

## Grades 9–10 Playlist: Precise Claims and Clear Relationships

*Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1.A:*

- Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

### Welcome

Writing well-supported and clear arguments is an important skill to develop, as it is used in many fields as a basic form of communication. Arguments can also take on various genres, or forms, of writing, such as brochures, advertisements and the visual arts, emails, and academic essays. While many people understand how to form an argument, there are many conventions and techniques to keep in mind when writing formal argumentative, persuasive, research, or position essays. These techniques allow writers to convey their argument with precise claims, solid reasons, evidence, and counterclaims, all while developing clear relationships between these components through logical organization. Without the use of such guidance, arguments may not succeed in their inherent purpose of aiding readers in understanding the topic at hand.

### Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- establish a precise claim that demonstrates a thorough understanding of a topic or text.
- clarify the relationship between claims and reasons, reasons and evidence, and claims and counterclaims.

### Review

#### Key Terms

- A **claim** is a statement that asserts a belief or truth. In arguments, most claims require supporting evidence.
- A method of supporting evidence could be a **counterclaim**, which is an opposing view of the position taken in the argument.
- An **argument** refers to 1) a spoken, written, or visual text that expresses a point of view; 2) the use of evidence and reason to discover some version of the truth.



**Watch!**

Watch this video for an introduction to writing argumentative essays:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-IzGy5gizKg>

**Exploring the Standard**

To produce precise claims, writers need to understand the topic well by conducting thorough research. This includes research that provides popular counterclaims to the position taken in the argument. Using counterclaims shows readers that research has been done and provides the opportunity to further argue the main claims by discounting opposing claims. In addition, writers must be sure that their essay establishes clear connections or relationships between all components of the argument, such as the main claim or thesis, and the reasons and evidence used to support the claim. To achieve this goal, writers rely on organizing these components in an effective organizational pattern.

**A Closer Look: The Classical Argument**

One of the most tried and true methods of argumentation was developed through the ancient Greek court system. This system is now used in most academic fields as an effective way to approach and organize argument-based essays. The following is a typical outline for classical arguments:

<b>Introduction</b>	Grabs the audience’s attention, introduces the topic, and states thesis or main claim.
<b>Narration</b>	Summarizes necessary background information or circumstances surrounding the topic and claim, providing context.
<b>Confirmation</b>	Reasons and evidence to support the thesis.
<b>Refutation</b>	Possible opposing counterclaims and objections from the target audience.
<b>Substantiation</b>	Additional evidence that refutes the opposition.
<b>Summation</b>	Strong conclusion that summarizes the main points and solidifies the thesis.

This method forces writers to maintain a certain level of specificity, offers a clear progression of information, while also including all components of an argument. Because of this, readers will have the ability to easily understand the writer’s purpose and position presented in the essay.

**Read!**

For additional explanation of the classical argument, take a look at the following resource:

<http://www.austincc.edu/buck/eng/1301/pubtexts/Argument.htm>

**Example 1**

Using the classical argument structure, a student could effectively produce a solid argument. For example, suppose a student is tasked with writing an essay on wearing school uniforms. The following paragraph uses the above outline as a guide for a body paragraph:

