



# Argumentation and Debate

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# The checking list of an argumentation

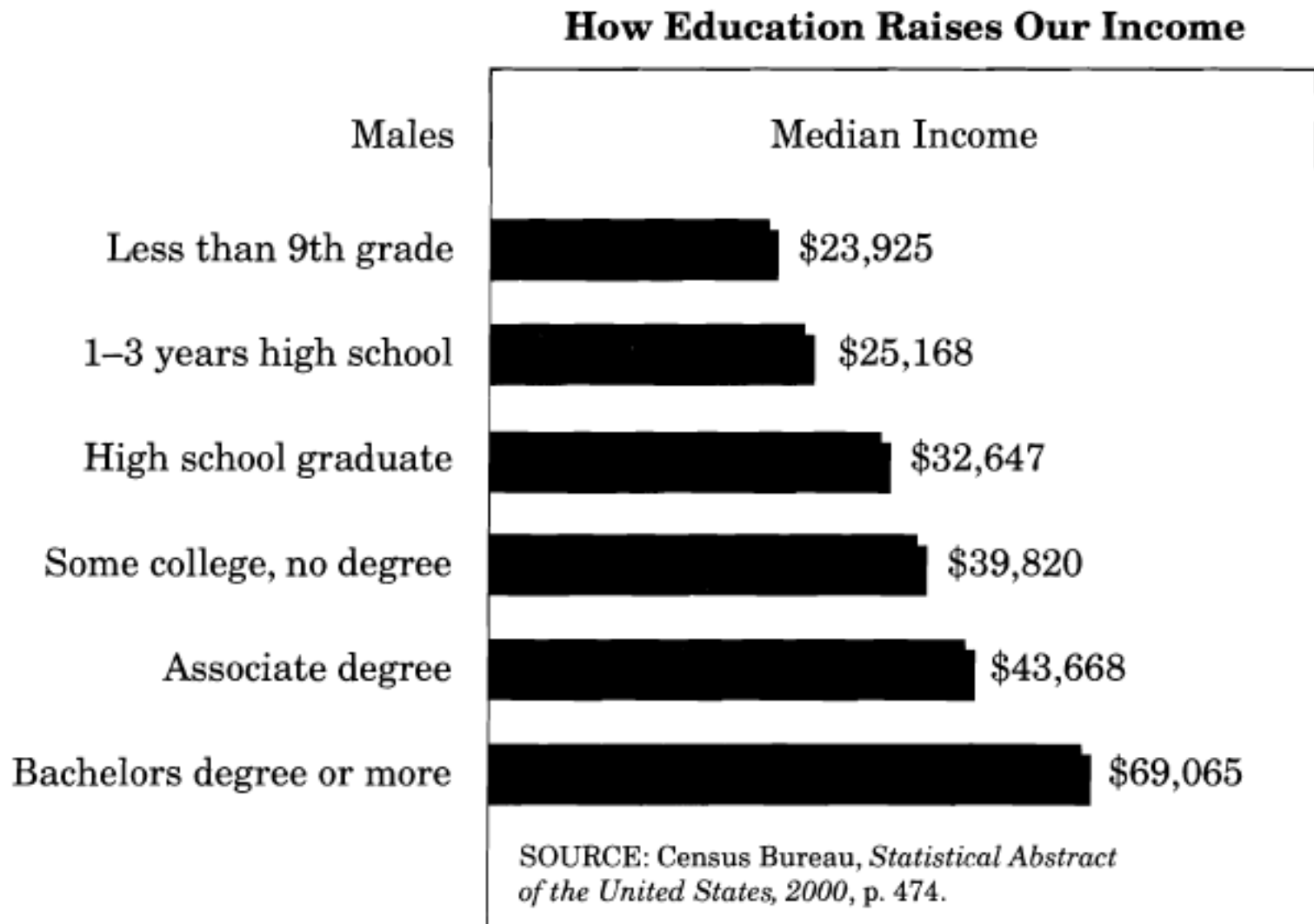
- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| (1) The <b>claim</b>        | What am I trying to prove?<br>What is my thesis?  |
| (2) The <b>support</b>      | What is the evidence(or data) for my claim?   |
| (3) The <b>warrant</b>      | What is the reasoning involved in my claim and its support? Are the parts of my argument logically connected?       |
| (4) The <b>qualifiers</b>   | How certain is my claim? When and where should I use qualifiers like mainly, mostly, probably, in many cases, etc.? |
| (5) The <b>reservations</b> | What are the counter-arguments?<br>Can I be rebutted? How, and in what way(s)?                                      |

