


You Want Me to Do What?

Part 2: Strategies for Teaching Argumentative Writing

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Welcome!



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Objectives




- Dig deeper into strategies for teaching argumentative writing
 - Creating argument and evidence
 - Organizational structure and progression of ideas
 - Editing/revising

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Time Out for an Update . . .




To create more effective writers, we must teach . . .



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We know the process . . .



1. **Read** the passage and question

2. **Unpack** the prompt (identify key words)

3. **Rewrite** the question in your own words and turn the question into a topic sentence/ thesis statement

4. **Collect** relevant details from passage

5. **Organize** details into a logical order

6. **Draft** your answer

7. **Re-read** and **edit/revise** your answer making sure all parts of the question are answered

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and the basic structure . . .

Beginning

Middle

Ending

• The introduction states the main idea or position. It begins with a topic sentence/thesis/hypothesis statement. The beginning restates the question and sets the stage to answer the prompt.

• Answer the question first.

• Provide important information the author stated and meant. This is where you go to the text(s) and provide examples/evidence and important details to support the answer.

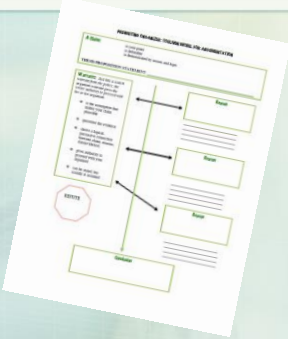
• Sample phrases to introduce each text reference include: ... stated; in the text ...; for example . . .

• Include background information as required through the prompt.

• Write a closing that summarizes the position taken or restates the thesis statement in a different way.

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But how do we dig deeper into teaching students how to develop and draft an effective argumentative response?



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Bonnie Goonen & Susan Pittman

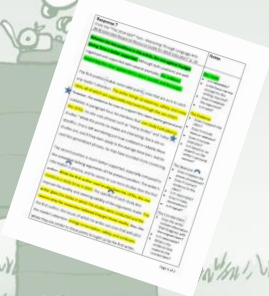
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Let's begin with the end in mind . . .

It was a dark and stormy night

Response 7

Assessing an argumentative writing sample



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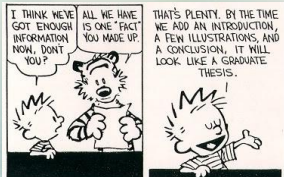
What's argumentative writing?

What is argumentative style writing?

Why does it matter?

How is it similar to or different from informative/explanatory/persuasive writing?


How do I teach it in my classroom?



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Argumentative writing is . . .

a type of critical thinking and rhetorical production involving the identification of a thesis (also called a claim), supportive evidence (empirical or experiential), and assessment of the warrants that connect the thesis, evidence, and situation within which the argument is being made.




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Why “Argument” Matters

Argument is the ability to support a claim using valid reasoning based on relevant and sufficient evidence. Well-crafted argumentative writing is an expression of rigorous analysis and critical thinking.


To support a claim, a writer must:

- identify and extract relevant and sufficient evidence from credible primary and secondary sources;
- develop a logical and reasoned analysis based on evidence; and
- acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of counterclaims.



Argumentative Writing and Evidence


Learned Hand,
"I Am an American Day Address"



Argumentative writing requires students to support their position after analyses of claims using **valid reasoning** based on **relevant and sufficient evidence** drawn from the text.


Similarities between Argumentative and Informative/Explanatory Writing

- Use **transitional language** to link major sections of the text and create cohesion.
- Employ a **concluding statement** or section that follows from what came before.
- Establish and maintain a **formal style** attuned to the discipline.



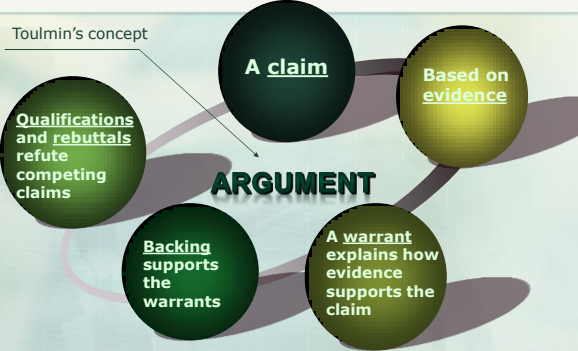
Differences between Argumentative and Informative/Explanatory Writing

