

AP English III; Compiled by J. A. Stanford, Jr.; modified by Erin Graham

Argumentation & Persuasion

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Rhetorical Terminology

- **Analogy**- comparison between 2 things to show how they are alike
- **Antithesis**- opposing or contrasting statements accentuated by their parallel structure
- **Assertion**- a statement made by a writer for consideration as true
- **Challenge / refute / dispute**- to argue against/ to prove wrong, based on evidence
- **Deduction**- Inference by reasoning from the general to the specific
- **Defend**- to take a stand in support of something
- **Ethos (ethical appeal)**- Convincing the audience of your credibility
- **Evidence**- support for an author's claim

Rhetorical Terminology Cont'd

- **Fallacy**- A statement which may appear to be an argument, but is not logical & could be misleading
- **Induction**- Reasoning that involves making a generalization based on numerous facts
- **Logos (logical appeal)**- Convincing your audience based on reasoning
- **Pathos (emotional appeal)**- Convincing your audience based on emotion
- **Position**- the opinion of the writer; the stance he/she takes on an issue
- **Qualify**- to alter or modify according to available evidence; qualifying words include *sometimes, many, most, often, few, etc.*
- **Rebuttal**- final opposition to an assertion; refute
- **Rhetoric**- using spoken or written communication to persuade; also used as a broad term for non-fiction

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Introduction to Rhetoric

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Why are we doing this?

"Students too often use faulty reasoning, unclear about what they want to say or how they reach their conclusions. Often, they decide quickly how they "feel" about an issue and then respond on a kind of visceral level. Their reasoning becomes muddled, and, when pressed, they resort to the justification, "Because that's what I believe."

- College Board, A Guide for Advanced Placement English Vertical Teams

Rhetoric

- **Rhetorical question** = serves the purpose of raising a topic, and is not a genuine question
- **Rhetoric** = a Classical oratory skill
- Has come to imply a series of "devices" that generate reader or listener buy-in to an argument.

Style vs. Rhetoric

Style includes **purpose, tone, diction** (devices, level, type), **syntax**, and **rhetoric**—but rhetoric only matters if the author is making an argument.

Rhetoric includes **style**, because if the author isn't making decisions regarding purpose, tone, diction, and syntax, the rhetoric is ineffective.

Aristotle



Ethos: **an ethical appeal** = the writer must convince his audience of his good character

E



Pathos: **an emotional appeal** = the writer offers nothing but simple responses to a complex problem, relying on stereotyping and emotion in place of facts or reason

P



Logos: **a logical appeal** = the writer must construct an argument using a thesis supported by evidence

L

Inductive vs. Deductive Reasoning

Logos

Inductive reasoning

- moves from the particular to the general, from evidence to a generalization or theory
- the scientific method

Logos

Deductive reasoning

- moves from the general to the particular
- Major premise "If..."
- Minor premise(s) "And if..."
- Conclusion "Then..."

Inductive vs. Deductive Reasoning

Inductive reasoning

- A child burns herself 3 times she touches a stove ► She decides that stoves burn

Deductive reasoning Syllogism

- *If* stoves burn
- *And if* this new thing is a stove
- *Then* this new thing will burn me

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Argumentation

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Argumentation vs. Persuasion

- **Persuasion** is designed to create a want or motivate an action.
 - It relies heavily on appeals to emotion, and often uses the same linguistic resources as poetry to achieve its end: vivid images, careful control of connotations, repetition, rhythm, even rhyme

Argumentation vs. Persuasion

- *Argumentation* clarifies a topic rather than moving a reader.
 - Its function is to make a reader *see* things from a particular way rather than make the reader *do* something.
 - It's a more rational skill than persuasion.

Argumentation vs. Persuasion

- Where *persuasion* seeks to put a mind to sleep, so that its appeal to emotion will be effective, *argumentation* aims to awaken thought by appealing to reason.

Argumentation

- The core of the argument is an *assertion* or proposition, a debatable claim about the subject.
 - The assertion may *defend* or *challenge* a position, value, or belief; suggest a solution; recommend a change in policy; *et cetera*.
 - Opposing arguments are raised, and then dispensed with.

An argumentative thesis

The statement must (1) present a position about which people may disagree; (2) offer an opportunity to argue for one possible solution (from at least two)



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Because seniors are responsible enough to make their own decisions, they should be allowed to decide whether or not to have off-campus lunch.