Toulmin (1964)

# Use a variety of reliable, current evidence

- **Facts** Information held to be true
- **Statistics** A group or list of numerical facts
- **Expert testimony** Statement by experts in a relevant field
- **Charts, graphs, tables, surveys** Numerical information about a subject
- **Detailed, documented examples** Illustrations or models from life
- **Personal interviews** Meetings with people who know about the subject
- **Firsthand experience** What the writer knows about the subject
- **Observation** What the writer has observed about the subject

# Make a claim and find evidence as the following





# Which of the following is good evidence?

- (1) The big oil companies are sure out to get all they can out of the consumer.
- (2) The United States alone is discharging 130 million tons of pollutants a year into the atmosphere, from factories, heating systems, incinerators, automobiles and airplanes, power plants and public buildings.
- (3) “That some of the women’s brains looked like the men’s is true of all these sex studies,” says neuropsychologist Melissa Hines of UCLA.

—From *Newsweek*, March 27, 1995

# How to do counter arguments

## Pro

- (a) Final grades encourage students to learn by rote
- (b) Grades lead to harmful competition among students.
- (c) Low grades discourage some students.
- (d) There are adequate substitutes for final grades: (1) pass-fail system of grading; and (2) teachers' written comments on students' performance.

## Con

Many students need prodding. Final exams serve this purpose.

In our society, competition is inevitable and useful.

Those students would probably be discouraged anyway.

These are poor substitutes; they are not precise enough. Both might be a disadvantage to students competing for the sometimes limited openings in graduate schools.

—by Morton A. Miller

# Argumentation for fact

<i>Introduction</i>	State <b>problem</b>	
	State <b>thesis</b>	
	Define <b>terms</b>	
<i>Body</i>	First point + <b>evidence</b>	Use a <b>graded/climactic</b> order; e.g., from the weakest point to the strongest
	Second point + <b>evidence</b>	
	Etc.	
	Evaluate points and evidence (optional)	
<i>Conclusion</i>	Written to fit the whole argument	



# Argumentation for action

<i>Introduction</i>	State <b>need</b> for action (the problem)
	State <b>thesis</b> (proposed action)
	Define <b>terms</b>
<i>Body</i>	Give as much <b>fact</b> argument as necessary
	Give details of proposed <b>action</b> ; expand as necessary
	State why action is <b>practical</b>
	State why action is <b>beneficial</b>
	State why action is <b>better</b> than other proposed or possible actions (optional)
<i>Conclusion</i>	Written to <b>justify</b> the proposal.



# Argumentation for refutation

<i>Introduction</i>	State <b>errors</b> in opponent's thesis or main argument Admit when opponent's argument is <b>strong</b> ; this is both <b>sensible</b> and <b>honest</b>
<i>Body</i>	State <b>flaws</b> in opponent's argument; arrange <b>flaws</b> in <b>graded/climactic</b> order, leaving greatest till last State your own argument of fact or action (optional)
<i>Conclusion</i>	Written to fit the whole refutation

—By Charlene Tibbetts & A. M. Tibbetts



# Try to avoid all possible logical fallacies

Always remember that argumentation is not a type of speech using only the intuitive responses to issues or romantic thinking without supports.

It is a formal, persuasive speech that requires strong evidence to be collected through studies, researches, and a lot of reading and discussion.

Therefore, don't hesitate to clarify a doubt or a question in the course of giving an argumentative speech. And remember again, **a clear speech definitely is on the basis of a clear thinking.**



# Practice

1. Opinions of Value state that one thing is better than another.  
For example: *I think that dogs are better pets than cats.*
2. Opinions of Policy say that the government or some other type of authority such as your company management or school administration should do something.  
For example: *I feel that the government should lower taxes.*
3. Opinions of Fact say that something is true, was true, or will become true.  
For example: *The Earth is getting warmer.*

# How to give a(n) argument/claim/resolution

(Nothing) Cats are better pets than dogs.  
I'm certain that...  
I think that...  
I believe that...  
I feel that ...

I (strongly) agree that...  
Me too.  
I think so too.  
I (strongly) disagree that...  
Not me!

# How to give supports with reasons

## What are strong reasons?

Strong reasons must

- logically support the opinion.
- be specific and state the idea clearly.
- be convincing to a majority of people.

These reasons must be based on **Comparison, Contrast, Cause-and-effect**

- ( ) Cats are cleaner than dogs.
- ( ) Cats catch mice; dogs don't.
- ( ) If the government raises taxes, then all the roads can be repaired.



# Manner

You need a strong manner, which means that you must speak in a way that is interesting, not boring.

Manner includes

- Gestures

- Eye contact

- Posture

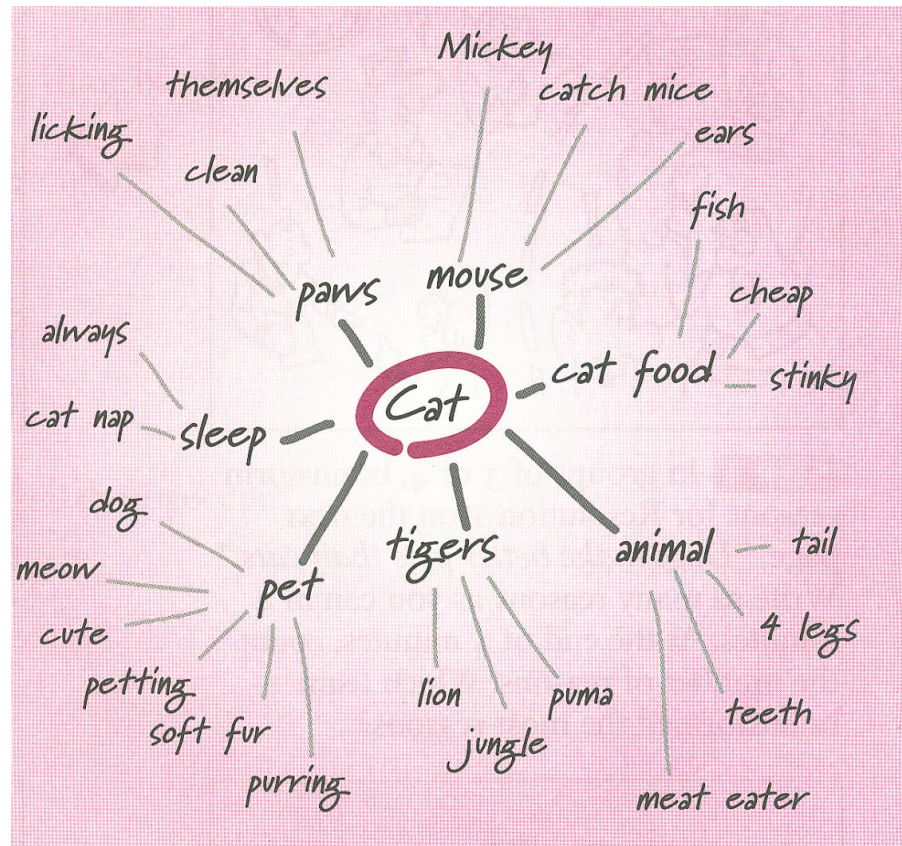
- Voice

- Humor



# Brainstorming—mind mapping

Make possible statements based on the map and then evaluate the reasoning for each statement





# Prioritizing

To put all the reasons in order (from the most important to the least important, keep one that is not as important as the first one but is an exciting one to conclude the whole claim).