- What distinguishes Arguments from Informative/Explanatory is the goal when writing:
 - **Defending** a claim versus explaining a topic
 - **Proving** a viewpoint versus unpacking a concept
 - **Supporting** a point versus examining an idea



Elements of Argument

Toulmin's concept




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graph TD; Claim((A claim)) --> Evidence((Based on evidence)); Evidence --> Warrant((A warrant explains how evidence supports the claim)); Warrant --> Backing((Backing supports the warrants)); Backing --> Qualifications((Qualifications and rebuttals refute competing claims)); Qualifications --> Claim; Backing --- Argument((ARGUMENT)); Warrant --- Argument; Evidence --- Argument; Claim --- Argument
```



Teach students to analyze and evaluate text(s)

analysis ≠ description or summary



An analysis or evaluation of text(s) goes “beneath the surface”

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Analyzing a Text

Analyzing a text(s) requires that students:

- Examine form, content, and organization
- Examine the author’s purpose and perspective
- Identify the author’s claim and the reasons
- Determine if evidence is sufficient and accurate
- Determine logical fallacies (errors in reasoning)

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Evaluating an Argument


Evaluating an argument requires that students:

- Analyze the purpose of the argument
- Recognize the main claim and evaluate how it is expressed
- Understand and evaluate the structure of the argument
- Evaluate the reliability of evidence
- Understand and evaluate reasoning about the evidence

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Teach the building blocks of an effective argument . . .

- Claim
- Evidence
- Warrant – the logical connection between the evidence and the claim
- Counterclaim – addresses potential objections to the claim
- Rebuttal

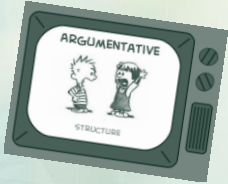


Toulmin Model

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Claim (thesis statement)

- States what is being argued; what point is being made.
- A claim must be
 - Debatable: reasonable people could disagree
 - Narrow: not too big to deal with in a writing
 - Valid: evidence needs to support the claim




Evidence (data)

- Supports the claim; not opinions but, information from reliable sources that may include:
 - Facts or statistics
 - Expert opinion
 - Examples



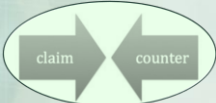
Warrant (bridge)

- Explains the pieces of evidence (arguments) and connects them to the claim.
- A warrant
 - Is logical – makes sense
 - Is reasonable – avoids excessive emotion
 - Does not assume – sticks with the evidence




Counterclaim (opposite argument)

- Disagrees with the claim.
- Reasonable people can disagree with a specific claim.
 - What do they think? (claim)
 - What is their evidence?



Rebuttal (evidence)

- Explains why the counterclaim is wrong.
- A person can reasonably disagree with the counterclaim.
 - Why is the counterclaim wrong?
 - What is the evidence as to why a counterclaim is wrong or less effective?




What does written argument look like in the classroom?

The Question	
Your Claim	
Your Evidence	Your Reasoning
Counterclaims/Rebuttals:	
Summary of your argument:	

- Evaluate data
- Make a claim
- List evidence and reasoning
- Identify counterclaims and provide rebuttals

Can your students answer these questions about the text(s)?

- What is the author's argument?
- What position does the author take (for or against)?
- What is one point that supports the author's argument?
- What evidence does the author give to support this point?
- What is the point of view of the author?
- What is one point that refutes the author's point of view?



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Teach the structure of an effective argument . . .

The flowchart outlines the structure of an argumentative essay. It starts with 'Writing An Argumentative Essay' leading to 'Thesis Statement: Reason One Reason Two Reason N'. From the thesis, arrows point to 'Reason One', 'Reason Two', and 'Reason N'. Each reason box contains 'Supporting evidence, Interpretive sentences, Transition sentence'. Arrows from these reasons point to 'Considered Objection ???' boxes, which then lead to 'However...' boxes. A 'Considered Objection' box also leads to a 'Transition Sentence' box, which then leads to a box stating 'Considered objections take into account opposing possibilities, data, evidence, and considerations.' A 'Strong Counterargument Paragraph' box also leads to the 'However...' boxes. The final step is 'State how your reasons contained in your paragraphs support your thesis stated in your opening paragraph's'.

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Sample Structure

- **Introductory Paragraph**
 - Set the stage or context for the position that is being argued
 - Provide a “hook” - material to get reader’s attention