The parts of the argument

Central claim or assertion

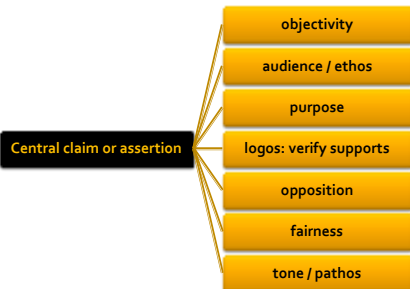
The parts of the argument are organized into a clear, logical structure.

The claim may *defend* or *challenge* a position, value, or belief; suggest a solution; recommend a change in policy; etc.

The claim is broken down into subclaims, each supported by evidence (body paragraphs).

Opposing arguments are raised, and then dispensed with (*qualification*).

The strategies of the argument



The Classical system of organization

The introduction

- Seizes the reader's attention
- Establishes common ground
- Demonstrates fairness
- Establishes ethos
- States thesis

Background

Lines of Argument

- Presented in order of importance, or strength

Alternative arguments

- Advantages and disadvantages

Conclusion

- Implications
- Make strong ethical or emotional appeal
- Call to action

Stevenson example

- Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson's veto of state Senate Bill No. 93, entitled "An Act to Provide Protection to Insectivorous Birds by Restraining Cats"
 - What are Stevenson's lines of argument?
 - How are they arranged?
 - Where does he qualify?
 - What is his conclusion, and how effective is it?

Rhetorical Devices

- Tone
- Attitude
- Diction
- Detail
- Point of View
- Organization
- Irony
- Imagery
- Metaphor, simile & other figurative language
- Supports / evidence
- Invocation
- Syntax (including parallel structure, chiasmus, etc.)
- Repetition
- Humor
- Satire
- Analysis

**But it all begins with
PURPOSE.**

Appropriate Evidence

- Inappropriate evidence
 - Assertions Fine for Thesis, Topic Sentences, Intro, Conclusion
 - Pathos Fine for Thesis, Topic Sentences, Intro, Conclusion
 - Ethos (example: aphorisms) Fine for Intro, Conclusion
 - Logical fallacies, including:
 - Unreliable statistics
 - Invalid statistics
 - Weasel words

Appropriate Evidence

- Weak evidence
 - Vague or overgeneralized facts
 - Pop culture references

Appropriate Evidence

- Strong evidence: Use the **USA ARR** test.
 - *Unified*
 - *Specific*
 - *Accurate*
 - *Adequate*
 - *Relevant*
 - *Representative*
- Reject evidence failing any of these 6 standards.

Appropriate Evidence

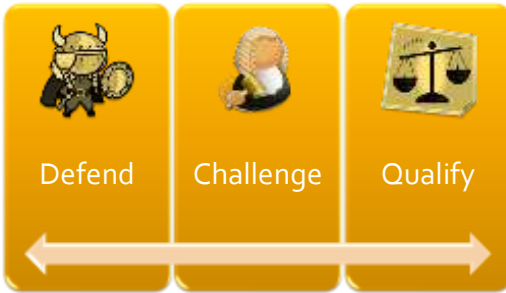
- Strong evidence
 - Current events (local, municipal, state, national, global)
 - Historical events
 - Literature (and other academic texts)
 - Analogies & hypotheticals
 - Personal anecdotes (if germane to the prompt)

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Responding to an Assertion

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The prompt



Students do it, but they shouldn't

- Rail against everything
- Give unsupported opinions (overgeneralize)
- Supply inappropriate evidence
- Use low levels of diction
- Use non-sequiturs
- Indulge in self-referential commentary

Students don't do it, but they should:

- Plan the essay
- Leave space for the introduction and do it last
- Take a stand and move ahead quickly
- Complete a thought before moving on
- Qualify (show both sides)
- Use active verbs and vary sentence structure

When asked to respond to an assertion:



When planning a response:



"It is perilous to make a chasm in human affections; not that they gape so long and wide, but so quickly close again." – Nathaniel Hawthorne... **Challenge, defend, or qualify.**

Summarize or paraphrase the issue.

perilous = *dangerous*
 make a chasm = *denotes a deep crack in the earth's surface (connotation: a wide divergence of feelings, sentiments, etc.)*
 human affections = *fond or tender feelings (friendships... not romantic relationships)*
 they = *antecedent is "affections" not "chasm"*
 gape = *to open the mouth wide, as in yawning or hunger; to stare with the mouth open*
 close = *shut*
 So it does not mean: You shouldn't make up quickly after a fight.
 It means: It is dangerous to hurt a friend's feelings, not that it creates such a wide separation, but that the relationship may stop altogether.
 So the issue is: Metaphors for hurt feelings: chasm, gape, things that close

