

Grades 11–12 Playlist: Precise Claims and Logical Organization

Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1.A:

- Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences 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 be expressed in various genres 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 and knowledgeable 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 and knowledgeable claim that demonstrates a thorough understanding of a topic or text.
- create a logical organization of 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 and knowledgeable claims, writers need to understand the topic well by conducting thorough research and establishing the significance of their topic and claim for the reader. Writers can achieve this by providing context and background information surrounding the claim and by discussing counterclaims or opposing views. Providing such information shows the reader that research has been done and provides the opportunity to further argue the main claims by discounting opposing claims. Writers must also be sure that their essay exhibits a logical progression of information that takes readers through each step of the argument at a reasonable pace and reinforces the relationships between the components of the argument.

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:

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

This method offers a clear, logical progression of information while also including all components of an argument, which allows readers 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>

