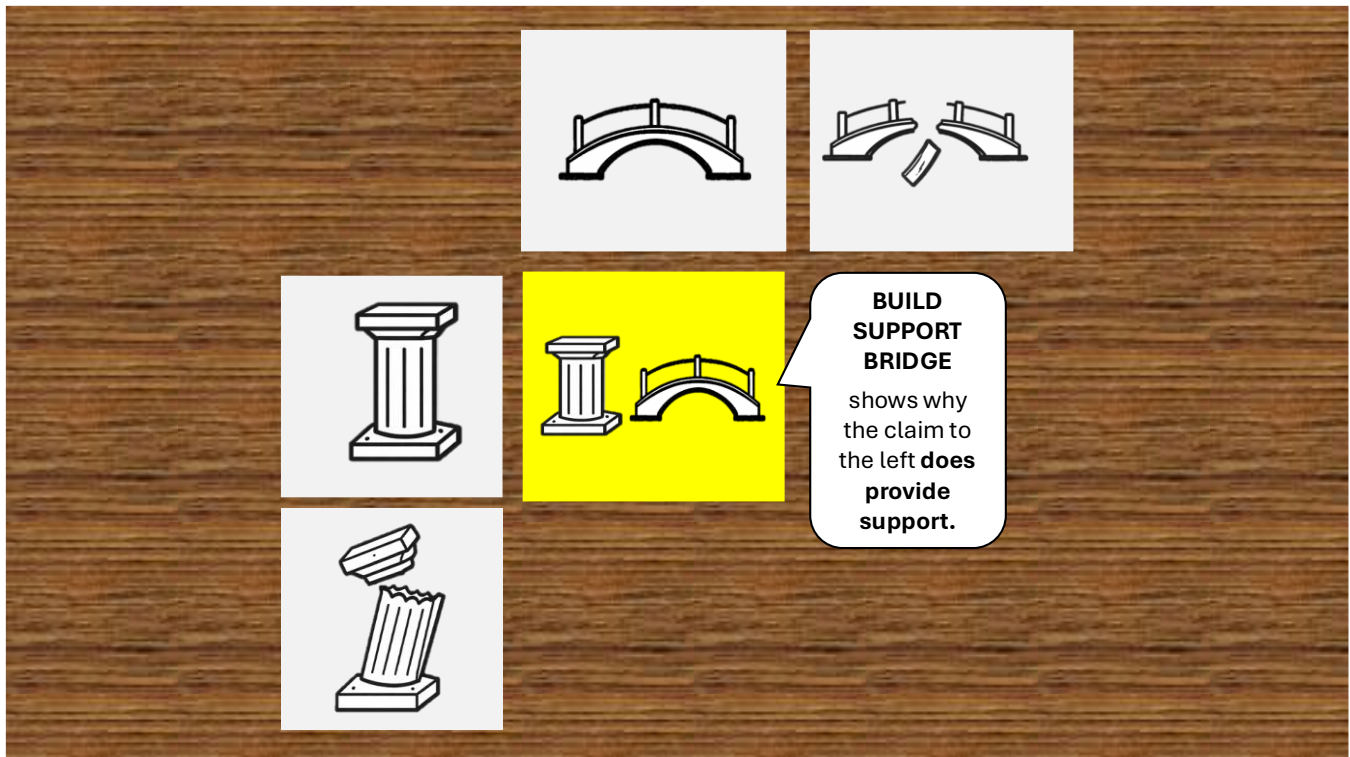


REASONATE REASONING MOVES **Building Bridges**

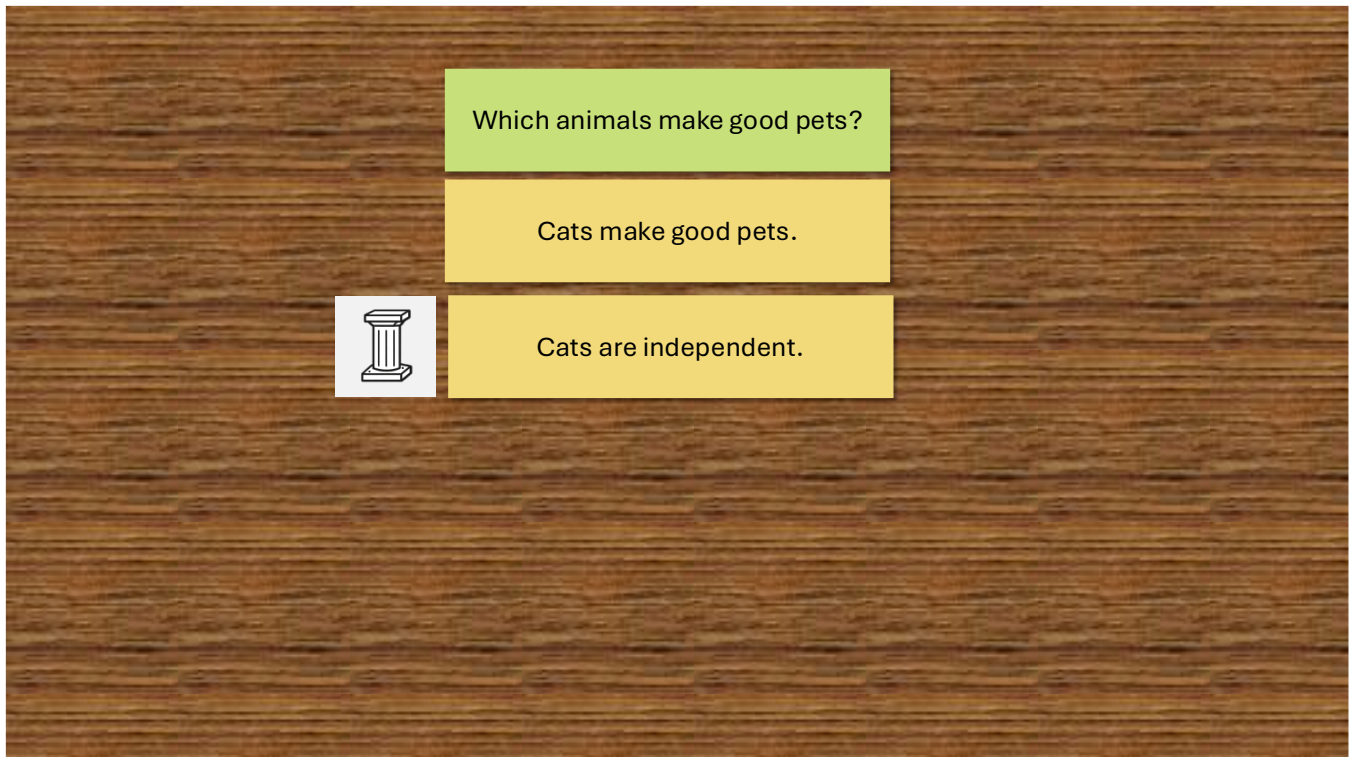
Dōna Warren, dwarren@uwsp.edu

Let's look at how to build bridges.