"It is perilous to make a chasm in human affections; not that they gape so long and wide, but so quickly close again." – Nathaniel Hawthorne... *Challenge, defend, or qualify.*

Pros / Defend

- People of all ages avoid confrontation rather than work for a solution
- Don't expect forgiveness
- Politeness is an essential part of professionalism

Cons / Challenge

- Honesty should not be sacrificed merely for courtesy
- Conflicts will happen; people should forgive
- Directness is an essential part of leadership

"It is perilous to make a chasm in human affections; not that they gape so long and wide, but so quickly close again." – Nathaniel Hawthorne... *Challenge, defend, or qualify.*

Summarize or paraphrase the issue.

List the pros (defend) and cons (challenge).

Assign appropriate evidence for both.

Decide to defend or challenge.

Organize the evidence.

Appropriate Evidence

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Appropriate Evidence

- Weak evidence
 - Vague or overgeneralized facts
 - Pop culture references
 - Anything your audience has seen or heard over and over again

Appropriate Evidence

- Strong evidence: Use the **USA ARR** test.
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Appropriate Evidence

- Strong evidence
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Errors are essential. (Sample essay)

"The annals of scientific discovery are full of errors that opened new worlds: Bell was working on an apparatus to aid the deaf when he invented the telephone; Edison was tinkering with the telephone when he invented the phonograph. If a man can keep alert and imaginative, an error is a possibility, a chance at something new; to him, wandering and wondering are part of the same process, and he is most mistaken, most in error, whenever he quits exploring..."

Errors are essential. (Sample essay)

"Biochemists hold that evolution proceeds by random genetic changes—errors—and that each living thing is an experiment within the continuum of trial and error and temporary success. In nature, correct means harmony. Hesse writes, 'I am an experiment on the part of nature, a gamble within the unknown, perhaps for a new purpose, perhaps for nothing, and my only task is to allow this game on the part of the primeval depths to take its course, to feel its will within me and make it wholly mine.'" Whitman said it too: "A man is a summons and a challenge."
- Blue Highways by William Least Heat Moon

"It is perilous to make a chasm in human affections; not that they gape so long and wide, but so quickly close again." – Nathaniel Hawthorne... **Challenge, defend, or qualify.**

Pros / Defend

- People of all ages avoid confrontation rather than work for a solution
 - Hypothetical dinner party guests (Vegans), *The Great Gatsby*
- Don't expect forgiveness
 - *The West Bank, Gospel*
- Politeness is an essential part of professionalism
 - Cheney to Leahy on Senate floor

Assign appropriate evidence for both.

Cons / Challenge

- Honesty should not be sacrificed merely for courtesy
 - Hypothetical Marines in Iraq
- Conflicts will happen; people should forgive
 - Ann Coulter "F" word, France vs. Germany in World War I, Gospel
- Directness is an essential part of leadership
 - JFK "Ask not..."

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When writing a response

Introduction: Define and explain the importance of the assertion.

Thesis = Defend or Challenge.

Make your case in the form of body paragraphs.

Conclusion: *Qualify* and leave the reader with something to think about.

High scoring essays

- Don't ignore any part of the assertion.
- Organize your body paragraphs according to each **level of meaning** discovered about the assertion while brainstorming.
- Varied sources of evidence
- Qualify effectively

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Qualification

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How to Qualify

A three sentence formula for qualification:

Qualify

- It is true that
- Certainly
- Admittedly
- Of course
- Obviously

Reel it in

- However
- But
- On the other hand
- Nevertheless
- On the contrary

Punch 'em

- Therefore
- In short
- So
- As a result
- Thus

How to Qualify

Good paragraph, right?

NO

"Admittedly, many books and movies contain materials which are unsuited to all audiences that have access to them. Most parents would not want their seven-year-old to watch films that promote violence and hatred. They have the right to decide what is right or wrong for their children. On the other hand, they don't have the right to censor what I might want for my child. If a teacher wants a class to watch a certain film, then any parent may opt out for his/her child. Therefore, books and movies should not be banned, and the general public can be allowed to follow its own moral standards."

How to Qualify

"Admittedly, many books, films, and Internet sites contain violent or sexual content unsuited to the young audiences able to access them. A typical parent would not want her seven-year-old to watch *Caligula* or visit racist Aryan web sites. On the other hand, that same parent should not have the right to decide what my child watches. If my child's social science teacher wants the class to watch a clip from *Schindler's List*, then any parent may opt out. Censorship cannot prevent irresponsible parenting; it can only chill free speech."
