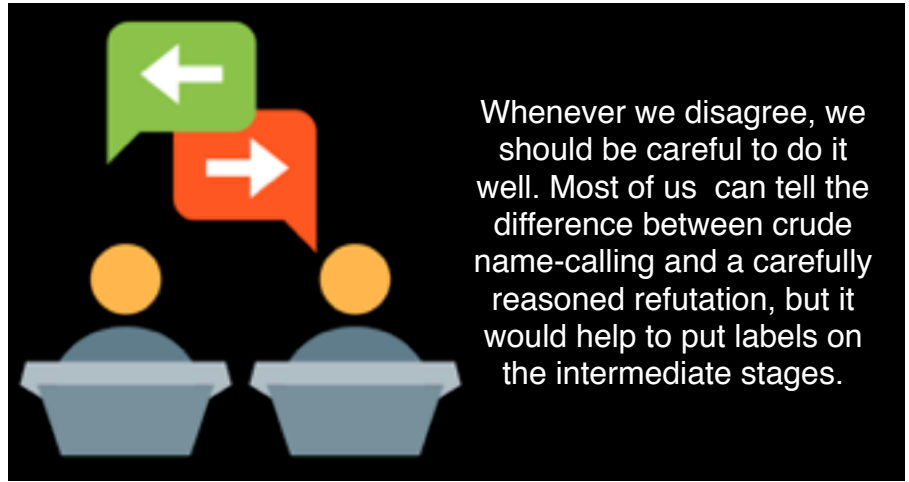


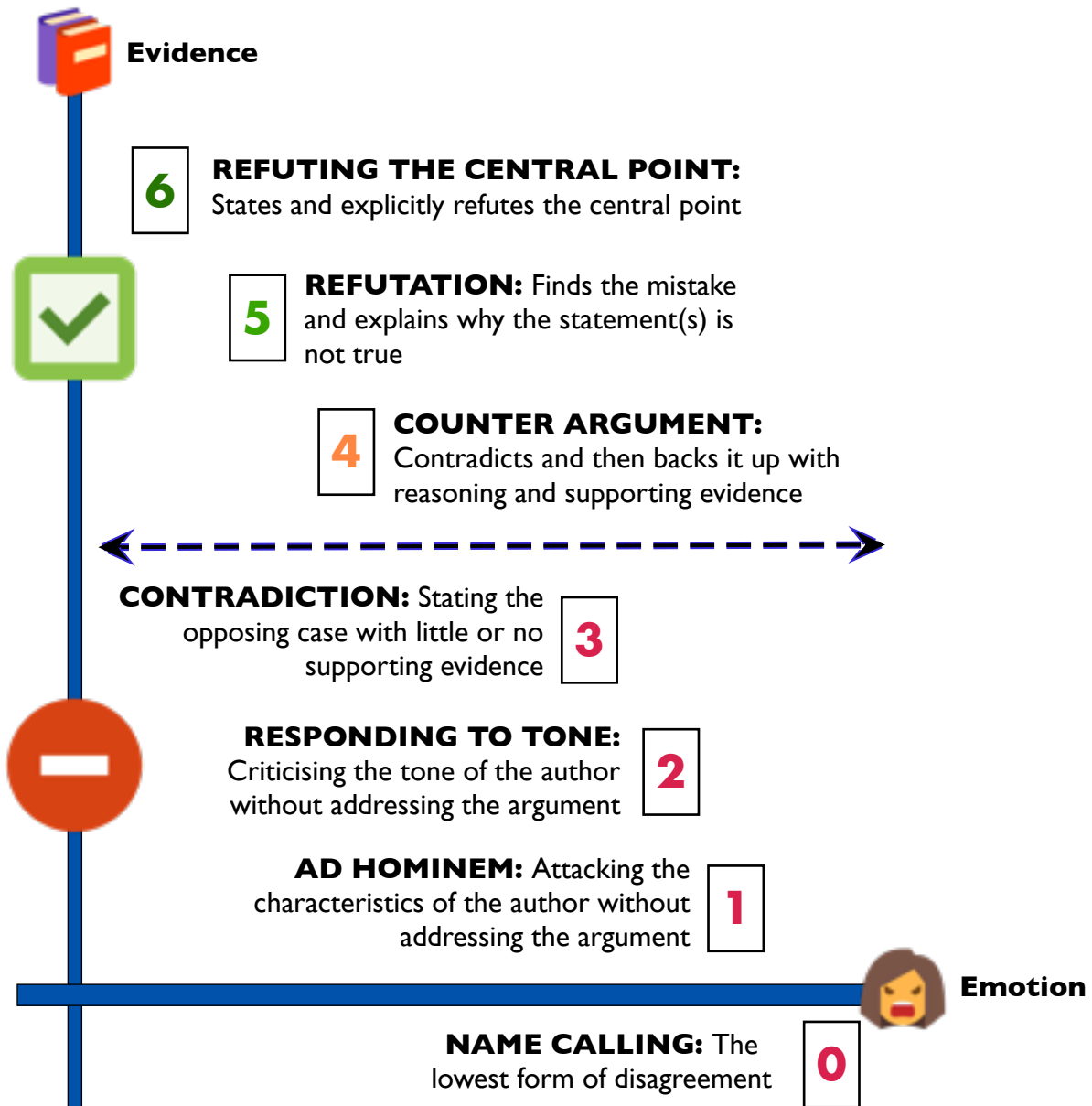


The best and the worst ways to argue: 7 levels



Whenever we disagree, we should be careful to do it well. Most of us can tell the difference between crude name-calling and a carefully reasoned refutation, but it would help to put labels on the intermediate stages.

Disagreement is a far more common form of response to statements and arguments than agreement. When you agree there's less to say. When we disagree, we should be careful to do it well. Most of us can tell the difference between crude name-calling and a carefully reasoned refutation, but it would help to put labels on the intermediate stages. Here's an outline for a disagreement hierarchy based on 2 elements: the quality of the statement(s) used and the underlying emotion that accompanies the disagreement.



Classifying forms of disagreement helps people evaluate what they read and hear, and see through intellectually dishonest arguments. An eloquent speaker or writer can appear to demolish an opponent solely by using forceful words: the defining quality of a demagogue. By giving names to the different forms of disagreement, critical readers are armed with a pin for popping these balloons.