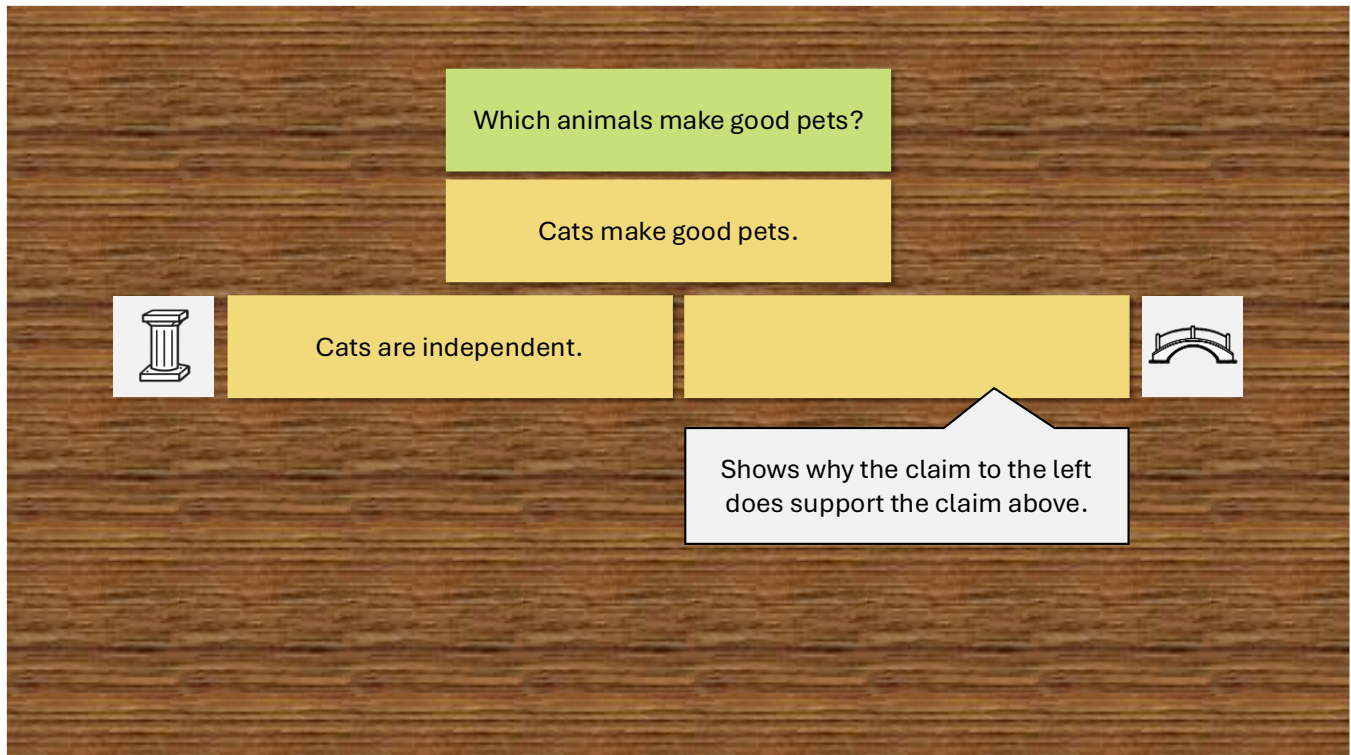


We'll start by building a **support bridge**.

This will show why the claim to the left does provide support for the claim above it.

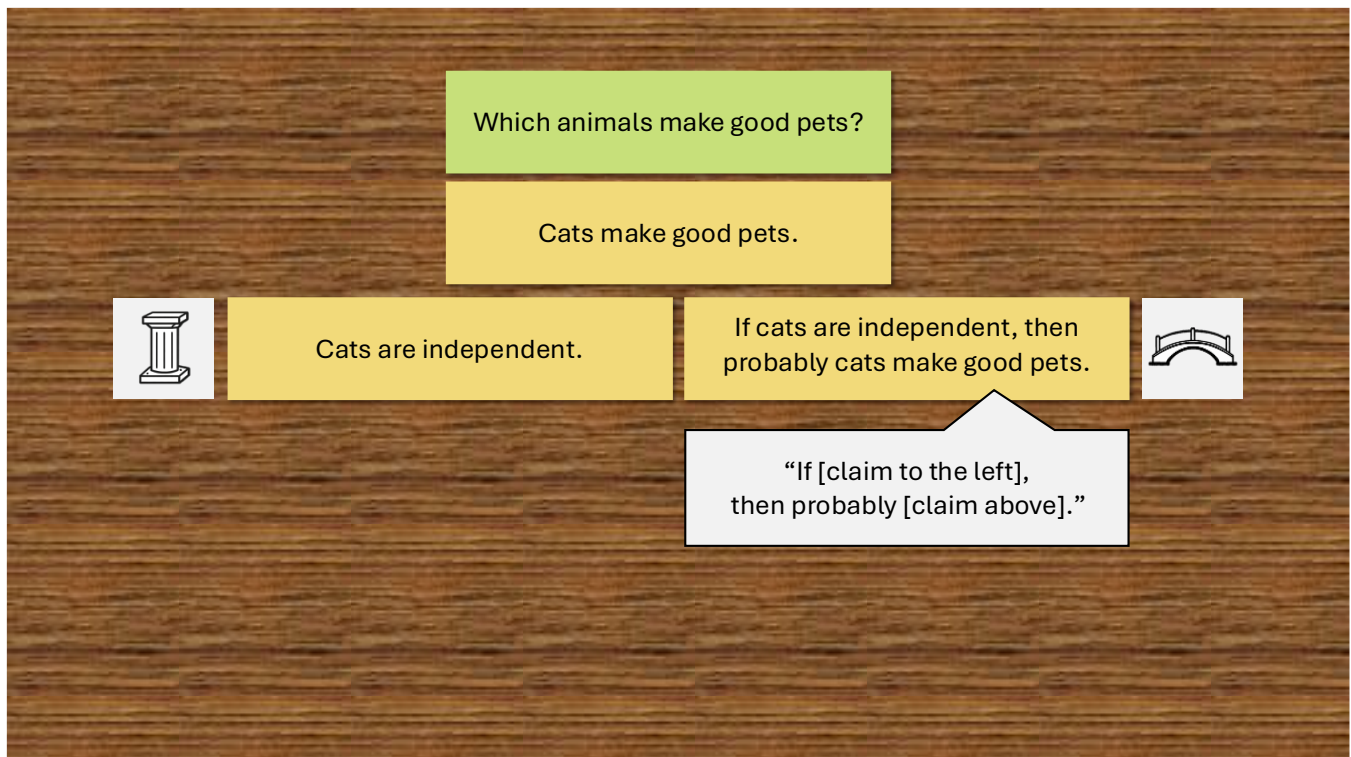


For instance, in this piece of reasoning, “Cats are independent” is given as support for “Cats make good pets.”



