

Argument

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Course: English 84 ~ Developmental Reading and Writing

Topic: Interpreting Argumentation for Quality

Content type: Content: A conceptual understanding of the elements of argumentation

Essential question: If you were trying to persuade your boss to give you a raise, what elements would you need to make your argument relevant and adequate?

Learning Outcome: Given two written arguments, where one side has better support, the students will circle which side of the controversy has the most relevant and adequate support. In writing, they will give three reasons explaining their choice. They will use the terms adequate and relevant in their explanations.

<p>Phase I: Introduction <i>Contextualize new content and activate prior knowledge.</i></p>	<p>Strategy to contextualize new content and activate prior knowledge</p> <p>Engage students by asking how many of them have ever been in an argument. Involve them by asking them what usually happens. Common responses include: yelling, saying mean things, not talking to each other, throwing/breaking objects, hurt feelings, fist fights, etc. Ask if any of them have started to argue</p>
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	<p>about one thing, and before they knew it, they were arguing about something that happened in the past and has nothing to do with the argument at hand. Ask how effective these emotionally charged arguments are and what could be done to make their arguments more effective. Discuss how lawyers argue a point and what they use to help them (evidence). Segue into the lesson from here, reminding them that when we argue, we are trying to convince the other person that our point (of view) is correct. We are trying to persuade them to think the way we think and not send them away angry. Discuss how a good argument needs to have the emotional backdrop removed and be validated with relevant and adequate support. Also engage the student with the idea that this is also something they can use in life and not just for tests or persuasive essays.</p>	
<p>Phase II: Presentation a. Explain/demonstrate each new content element to be learned. b. Provide sufficient examples.</p>	<p>Point 1</p>	<p>a. Three key elements to argumentation are: recognizing the point, deciding if the support is</p>

<p>c. Insert “Quick-Thinks” that function both as checks for understanding and as brief student engagement tasks.</p>	<p>relevant, and deciding if the support is adequate. Explain the meanings of relevant & adequate, putting both the words and definitions on the white board. Use a different color for each. Scaffold the concept of point/support to Main Ideas and Supporting Details learned earlier in the semester.</p> <p>b. Using the “Quick-Think” below (Quick-Thinks are quick examples that break up the lesson, engage the student, and allow a moment to check for understanding before moving ahead in the lesson) of both point and support, to model how to distinguish between the two. State a point, give one to three examples of support, and open discussion as to whether or not these points are adequate and relevant. (Langan, Pg 385-386) 1. _____ A. You should learn how to budget your money. _____ B. You’re always borrowing money from</p>
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	<p>me .</p> <p>(Have the students mark which answer they believe is correct; explain that "A" is the point, showing that the word "should" helps you choose "A" and that "B" is the "reason" why. Remind students that supporting details include <i>reasons</i>. Be sure to let them know that the word "should" is an excellent clue word, but it doesn't necessarily mean that <i>every</i> time they see it, they are looking at the point.</p> <p>c. To have some more guided practice, do another "Quick-Think" with the class. This time use an example with more complex sentences and choices. Remind students to look for a general vs. specific statement. Read this out loud to students so that they remain engaged and the auditory learners are addressed. Have them choose their answers and then turn to their neighbor to compare what they chose before asking for a</p>
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	<p>student to give the answer and volunteer information on why they chose it. (Langan, Pg 387)</p> <p>9. _____ A. According to some medieval philosophers, laughing dishonored humans because it made them look like monkeys.</p> <p>_____ B. Some medieval theologians believed that all laughing mocked God's creation and therefore endangered the human soul.</p> <p>_____ C. Many people objected to comedy, believing that laughing encouraged drunkenness and improper behavior.</p> <p>_____ D. In the Middle Ages, many people considered laughing harmful.</p> <p>Explain that "D" is the point; students should be able to point out that "D" is more general because all the other choices explain <i>why</i> laughing was considered harmful. Then students will do a Quick-Think on their own. (Langan, Pg. 385)</p>
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	<p>2. _____ A. Our town ought to require all residents to recycle bottles and cans.</p> <p>_____ B. The more the town recycles the less money it must pay for garbage removal.</p> <p>Chances are that your class will be split on this one. They are both good points, but a student who chose the right answer should be able to emphasize the fact that the words "ought to" show that a change in all residents is the point the author is trying to make. Saving money is one of the <i>reasons why</i> this should happen. Revisit prior knowledge by putting emphasis on the fact that <i>reasons</i> indicate support! Always take the time for an independent practice opportunity!</p>
	<p>Point 2 a. Do several independent Quick-Thinks (Langan, #'s 3-6, pgs 385-386) to check for understanding. Have students distinguish the difference between the support and the point, given the following</p>

