Analyzing an Argument

What is the author’s argument?
What claims are given to support this argument?
What evidence is given to support the claims?
Learning Targets for This Lesson
Learning Targets for This Lesson

LT 5: I can identify the argument, specific claims, and evidence in a text.
Analyzing an Argument

What is an “argument”?

• Analyzing an argument requires you to find the 3 parts of an argument:
  • the ARGUMENT
  • the CLAIMS
  • the EVIDENCE
Analyzing an Argument

What is an “argument”?

- The author’s argument is his/her POSITION on the issue being discussed--FOR or AGAINST.
  - EX: writing an article in support of recycling, writing a letter to Mr. Bushelman in support of new SWORD Rewards

- Basically, this is the author’s THESIS STATEMENT
Analyzing an Argument

Step #1: Determine the author’s argument.

1. To find the argument, first **look at the TITLE** of the text. Titles usually indicate the writer’s purpose/position. Some argument writers may state the argument in the title and **NOT** state it anywhere else.

2. If you can’t find it in the TITLE, **look in the INTRODUCTION** paragraph (usually near the end). *Note: sophisticated writers sometimes do not state their argument until the end.*

3. If you can’t find it in the INTRODUCTION, **look in the CONCLUSION** paragraph.
Analyzing an Argument

Step #1: Determine the author’s argument.

- Look at your mentor texts #1: “Chocolate Milk Nutrition Information.”

- Follow the steps to find the author’s argument: look at the title, look at the introduction, and, if necessary, look at the conclusion.

- When you have located the author’s argument, underline the ONE sentence that gives the author’s position about chocolate milk in schools with your RED/ORANGE colored pencil. Label it with an A for “argument.”
Step #1: Determine the author’s argument.

In this text, the argument can be found in the INTRODUCTION paragraph.

While you might not think of chocolate milk as your healthiest beverage option, it has a place in a balanced diet. Drinking chocolate milk after your workouts might offer benefits, as Dr. John Ivy, Ph.D., explains in an interview with the University of Texas, that drinking chocolate milk as a post-workout snack helps you hold onto muscle and burn fat. Chocolate milk also offers other health benefits, thanks to its nutrient content, but drink it in moderation, because it contains added sugar.
Analyzing an Argument

What are “claims” in an argument writing?

- An author’s **ARGUMENT** is supported by a 3-4 **CLAIMS** (REASONS) to prove the argument as true.

- **Claims** are the GENERAL reasons WHY or HOW an argument is right/true/deserving of support (they are not super-specific).

- Claims are usually conclusions the author has drawn about why or how their argument is correct.

  - **EX:** Everyone should recycle because it reduces the amount of trash that sits in landfills.
Analyzing an Argument

Step #2: Determine the argument’s claims.

- Generally, each claim is addressed in a different body paragraph of the text. If there are 4 body paragraphs, there are 4 different claims. If there are 3 body paragraphs, there are 3 different claims.

- To find a claim, look for the MAIN IDEA SENTENCE of each body paragraph.

- Main idea sentences can be found at the beginning, middle, or end of each body paragraph OR may be unstated, so it may have to be INFERRED (you may have to put it in your own words rather than copy word-for-word from the text). **Ask yourself, “What is this entire paragraph about?”**

- If an article uses SUBHEADINGS, you can use those to guide you toward each CLAIM. Subheadings will reveal a general subject that can help you determine the claim.
Analyzing an Argument

Step #2: Determine the argument’s claims.

- Look at your mentor text.
- Read the body paragraphs.
- Follow the steps on your reference sheet to find the CLAIMS that support the author’s ARGUMENT.
- With your BLUE colored pencil, find each CLAIM. Remember that main idea sentences can be found at the beginning, middle, or end of the paragraph OR may be unstated--you may have to write it in. If you have to write it in, write it with your pencil/pen and then underline it in blue. Label each CLAIM with a “C.”
Subheading: “The Nutrition Basics”

Each cup of chocolate milk boosts your energy intake by 190 calories, and provides roughly 10 percent of your daily caloric intake in a 2,000-calorie diet. Most of chocolate milk's calories come from its 4.8 grams of fat and 30 grams of carbohydrates, which provide energy to help you get through the day. Chocolate milk also offers 7.5 grams of protein per serving. This protein helps your body maintain and repair muscle tissue, and it also supports hormone and enzyme production. Getting enough protein in your diet also nourishes other tissues, including your eyes and skin.