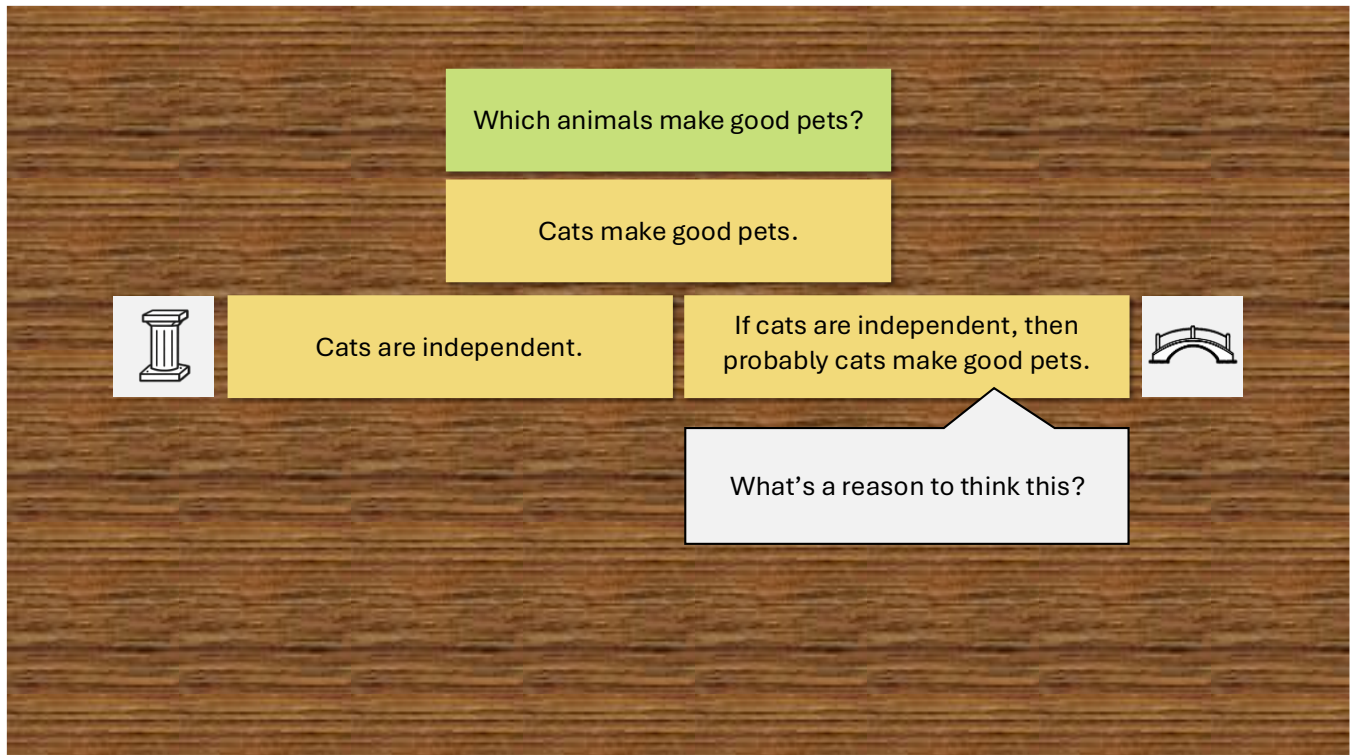
If we put a same-colored note next to “Cats are independent,” we’ll be stating why “Cats are independent” succeeds in supporting “Cats make good pets.”

How can we decide what claim to put in that bridging note? There’s a procedure we can follow.

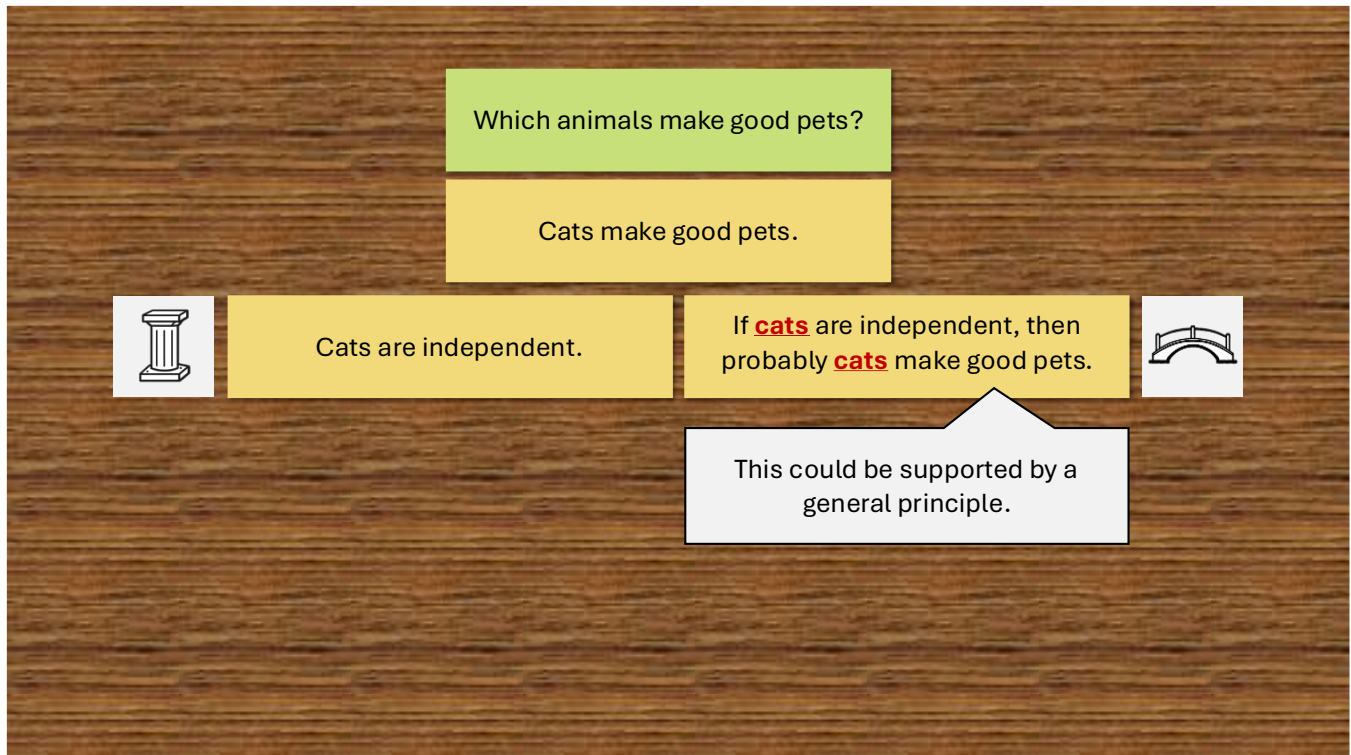


We'll start with the claim that we get when we write a sentence of the form “if...then probably...,” putting the claim to the left behind the “if” and the claim above behind the “then probably.”

In this case, that would be “If cats are independent, then probably cats make good pets.”

