

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

How to Shine a Positive Light
on your Opinions and thus
Argue Better

The Parts of a Good Argument

- Claim
- Evidence
- Warrant
- Counterclaim
- Rebuttal

Claim (thesis statement)

States what you are arguing for; what point you are trying to make.

Claim must be-

- 1) **Debatable**: reasonable people could disagree with it
- 2) **Narrow**: not too big to deal with

Example: Energy drinks are bad for people.

Evidence (data)

Supports your claim.

-not just more opinions but information from reliable sources that include-

- ▣ **Facts or statistics**

- Energy drinks have caused the deaths of 18 people.

- ▣ **Expert opinion**

- The Food & Drug Administration has shown ...

- ▣ **Personal experience**

- I once had to have a heart monitor attached...

Warrant (bridge)

Explains your pieces of evidence (arguments) and connects them to your claim.

A warrant -

- ▣ Is **Logical** – makes sense
- ▣ Is **Reasonable** – avoids excessive emotion
- ▣ **Does not assume** – sticks with the evidence

Counterclaim (opposite argument)

Disagrees with your claim.

Reasonable people can disagree with your claim.

- ▣ What do they think? (claim)
 - Energy drinks make workers more efficient.
- ▣ What is their evidence?
 - Productivity increases when workers use ...

Rebuttal (evidence)

Explains why the counterclaim is wrong.

You can reasonably disagree with the counterclaim.

- ▣ Why are they wrong?
 - Productivity is good, but sleep problems can occur.
- ▣ What is your evidence as to why they are wrong?
 - A worker who crashes after a few hours is...

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