

Persuasive Writing Review
(*Massive Purple Text*, pp. 308-9 & 320-7)

Argument: a series of statements designed to persuade

Claim/Opinion Statement = Thesis Statement

The claim, opinion statement, or thesis statement (they all mean the same thing) is a generalization* that clearly states the issue and the writer's opinion about it; it is the "side" of the issue for which the writer is arguing.

***Generalization:** a broad statement covering many situations; not specific details or examples

Example: Members of a jury should be allowed to take notes.

Example: Hercules had many things in common with other heroes of mythology.

Example: There should be more variety and choice in school lunches.

Example: School uniforms have a negative effect on schools and students.

Example: School uniforms have a positive effect on schools and students.

Support: Information the writer offers to prove his/her point and persuade the reader to agree. There are three types of support: logical, emotional, ethical.

Logical support appeals to a reader's sense of logic; it makes sense. This is the best way to support most claims.

Reasons: statements that explain why the writer holds an opinion.

(Example: Jury members should be able to take notes *because it will help them remember important information.*)

Evidence: facts, statistics, examples, case studies, and expert opinions (quotes) that explain why the writer holds an opinion; evidence is proof that the claim is correct.

Analogy: a comparison that explains something the reader may not understand in terms of something familiar or that shows how one situation is like another. (Example: Analyzing an argument is like being on a jury. You have to decide whether or not the evidence is convincing enough to persuade you.)

Emotional support appeals to a reader's emotions. Arguments that are based too heavily on emotional support are not very convincing; use emotional appeals sparingly. Two ways to develop an emotional appeal are with "loaded words" and anecdotes.

"Loaded words"/Connotative words: Words with implied or underlying meanings that create emotional responses in readers

Anecdotes: Personal examples or stories to illustrate a point

Ethical support appeals to a reader's sense of right and wrong (fairness, justice). It is not enough to say, "It's not fair!" To develop a good ethical argument, you have to show how your claim leads to justice and fairness for those involved.

"Loaded words" can also be useful for creating an ethical appeal.

Purpose/Intent: what the writer is trying to convince his/her audience to do or believe

Audience: the people the writer is trying to persuade; you must have a clear audience in mind before you start, and you must be sure you are appealing to the correct audience

Tone/"Voice"/Persona: the writer's personality and feelings about the subject; the "voice" the writer assumes: serious, reasonable, sarcastic, funny, etc. Writers use different tones to appeal to different audiences.

Counterclaim: the other "side" of the issue; the writer must address the counterclaim and show logically why it is invalid or why his/her own opinion statement (thesis) is better.

Sequencing: the order in which the writer's reasons are presented; many writers save their best argument (the "kicker") for last so that it will remain in the reader's mind.

Format for a Traditional Persuasive Essay *(This should look familiar!)*

- Introduction
 - Grab the reader's interest with an attention getter.
 - Give background information so that readers will understand the issue.
 - Present your claim/opinion statement/thesis that identifies the issue and states your opinion about it.
- Body
 - Provide at least three (3) reasons (one paragraph each) that support your claim/opinion statement.
 - Give at least two pieces of evidence to support each reason.
 - Address the counterclaims and show why your opinion is better.
 - Organize/Sequence the reasons and evidence logically and effectively.
 - Transitions will help you do this!
- Conclusion
 - Restate your opinion
 - Summarize your reasons
 - Include a call to action that encourages your readers to act on what they have just read.
 - End with a powerful "clincher" sentence.