 - Introduce the claim or thesis

A green signpost with the words 'The Beginning' in white, set against a background of a blue sky with clouds.

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How about a vee-chart as a prewrite?

Or a pro/con organizer or a Toulmin graphic organizer or . . . ?

The image shows three organizational tools: a 'Pro/Con Organizer' (a table with columns for 'Pro' and 'Con'), a 'Toulmin Graphic Organizer' (a diagram with boxes for 'Claim', 'Data', 'Warrant', 'Backing', 'Rebuttal', and 'Response'), and a 'Vee-chart' (a diagram with 'Position One' and 'Position Two' at the top, an 'Issue' in the middle, and 'My Claim' at the bottom).

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Sample Structure

A diagram of the Toulmin model showing a balance scale. The left pan is labeled 'Claim' and the right pan is labeled 'Data'. The fulcrum in the middle is labeled 'Warrant'.

- **Body (Middle) of the Argument**
 - Offer data (reasons/evidence) to support the claim
 - Introduce evidence in a few words or a sentence, e.g. “to support his/her position, the author provides recent statistics”
 - State supporting evidence
 - Explain the evidence
 - Connect the reasons/evidence to the claim
 - Explore warrants that show how the evidence is logically connected to the claim
 - Discuss counter-arguments and provide rebuttal
 - Present positions in opposition to the one being argued
 - Point out what opposition states in response to the argument
 - Provide rebuttal or refutation of opposing view(s)

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Remember, effective argumentative writing should include:

P

Point

A claim or thesis

E

Evidence

Evidence & examples to support the claim

E

Explanation

Explanation of the evidence (how and why it supports the claim)

L


Link

A link (transition) to the next point or from the last point

S

Style


A formal style throughout



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It's like building a chain of evidence


- Identify the claim
- Define the evidence
- Explain the connections
- Define the counter-arguments
- Refute the counter-arguments
- Organize the evidence



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Sample Structure

- Conclusion/Ending
 - Share the significance of the claim and what the reader should “take away”
 - Show reader implications of the argument, summarization of points, or final statement so that reader remembers the argument
 - Provide logical ending



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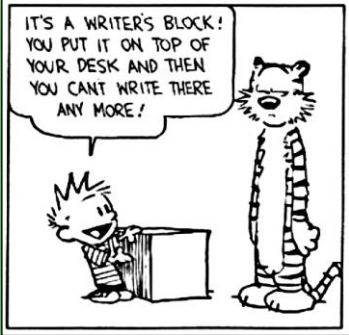
Don't forget to provide tools for real-world revision and editing



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Ideas for Revising and Editing

- The Everyday Writer 20 Common Errors in Writing
http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/everyday_writer/20errors/
- Twelve Common Errors
<https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/CommonErrors.html>
- 15 Grammar Goofs That Make You Look Silly
<http://www.copyblogger.com/grammar-goofs/>




IT'S A WRITER'S BLOCK!
YOU PUT IT ON TOP OF
YOUR DESK AND THEN
YOU CANT WRITE THERE
ANY MORE!

Need more ideas?

A Few Tools for the Classroom

Argumentative Essentials - putting it all together



Argumentative Essentials

- Study sides of an issue
Align with one side & formulate an argument
- Develop logical reasons
Support your side with sufficient proof
- Present both sides
Identify strengths & weaknesses of each
- Conclude the argument
Don't repeat remind readers what's at stake
- Connect ideas logically
Transition between key points intentionally
- Apply a formal style
Establish and maintain an objective tone

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<http://www.gedtestingservice.com/>



LESSON PLANS

Florida's Instructor Handbook for GED® Preparation

2014 GED® Test

Revised February 2014

http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/dwdframe/ad_frame.asp

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Stay connected

Purdue OWL Writing Lab
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/03/>


Tools for Teachers: Engaging in Academic Writing
<http://www.aspendl.org/portal/browse/CategoryList?categoryId=281>

Writer's Web. University of Richmond Writing Center
<http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wwweb.html>

Teach 4 Results
http://iteach4results.wikispaces.com/*Writing

The Writing Studio – Colorado State University
<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=58>

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If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There's no way around these two things that I'm aware of, no shortcut.

Stephen King

“Don’t just sit around and think about it

GET UP & DO IT.”

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— Taysha
Florida, 2014 graduate

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