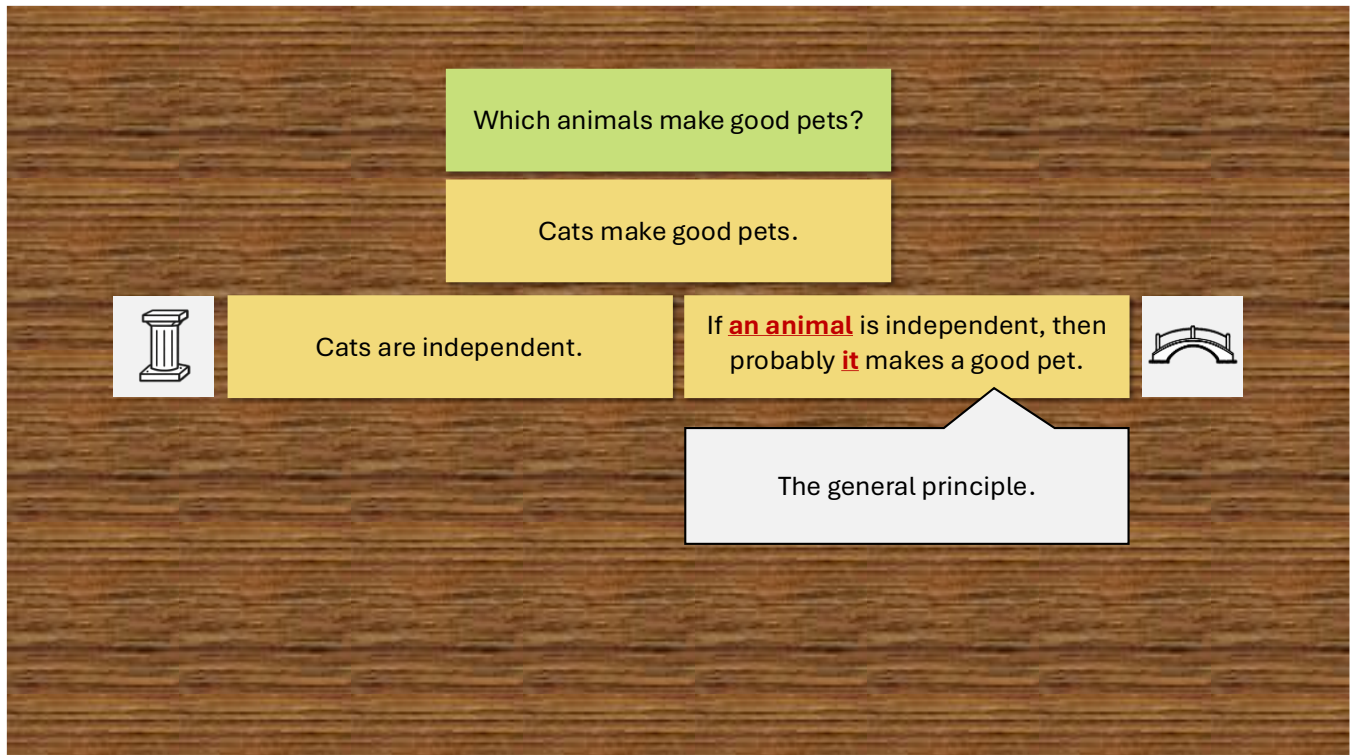


We can stop there, if we want to, but frequently it's useful to replace that sentence with the justification we have for accepting that "if... then probably..." sentence.

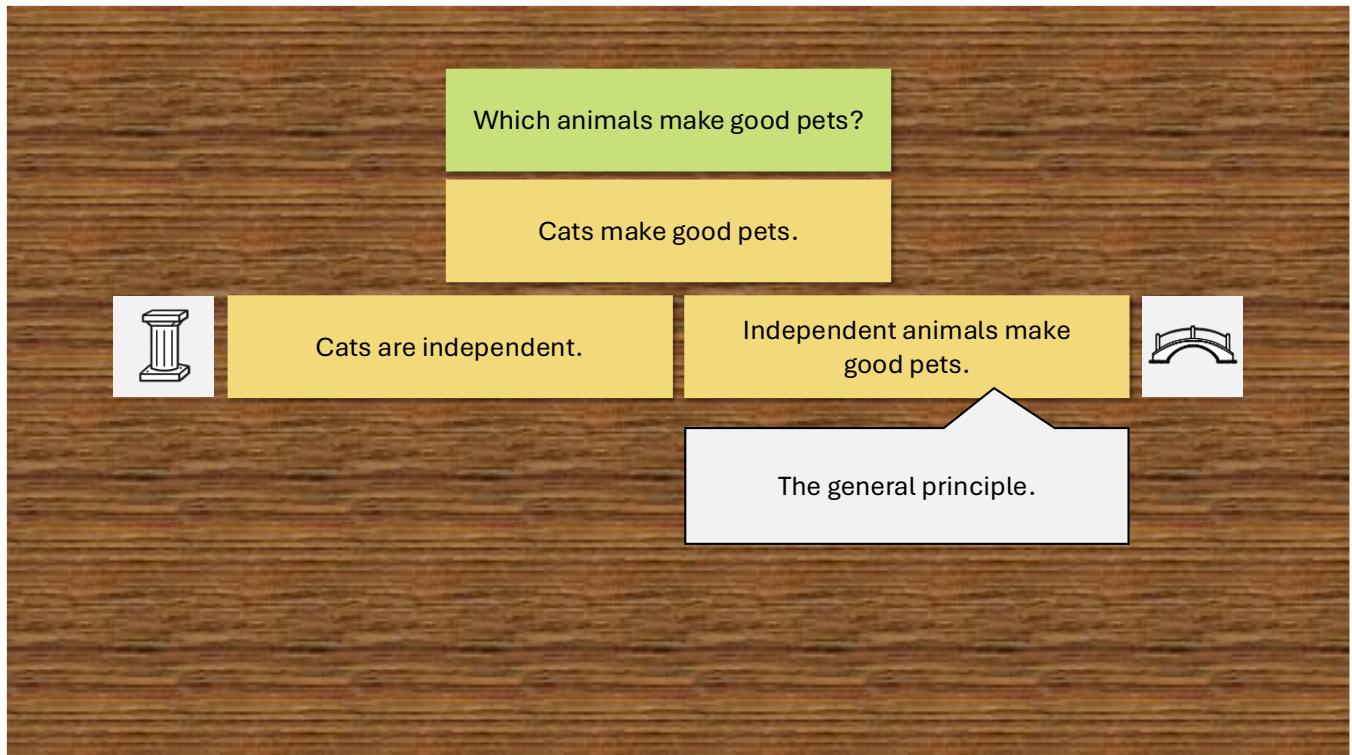


Sometimes, that justification is a general principle.