Note: An important part of debate is being able to see both sides of an issue.

# Examples of how to support your opinions

Opinion ⇐ reason ⇐ supports

Example:

Opinion:	The government should lower taxes.
Reason	Lower taxes will help the economy.
Support 1	If taxes are lower, people have more money to spend. Companies will sell more and give more people jobs.
Support 2	When American lowered taxes a few years ago, people bought more things.
Support 3	According to Dr. Max Moneybags of <i>The Daily Economist</i> , lowering taxes will help business.
Support 4	Corporate sales fell by 5% when our government raised taxes last year.



# What makes good/convincing supports?

1. Explanations
2. Statistics
3. Expert opinions
4. Examples  
(social news, personal experiences, anecdotes, etc.)



# Examples of evidence

Finding evidence to support your reasons often requires researching a variety of sources, including newspapers, magazines, books, journals, and the Internet.

Example:

According to a 1990 study by Professor Toru Machigai of the University of Hawaii, 67 people convicted of capital crimes in the United States of America between 1900 and 1986 were actually innocent.



# Case Study

Opinion

Reason 1

Support and Sources (a)

(b)

(c)

Reason 2

Support and Sources (a)

(b)

(c)

Reason 3

Support and Sources (a)

(b)

(c)





# Case Study (counter)

## Counter-opinion

### Reason 1

Support and Sources (a)

(b)

(c)

### Reason 2

Support and Sources (a)

(b)

(c)

### Reason 3

Support and Sources (a)

(b)

(c)

# In presentation

Introduction

Point 1

Point 2

Point 3

Point 4

Conclusion

(Thank you.) Ladies and Gentlemen. We are debating the resolution, “A small company is better to work for than a large company.” We, on the affirmative team, strongly support this resolution. We have 4 reasons: cost, excitement, simplicity, and responsibility.





# How to refute

Stating why something is **not so** is called a refutation.

That is not a significant difference.

That's not always/necessarily true.

That's easy to solve.

That's not relevant!



# How to refute

Not true. The fact is...

Not always true. (Provides the right percentage)

Not necessarily true. (Provide the true causality)

Not relevant. (Provide the relevant reasons)

Not significant. (Provide more important/significant reasons)

Easy to solve. (Provide how it can be solved easily).



# Assignment

Download the article “” from the website and try to sort out the con and pro of the claim you make.

For example

We should not share food with the poor unconditionally.

# Finding a claim/argument

I think that \_\_\_\_\_ tastes  
better than \_\_\_\_\_.