	<p>examples. So they are ready to participate, be sure to ask them to be able to express the reason why they chose their answers.</p> <p>b. (Langan, Pg. 385)</p> <p>3. _____ A. Use olive oil on your bread instead of butter, which can clog arteries.</p> <p>_____ B. You can eat a healthy diet in restaurants with a little care.</p> <p>_____ C. You can order sautéed or steamed dishes instead of fatty, high-cholesterol fried foods.</p> <p>(Langan, Pg. 386)</p> <p>4. _____ A. A large new park will benefit the community.</p> <p>_____ B. Joggers who risk accidents by running along the roadside will be able to run in the park.</p> <p>_____ C. Kids who play ball in the streets can play in a safer place.</p> <p>_____ D. A park provides good opportunities for people to meet their</p>
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	<p>neighbors.</p> <p>5. _____ A. Our mail carrier often puts our mail in someone else's mailbox.</p> <p>_____ B. When our mail carrier delivers a package, he leaves it on our front stoop without ringing the doorbell to see if we're home.</p> <p>_____ C. Our mail carrier is careless about delivering mail.</p> <p>_____ D. After delivering our mail, the carrier often leaves our mailbox partially open.</p> <p>6. _____ A. Mass transportation helps people who can't afford a car.</p> <p>_____ B. Increased use of mass transportation would reduce air pollution from cars.</p> <p>_____ C. The government should fund more mass transportation.</p> <p>_____ D. Mass transportation is more energy-efficient than automobile use.</p>
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		<p>Instructor walks the room to make sure the students are on task.</p>
		<p>c. Have students compare answers with partners, giving the opportunity to verbally express their answers. Ask if any disagreed, discuss the differences, and visually and verbally check for understanding. "B" is the point of the first one. Explain how the other two are support because they are <i>examples</i> of making choices that are healthy. Remind students that <i>examples</i> indicate supporting details; then ask students for answers and explanations on the last three. (Answers are A, C, and C)</p>
	<p>Point 3</p>	<p>a. Revisit the meaning of relevant and explain how important understanding this concept is for critical thinking, comprehension, and their own writing (all upcoming skills they'll need throughout college and life)</p> <p>b. Check for understanding with group</p>

	<p>practice (2 or 3 students per group) on a point with 3 relevant details and 3 irrelevant details.</p> <p>(Langan, Pg. 388)</p> <p>See if you can check the numbers of the three relevant statements of support.</p> <p>Point: Pigs make good pets.</p> <p>___ 1. When a pig weighs over 180 pounds, it is called a hog.</p> <p>___ 2. Pigs are friendly and intelligent.</p> <p>___ 3. In 1965, a pig named "Old Faithful" gave birth to thirty-six piglets in one litter.</p> <p>___ 4. Pigs are easily housebroken.</p> <p>___ 5. Pigs, like people, can get sunburn.</p> <p>___ 6. Pigs can be taught to walk on a leash.</p> <p>Have the students choose those that are relevant.</p> <p>~Answers are 2, 4, and 6~</p>
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	<p>Have the students discuss why the others don't work.</p> <p>c. Go on to an independent practice using the same method of statements that "logically" support the point. Partner share or class share. (Langan, Pg. 390)</p> <p>4. Point: The flu epidemic of 1918 was horrendous.</p> <p>A. Worldwide, 40 million people died of the 1918 flu—more than the number killed in World War I.</p> <p>B. Because of the flu epidemic, in 1918 many public events, including funerals, were restricted or canceled, and bodies piled up in city morgues.</p> <p>C. The flu strain that swept the world in 1918 was so severe that people would show the first symptoms in the morning and be dead by nightfall.</p> <p>D. Bubonic plague,</p>
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	<p>another terrible disease, killed about 70,000 people in London between 1664 and 1666.</p> <p>E. An ordinary flu usually results in fever, coughing, and headache for three or four days.</p> <p>F. A contagious disease that covers a large part of the world is properly called a "pandemic."</p> <p>Answers are A, B, and C (students discuss why others are not relevant)</p>
	<p>Point 4</p> <p>a. Note: If someone can say "Who cares?" or "What difference does that make?" then the support is irrelevant.</p> <p>b. Moving on to a paragraph, have students find the sentence that is irrelevant support in a paragraph. (Langan, Pg. 391)</p> <p>Read the paragraph that follows and see if you can find the statement</p>