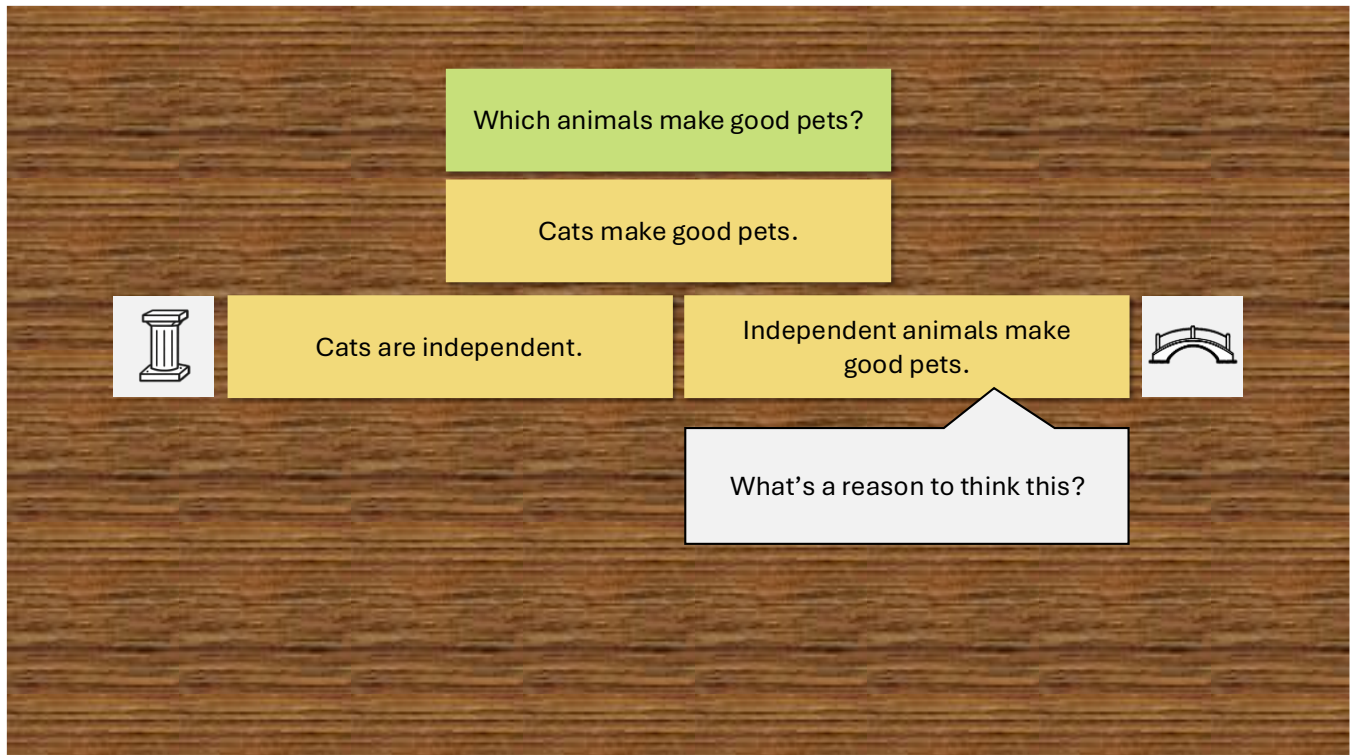
If the claim behind the “if” and the claim behind the “then probably” have something in common – like “cats” in this case - we can formulate the general principle by replacing that common term with a broader category.



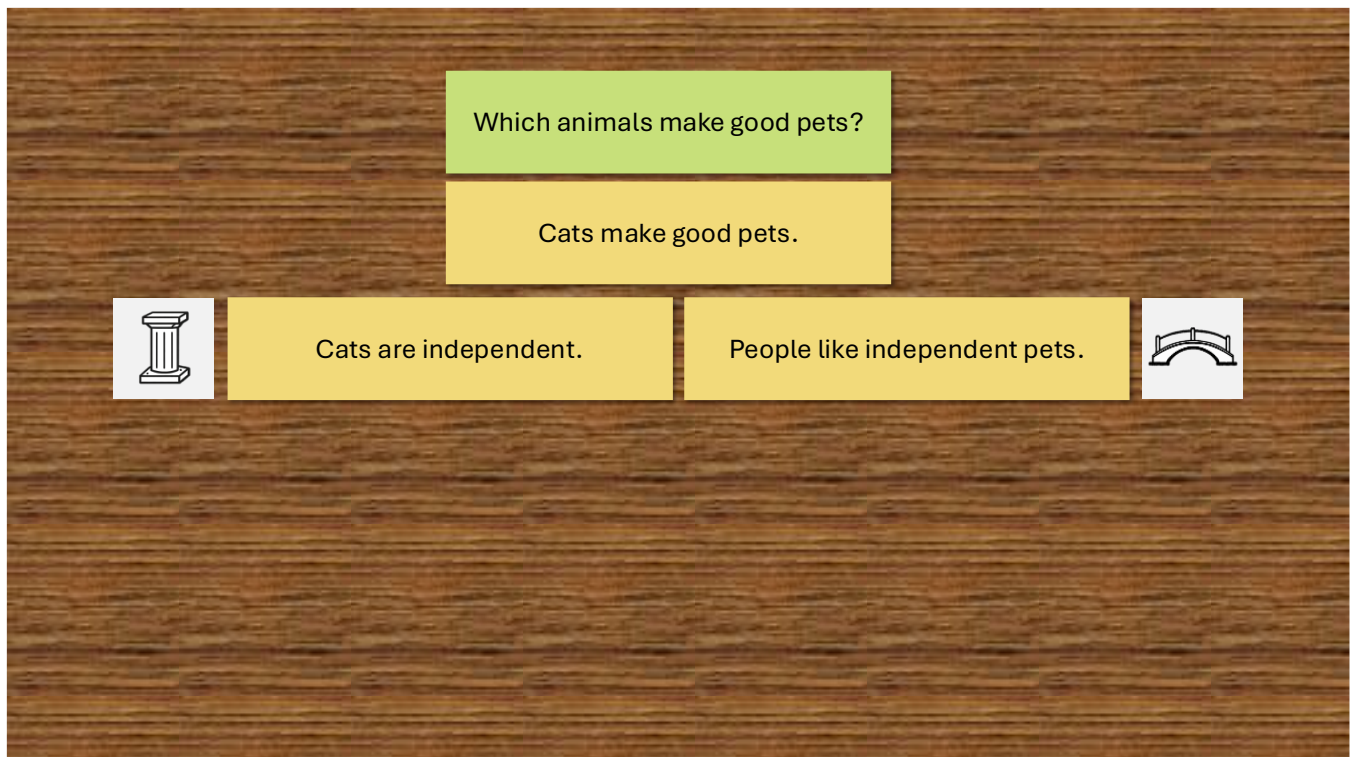
Here, this gives us the general principle that “If **an animal** is independent, then probably **it** makes a good pet.”



Which we can rephrase as “Independent animals make good pets.”



