

Tug of Logic — Game Instructions

Game Description:

Tug of Logic is a board-game for the collaborative and competitive development of persuasive arguments built on a shifting common-ground.

The board-game is normally played in groups of 5-9 players. For more players, use more than one gameboard.

Game Terminology:

Controversial MainClaim (MC): A written statement (true/ false sentence) that divides player opinions more or less equally. Choice of a controversial MC begins the game. Some players feel sure and endorse it, others reject it or are not sure. The MC is voted on in an initial and final tally. The MC wording cannot be adjusted during the game.

Reason-in-Play (RiP): A written statement (true or false sentence) that an individual player advances and alleges either as support for (adding proof to) the MC or in opposition to it (evidence against it). RiP wording may be adjusted during the play.

Bout of Logical Scrimmage: An open but timed period of play (facilitated philosophical dialogue during live-voting) focused on whether or not the current Reason-in-Play is true or false. Play consists in facilitated dialogue amongst all players during live revisable voting.

Logic Referee: The player who facilitates the philosophical dialogue, declares the start and end of Bouts, and officiates fair play.

The Game:

The object of the game is to change minds, above all one's own. You try to "pull" others toward your view by establishing reasons on a common ground, but sometimes you find you get pulled over, and win.

Details of Play:

Players choose pieces to represent themselves. Each Bout, they will locate their pieces in red or blue areas on either side of the board (never on a border or straddling red-blue areas). Players may move their piece to a different red or blue area at any time during a Bout, and must promptly remove their pieces from the board at the end of each Bout (so that a new Bout can begin or the Game can end). The Board is cleared at the end of each Bout.

Players place their pieces on the board according to their opinions, and to signal a change of opinion on either the RiP or the MC.

A Bout begins when one player's reason is entered into play and becomes the Reason-in-Play for that Bout. The Reason-in-Play must be written on an index card and placed in the central black areas of the board during the Bout. The Bout will end when the RiP is either Established or withdrawn. The Referee selects the reason to be played, and alone declares the Bout over (based on 'voting', i.e., distribution of gamepieces across the

board). Roughly, a RiP is Established when all or almost all of the Players support it (ratio set by Referee). Once established, the index card is moved to the yellow Common Ground, and a new Bout can begin. A RiP that can't be Established must eventually be withdrawn (perhaps revised and replayed).

Once RiP card is placed in the central black area, all players must take up a stance in the RiP by placing their gamepiece on the board in a blue or red area of the board (either left or right). Left or right, players choose blue or red areas to signal their opinion on the Reason-in-Play. Chose a blue area to signal agreement with the RiP, a red area to dispute the RiP. Blue is true, red is false or uncertain.

However, players who are convinced of the MainClaim show their RiP vote by placing their game piece on the right side of the Board (red or blue area); players who are not yet persuaded of the MainClaim vote for RiP on the left side of the Board.

Players can and may need to change the location of their game-piece during a Bout if:

- the wording of the RiP is changed
- a player changes their mind about the RiP *as it is worded*, or *after* it is re-worded.
- a player changes sides on the MC (move gamepiece to other side of board)
- the Bout ends (remove all gamepieces from board)

Each Bout consists in a referee-facilitated discussion focused on the truth or falsity of the RiP. Each Player should have a chance to speak to each RiP, and should be able to explain how they interpret the RiP, why they agree or disagree with it, and how the RiP has or does not have a bearing on the truth of the MC.

The Referee facilitates the discussion during the Bout. The Referee should endeavour to ensure that all players are given equal chances to speak, and players listen to each other and do not interrupt, and that no player or players speak for most of the time. Priority in the discussion should be given to any player who changes the position of their gamepiece on the board (so they can share and explain the reason for the change of mind).

Conditions of Victory:

The winners are the players who change their mind. Any player can have the satisfaction of making another player a winner, by convincing them and 'drawing them over". But the real winners are those players who change their own mind on the MC, which is shown at once to all by moving that player's gamepiece to the opposite side of the board during a Bout.

Fiddly Bits:

Key: Generally, the connection between a RiP and an MC will require another premise or reason to be played. Game strategy requires assembling connected series of reasons (multi-premise logical arguments) to establish (or refute) the MC.

Although Players may strategize together, any player is free at any time during any game of Tug of Logic to change their mind on any RiP or MC. Only they must signal this

change publicly by relocating their gamepiece, and explaining to others their change of mind.