	<p>that does not support the point of the argument.</p> <p>1When you go to college, you should live off campus. 2In a rented apartment you can enjoy the privacy and convenience of your own kitchen and bathroom. 3If you live off campus, getting to and from classes will take more time. 4However, off-campus apartments give you more living space than a dormitory room for the same price or less. 5An off-campus apartment is usually quieter than a dorm. 6It also gives you a better chance to develop a sense of the larger community, the town or city in which your college is located.</p> <p>This will revisit Main Idea and Supporting Details within the paragraph setting and help to eliminate unnecessary (irrelevant) support in writing.</p>
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		<p>c. Compare answers as a class. The answer is sentence 3.</p>
	<p>Point 5</p>	<p>a. Define adequate support as substantial enough to prove the point, not jumping to conclusions.</p> <p>b. Check for understanding: Opposite of the first exercise of finding relevant support, give three supporting details and ask the student to chose the point that is adequately supported (out of 3 or 4). (Langan, Pg. 393)</p> <p>Choose the one point that you think is adequately supported, and put a check mark beside it.</p> <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lately Valerie has looked thinner and paler than usual. • She used to go to all the parties, but now she stays home in the evenings. • At work, she has been seen crying in the ladies' room. <p>Which point is</p>

	<p>adequately supported by all the evidence above?</p> <p>___ A. Valerie is seriously ill. ___ B. Something is troubling Valerie. ___ C. Valerie has broken up with her boyfriend. ___ D. Valerie owes a great deal of money.</p> <p>Compare answers as a class and discuss why the other choices cannot be the point. The answer is "B".</p> <p>c. Repeat finding the point that is adequately supported with the example below.</p> <p>(Langan, Pg. 394)</p> <p>For each group, read the three items of support (the evidence). Then check the one point that is adequately supported by that evidence.</p> <p>Group 1</p> <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In one study, fifteen
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	<p>of the thirty women who listened to music during childbirth labor had no need for anesthesia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies indicate that the body produces pain-reducing hormones when a person listens to enjoyable music. • Patients who had suffered a stroke gained lasting benefits after listening for three weeks to recorded music. <p>Point: Which of the following conclusions is best supported by all the evidence above?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A. Music can have a role in curing diseases of all types.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B. Music can be a helpful tool in dealing with some physical problems.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C. Music should be a resource in every medical office.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D. Music can also have negative effects on our physical well-being.</p> <p>Instructor does a visual check or uses clickers to check for understanding.</p>
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		<p>The answer is B. Discuss why others were not chosen.</p>
	<p>Point 6</p>	<p>a. Revisit the importance of supporting argument, especially in textbook writing.</p> <p>b. Reemphasize how these well-developed ideas are supported by relevant and adequate support including: experiments, surveys, studies, reasons, and examples. (Langan)</p> <p>c. Explain to them that they now have the background knowledge to form a high quality argument (ie. The Essential Question). Quickly review the 3 elements: Point, Adequate Support, and Relevant Support by asking the class to explain them (discussion/volunteers, note on board)</p>
<p>Phase III: Independent Practice <i>Students practice in order to transfer their understanding to a new context. (Matches Learning Outcome.)</i></p>		<p>Independent practice task: Given two written arguments, where one side has better support, the students will circle which argument has the most relevant and adequate support. In writing, they will give three reasons</p>