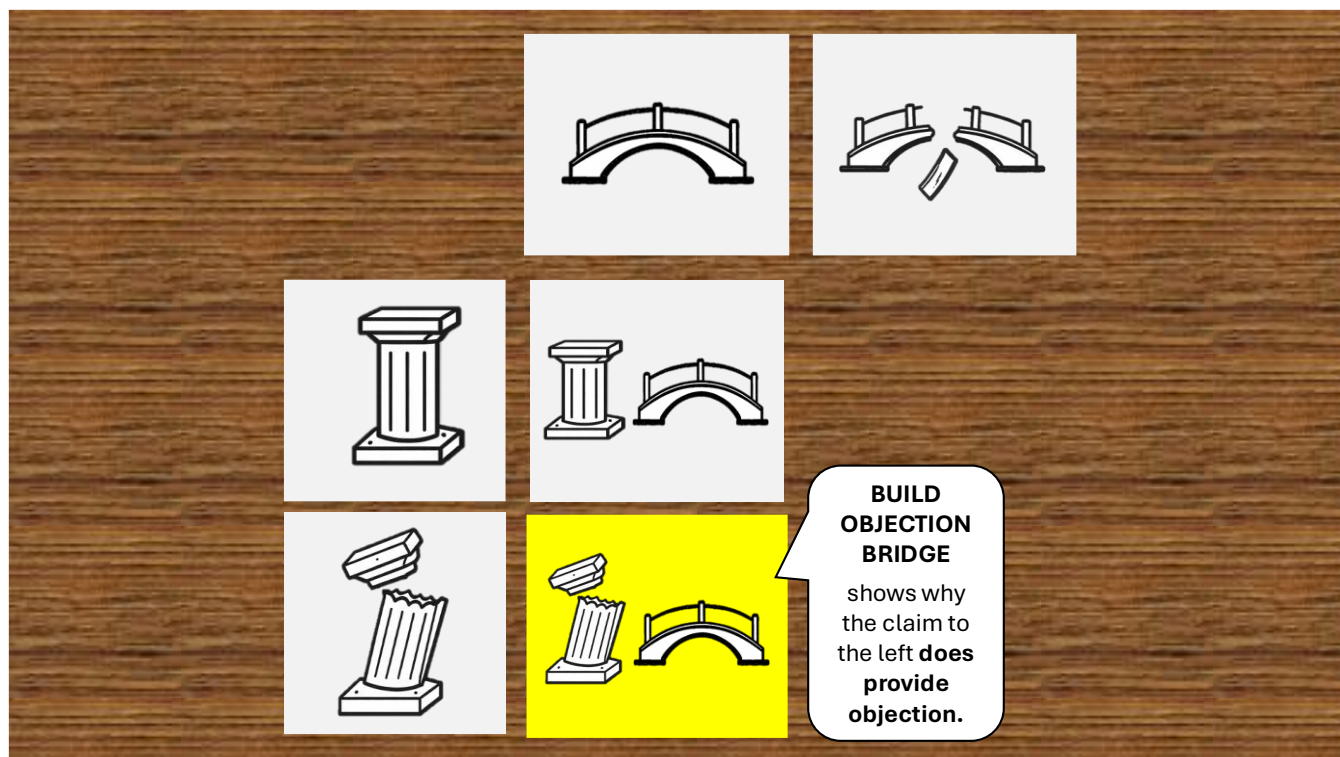
We can stop there, if we want to, but sometimes it's useful to replace the general principle with a reason to think that the general principle is true.



Such as “People like independent pets.”

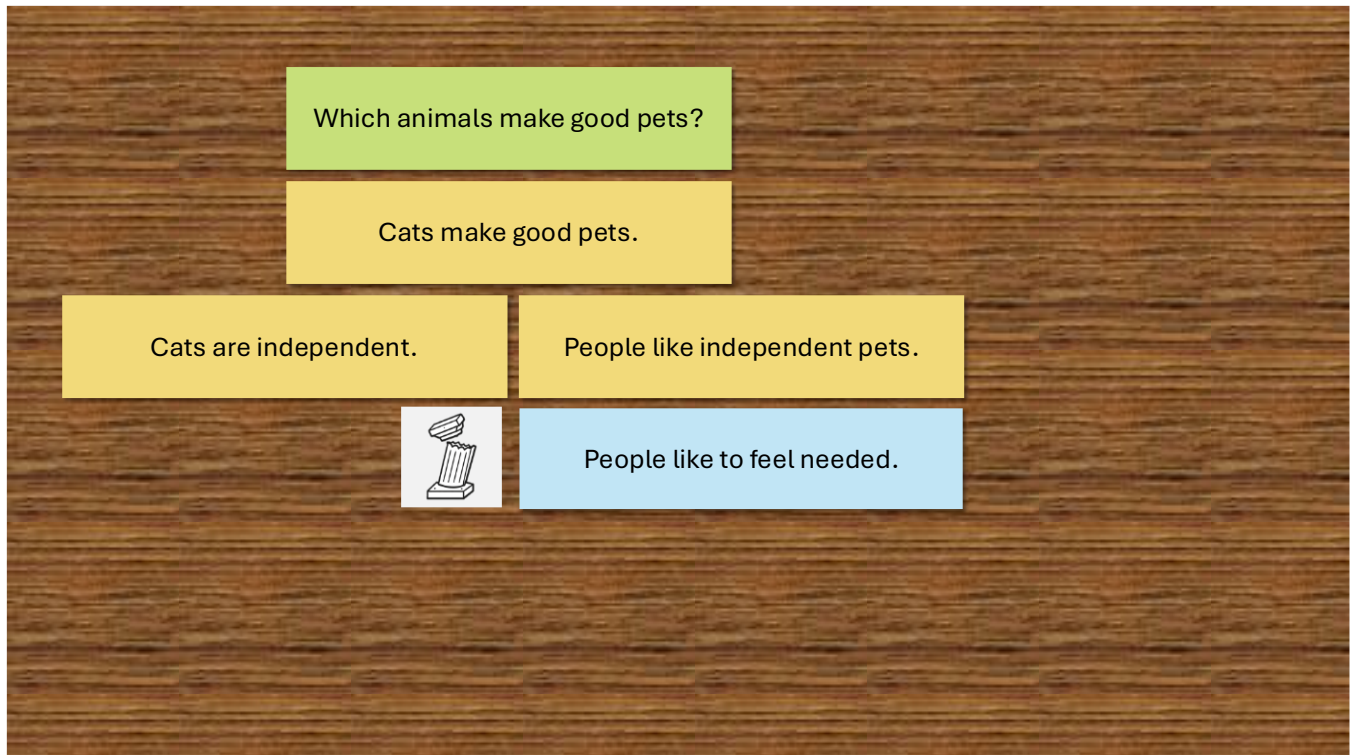
“People like independent pets” helps us to see why “Cats are independent” supports “Cats make good pets.” It builds that support bridge.

Taken together, the supporting claim and the bridging claim do a better job establishing “Cats make good pets” than either claim would do alone.

