

# Should Students be Taught to Spot Logical Fallacies?

Ever since the particularly contentious and wild 2016 presidential election, an increasing number of articles have posed the question: “How do you talk to your kids about Donald Trump?” Or about the many other varied and wild political fights that occur with increasing regularity?

The question largely revolves around Trump because of his sometimes controversial speech in debates and other public appearances. For many parents, Trump’s approach to politics is difficult to explain to their children.

But instead of trying to figure out how to explain Trump, parents might be better off training their children to evaluate the speech of *all* political candidates. A simple way of doing this recently came across my desk in the form of a book called [\*The Fallacy Detective\*](#).

Written by Nathaniel and Hans Bluedorn, *The Fallacy Detective* uses creative examples, cartoons, and simple lessons to help ages 12 and up recognize faulty reasoning in their own conversations, Facebook debates, or political stump speeches. At the outset, the book’s authors encourage students to maintain an open mind and examine both sides in any argument.

Such an attitude is in keeping with the goal of “critical thinking,” which many school districts seek to promote. Yet many schools have also [removed logic instruction](#) from their curriculum, a course which Benjamin Franklin [once suggested](#) should be taught to high school students. If students haven’t been given a basic understanding of logic’s fundamentals, can we really expect them to become “critical thinkers” who can cut through the noise of political debate and promote civil discourse?

*Image Credit: Tumblr*