	<p>explaining their choice. (see Pop Quiz handout below)</p> <p>NOTE: If the instructor chooses to use an online test, or another assessment from the textbook, this can be put on the overhead and used for a class discussion. I tried it that way in one class, and it was a lively discussion! Students pointed out the differences in support from both arguments and weaker and stronger support within each of the arguments as well.</p>
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(Handout) Pop Quiz: In the following two letters, a teenager is arguing why he or she should have a new cell phone. Circle the stronger argument. Back up your choice by writing three reasons why you chose your paragraph using the words **adequate** and **relevant** in your responses Dear Mom,
Dear Mom,

I want a cell phone for Christmas. All of my friends have cell phones and I think I should have one too. I'm the only one in the whole school who doesn't have one. How can you expect me to fit in with the rest of the kids if I don't have a cell phone? Besides that, remember when I helped you out with all that office work? That should be worth at least the cost of a new phone! Do you remember the time I got stuck at the park and had to use Chris's phone to call you to come and get us? It was so embarrassing that I didn't have my own phone. I promise I'll take care of it!

Love,
Your child

Reason #1:

Reason #2:

Reason #3:

I want a cell phone for Christmas. Having a cell phone will make it so that I can always be in touch with my family and you'd be able to contact me at any given time. It is an important safety device in today's world. Also, I could have everyone's phone number handy in case of an emergency. It will also teach me responsibility. If you don't get insurance on it, and I lose or damage it, the money can come out of my savings. It is also always good to have a camera on hand. You never know when I'll need that, especially now that I'm driving.

Love,
Your child

(See assessment rubric at the end of this lesson plan)



<p>Phase IV: Consolidation <i>Students answer the Essential Question posed at start of lesson.</i></p>	<p>Strategy for answering the essential question: Students will map (<i>map</i>: a visual diagram of an outline with a hierarchy of the Main Idea, Major Supporting Details, and Minor Supporting Details ~ see the Langan textbook, pages 100-102) a paragraph with the supporting details (elements) that they would need to persuade their boss to give them a raise, making sure their supporting details are both relevant and adequate? Option: Do this on the Inspiration program in the computer lab to connect their learning to their lab work!</p>
<p>Materials Needed</p>	<p>Phase 1: White board and three different colored markers for highlighting key elements that come up in conversation.</p> <p>Phase 2: White board and three different colored markers for highlighting key elements that come up in conversation. 10 Steps Textbook or similar overhead examples (overhead & marker) or Smart Classroom Viewer or Handouts</p> <p>Phase 3: (POP QUIZ) Handouts (or put on the overhead), one page of two arguments side by side with three spaces below for listing the three reasons explaining their choice. Hand in papers for assessment. Option 2: If this is not used for assessment, use a class discussion, or students may compare their answers with a partner.</p> <p>Phase 4: Paper and pen or pencil. Inspiration computer program.</p>

Assessment Rubric
 Argument Lesson
 Fa07 Lesson Plan Project
 Nancilyn Burruss, M.S.

3 = All Criteria Met
 2 = Some Criteria Met
 1 = No Criteria Met

Criteria	Possible Points	Points Received	
The student shows an understanding of what makes a higher quality argument by circling the paragraph with the best argument.	3 points		
The student shows an understanding of the concepts taught in the lesson in all three of their reasons given for making their choice.	9 points (3 points per reason)	Reason 1	
		Reason 2	
		Reason 3	
The student used the word relevant in his or her written response to properly identify the difference between relevant and irrelevant information	3 points		
The student used the word adequate in his or her written response to properly identify what qualifies as adequate support.	3 points		
Total	18 points		