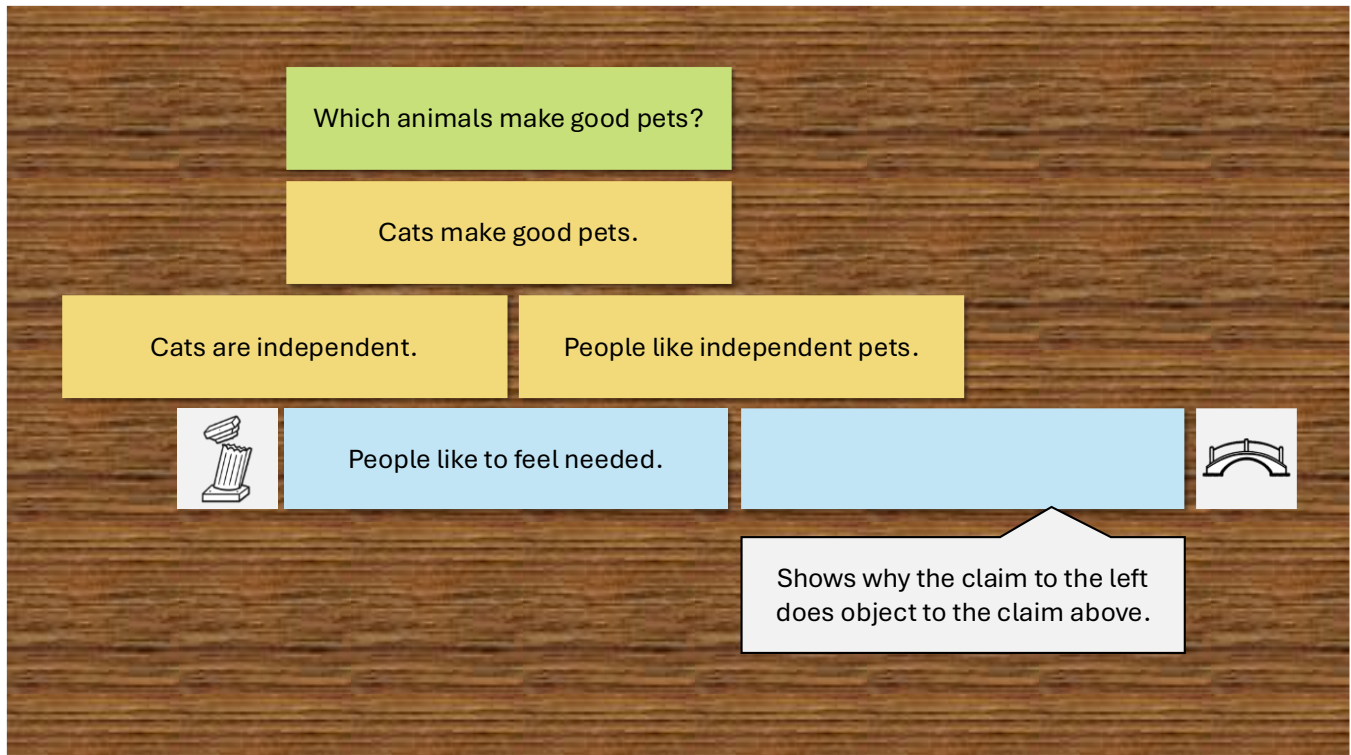


We can also build **objection bridges**.

An objection bridge shows why the claim to the left does object to the claim above it.

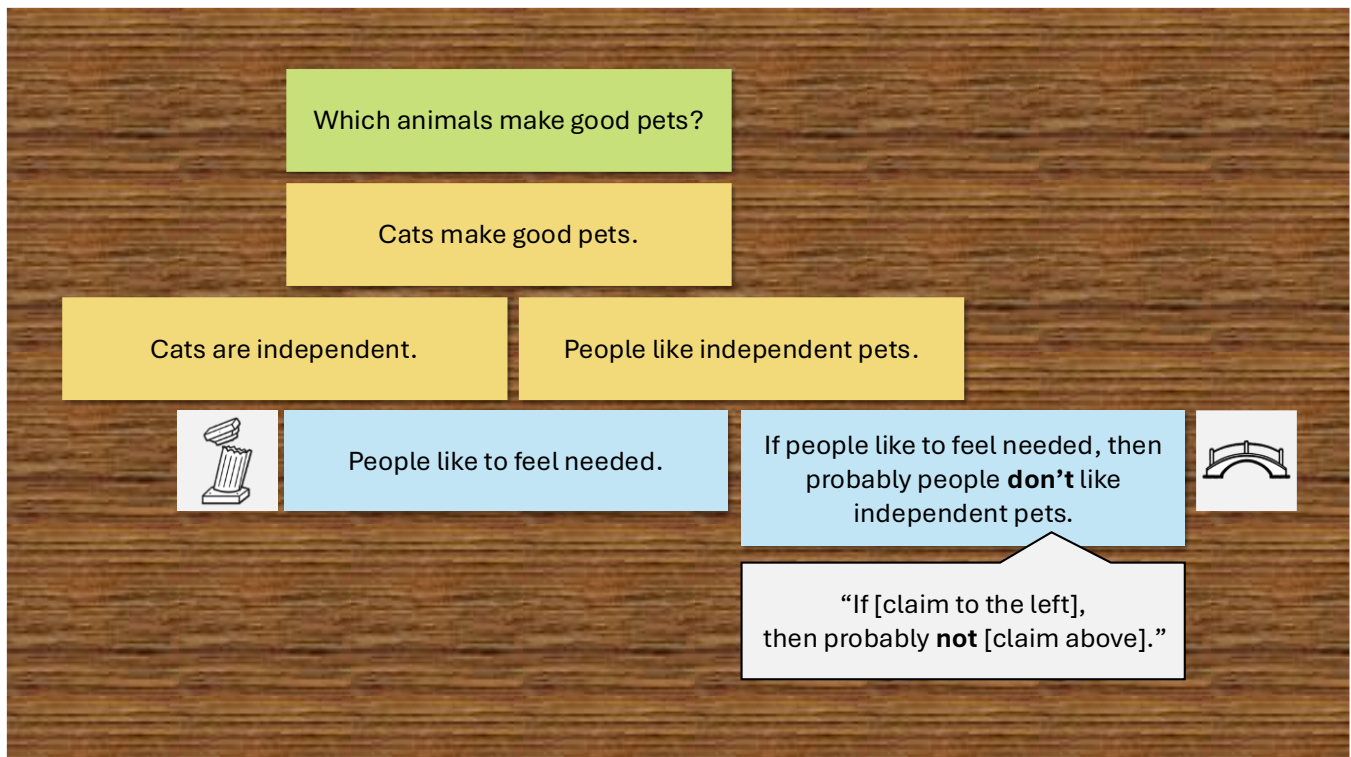


To continue our earlier example, suppose someone objects to “People like independent pets” by saying “People like to feel needed.”