Claim: **Chocolate milk has several nutritional benefits.** (This one had to be inferred).
Subheading: “Bone-Building Minerals”

The minerals found in chocolate milk nourish your skeleton. Each serving of chocolate milk provides 272 milligrams of calcium, or 27 percent of the recommended daily intake. Calcium becomes incorporated into the mineral tissue that makes up your bones, and a calcium-rich diet fights bone-related diseases, such as osteoporosis. The copper found in chocolate milk helps you make collagen, a protein found in abundance in bone tissue. Drinking a cup of chocolate milk boosts your copper intake by 188 micrograms, or 21 percent of the recommended daily intake.
Subheading: "Beneficial Vitamins"

Drink chocolate milk and you'll also consume more vitamin D and riboflavin, which is also called vitamin B-2. Vitamin D supports skeletal health, because it helps your body absorb and use calcium. It also benefits your cardiovascular health by controlling your blood pressure, helping to keep it in a healthy range. A serving of chocolate milk offers 122 international units of vitamin D, or 20 percent of the recommended daily intake. The riboflavin found in chocolate milk helps you metabolize nutrients and produce energy, and it also helps your liver detoxify your body. A serving of chocolate milk boasts 0.46 milligram of riboflavin, which is 42 percent and 35 percent of the recommended daily intake for women and men, respectively.
Subheading: “Nutritional Concerns”

Drink chocolate milk in moderation to maintain your health; each serving contains 4 teaspoons of added sugar, which is two-thirds of the recommended daily added sugar limit for women and 44 percent for men, according to guidelines published by the Harvard School of Public Health. If you drink several servings of chocolate milk daily, you'll easily exceed your added sugar allotment, even discounting the added sugar in other foods in your diet. Drinks sweetened with sugar contribute to obesity, and can also be bad for your health, increasing your risk of diabetes.
Clockwork

• Choose one of the following to explain:
  (Use the steps we discussed)

• How do you find the argument?

• How do you find the claims?

• How do you find the evidence?
Analyzing an Argument

What is “evidence” in argument writing?

• Each of the author’s **CLAIMS** are supported by **SEVERAL** pieces of **EVIDENCE** to prove that the claims are logical and true.

• **Evidence** = the specific details that support (prove) the claim

• Evidence can come in many forms: comparisons, contrasts, causes, effects, statistics, direct quotes from experts, rhetorical questions, analogies, personal experiences, anecdotes, examples
Analyzing an Argument

Step 3: Determine the evidence that supports the author’s claims.

- To find evidence, look for the supporting details in each paragraph that support the **claims** (main ideas).

- The evidence will be very specific facts and statements that further explain the claims.
Analyzing an Argument

Step #3: Determine the evidence that supports the claims.

• Look at your mentor text.

• Skim through the body paragraphs that you’ve already read, looking for the supporting details for each claim.

• With your GREEN colored pencil, underline the sentences in each body paragraph that contain EVIDENCE that supports the claim (blue). Remember that evidence will be specific, not general.

• Label EVIDENCE with an “E.”
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What We’ve Learned.....

• Put yourself into groups of 4. If there is an odd number, we will reconfigure.

• Order yourselves by birthday.

• When I say “GO,” the OLDEST person in the group will teach the group how to find the ARGUMENT in an argument writing.

• The SECOND OLDEST person in the group will teach the group how to find the CLAIMS in an argument.

• The THIRD OLDEST person in the group will teach the group how to find the EVIDENCE in an argument.

• The YOUNGEST person in the group will teach the group the DIFFERENCE between CLAIMS and EVIDENCE.
Analyzing an Argument
ON YOUR OWN!

• Look at the text.

• Use all of the processes we just practiced and reviewed to find the **ARGUMENT**, **CLAIMS**, and **EVIDENCE** of this article. Underline them with the appropriate colors and write appropriate labels beside them.
Analyzing an Argument
ON YOUR OWN!

• Look at mentor text #2: “Chocolate Milk: More Harmful than Healthful.”

• Use all of the processes we just practiced and reviewed to find the ARGUMENT, CLAIMS, and EVIDENCE of this article. Underline them with the appropriate colors and write appropriate labels beside them.