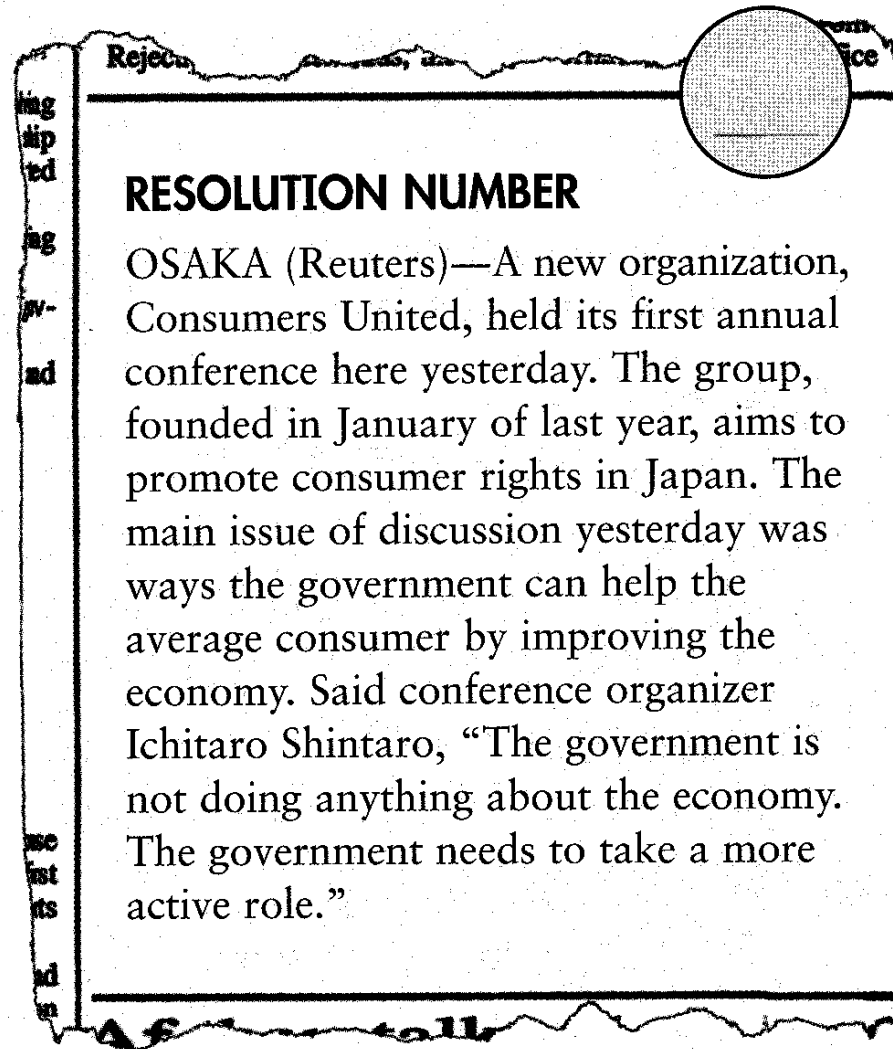
I feel that \_\_\_\_\_ should  
\_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ will become  
\_\_\_\_\_





# From Newspapers?



# Give me one reason why

Practice: Opinion groups vs. reason groups

Give me one reason why the city is better than the country.



# Put the order of importance

- a. Cats catch mice.
- b. Cats are cheaper than dogs.
- c. Cats sleep a lot.
- d. Cats have 4 legs.
- e. Cats are cute; dogs are not.
- f. Dogs are dirty, but cats are clean.
- g. Cats are quiet, dogs are noisy.

Keys: g b f a c e d



# Organizing supports

Opinion:	
Reason	
Support 1	
Support 2	
Support 3	
Support 4	



# Organizing your opinions

A. Cigarettes make the air dirty.

B. Our first point is *health*.

C. Our second point is *hospital costs*.

D. This is a big problem on train platforms, where many people ignore the *no smoking* signs and blow smoke in your face. We should ban cigarettes to get rid of this problem.

E. According to the American Cancer Society, every cigarette you smoke shortens your life by approximately 7 minutes.

F. Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen. Today the resolution is, "*Smoking should be banned.*"

G. This is because smokers get cancer and other diseases more than non-smokers. Smokers miss more work and spend more time in the hospital.

H. We have talked about *health*, *hospital costs*, and *pollution*. We have shown clearly that cigarettes should be banned. We beg to propose.

I. We, on the affirmative team, strongly support this resolution. We have 3 reasons: *health*, *hospital costs*, and *pollution*.

J. Cigarettes fill your lungs with poisonous chemicals, causing cancer and lung disease.

K. Smokers cost the country a lot of money.

L. Also, according to the Ministry of Health, the average smoker requires over \$200,000 in hospital costs over the course of their lives. The total bill for the country is over \$50,000,000 a year.

M. Furthermore, this has directly affected my life. My grandfather died of lung cancer two years ago. It was a long illness, and it caused my family much stress and sadness.

N. This is because when people smoke, they blow many poisonous gases into the air.

O. Our third point is *pollution*.

