

### Opinions on trial - building an argument



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What if opinions had to be judged in court in the same way that we judge whether someone is guilty or innocent of a crime?

Imagine if opinions had to be defended, prosecuted and then judged to be true or false?

Imagine you are the defence lawyer for the following opinion:

#### ***'THE ONLY AUTHORITY WE SHOULD FOLLOW IS OUR OWN CONSCIENCE'***

At the end of a trial, there is an opportunity for the lawyers to give a summing up of their arguments to the judge and jury. Prepare your summing up statement in the ways suggested below:

1. You must give reasons why this opinion is a true and valid one.
2. You must refer to reasons given by the prosecution lawyer as to why this opinion is NOT true or valid, but then you must explain why his/her arguments are weak and yours are stronger.
3. You will finish by reminding the judge and jury why this opinion is correct.

A possible way to begin is given below:

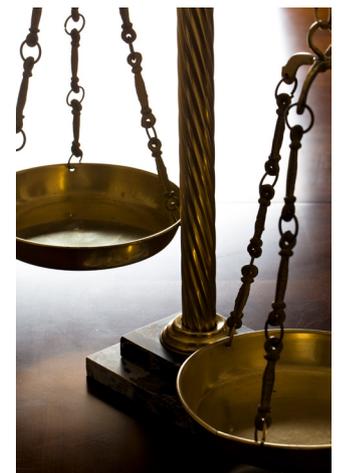
***'Many think the statement is true because conscience is believed to be God-given...'***

Now imagine you are the prosecution lawyer trying to explain why the following statement is NOT true or valid:

#### ***'THE WORLD IS OURS TO DO WHAT WE LIKE WITH'***

This time you will:

1. Give reasons that challenge (disagree) with the statement and argue that it is NOT true or valid.
2. Refer to some of the arguments given by the defence lawyer in support of the statement, but then explain why his/her arguments are weak and yours are stronger.
3. Finish by reminding the judge and jury why this opinion is NOT correct.



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A possible way to begin is given below:

***'Many would argue that this view is wrong because humankind was given planet earth by God...'***