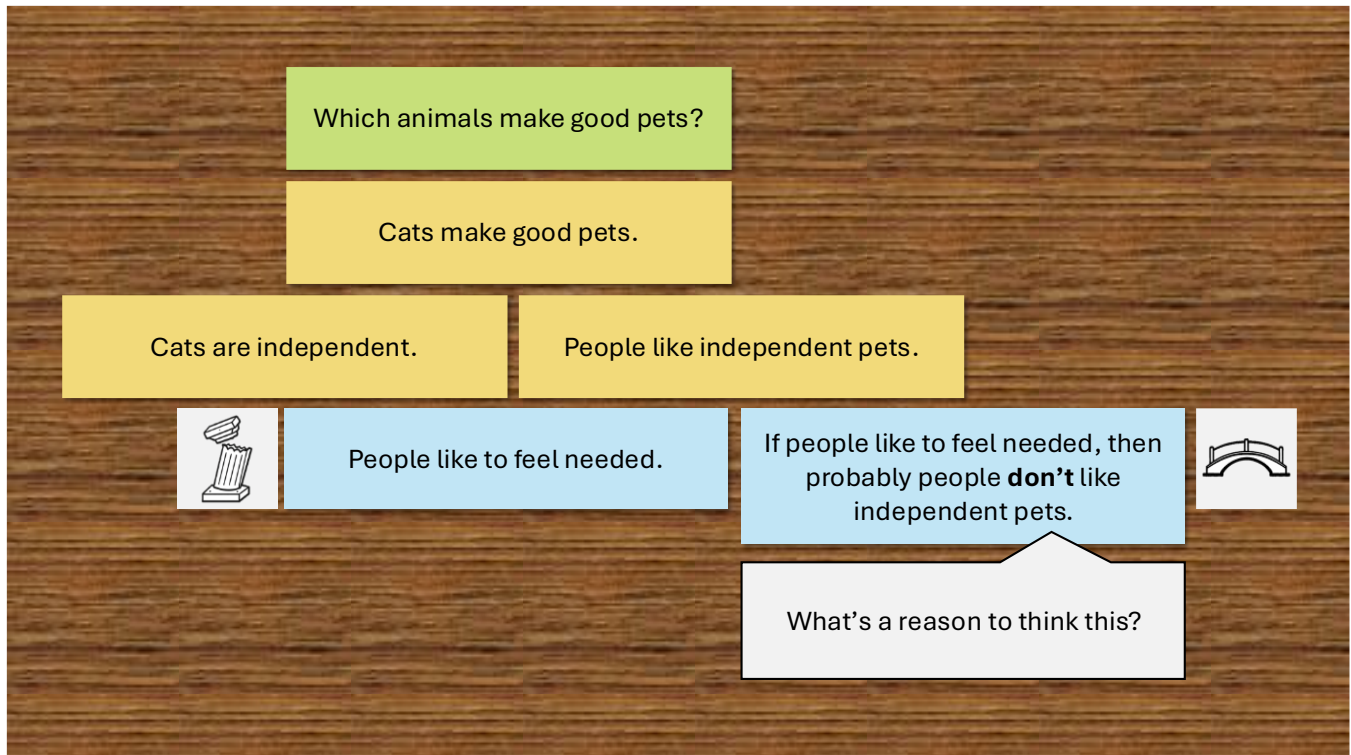
If we put a same-colored note next to “People like to feel needed,” we’ll be stating why “People like to feel needed” successfully objects to “People like independent pets.”

Once again, there’s a procedure we can follow to build that bridge.

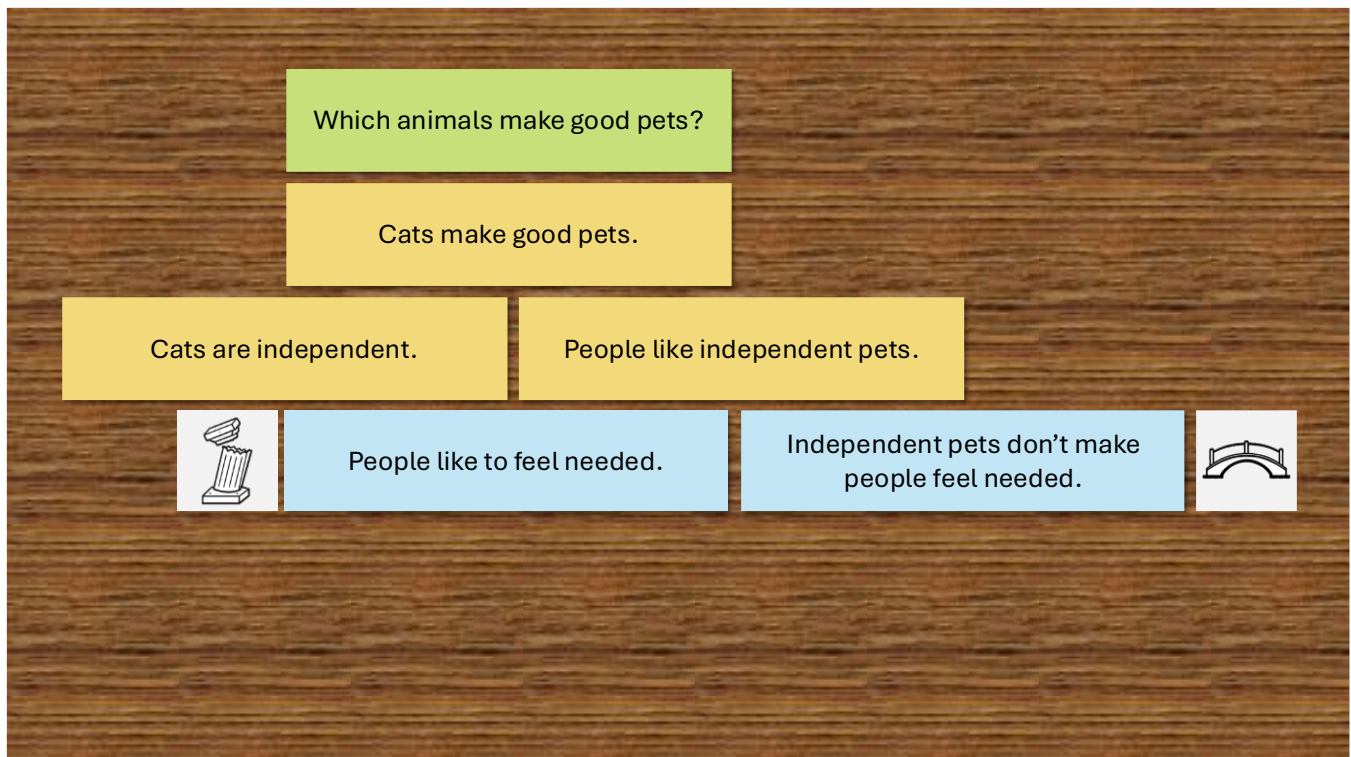


We'll start with the claim that we get when we write a sentence of the form "if...then probably not...", with the claim to the left behind the "if" and the claim above behind the "then probably not."

In this case, that would be "If people like to feel needed, then probably people **don't** like independent pets."



We can stop there, if we want to, but frequently it's useful to replace it with the justification we have for accepting that "if... then probably not..." sentence.



Here, that's probably something like "Independent pets don't make people feel needed."

"Independent pets don't make people feel needed" helps us to see why "People like to feel needed" objects to "People like independent pets." It builds that objection bridge.

Taken together, the objecting claim and the bridging claim do a better job disproving "People like independent pets" than either claim would do alone.