimension 4. Communicating Conclusions &amp; Taking INFORMED ACTION</i> 921960 <i>Communicating Conclusions</i> 921961 <i>INDIVIDUALLY AND WITH OTHERS, STUDENTS USE WRITING, VISUALIZING, AND SPEAKING TO...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D4.1.9-12. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.</li> </ul>	<i>Students will be able to independently use their learning to...</i> <b>T1</b> Pose and pursue question(s) to better understand an issue and draw conclusions or seek patterns based on a synthesis of evidence. <b>T2</b> Develop and communicate an informed argument/explanation using illustrative details and examples based on audience and purpose.
	Meaning
	Understanding(s)
	Essential Question(s)
	<i>Students will understand that...</i> <b>U1</b> Philosophers rely on logic to determine objective truths <b>U2</b> There are competing ideas about how we know what we know; knowledge using one approach may not constitute knowledge using another approach <b>U3</b> The construction of an argument determines its validity.
	Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill
	Knowledge
	Skill(s)
	<i>Students will know...</i> <b>K1</b> Kierkegaard's levels of existence
	<i>Students will be skilled at...</i> <b>S1</b> Evaluating syllogisms for validity and soundness

## Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

921965 *Critiquing Conclusions*

921966 *INDIVIDUALLY AND WITH OTHERS, STUDENTS...*

- D4.4.9-12. Critique the use of claims and evidence in arguments for credibility.
- D4.5.9-12. Critique the use of the reasoning, sequencing, and supporting details of explanations.

921969 *Taking Informed Action*

921970 *INDIVIDUALLY AND WITH OTHERS, STUDENTS...*

- D4.7.9-12. Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy identification, and complex causal reasoning.

### Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate

- Decision Making: Make responsible decisions, based on potential outcomes. (POG.4.2)
- Alternate Perspectives: Interpret or critique complementary and competing approaches, experiences, and worldviews in order to develop an empathetic perspective. (POG.5.2)

**K2** Key elements of the Tao te-Ching and Confucianism

**K3** Different levels of argument strength

**K4** Inductive and deductive reasoning

**S2** Constructing syllogisms

**S3** Evaluating the strength of arguments

**S4** Applying syllogism and argument to different forms of media