

# Writing an Argument



# The Goal



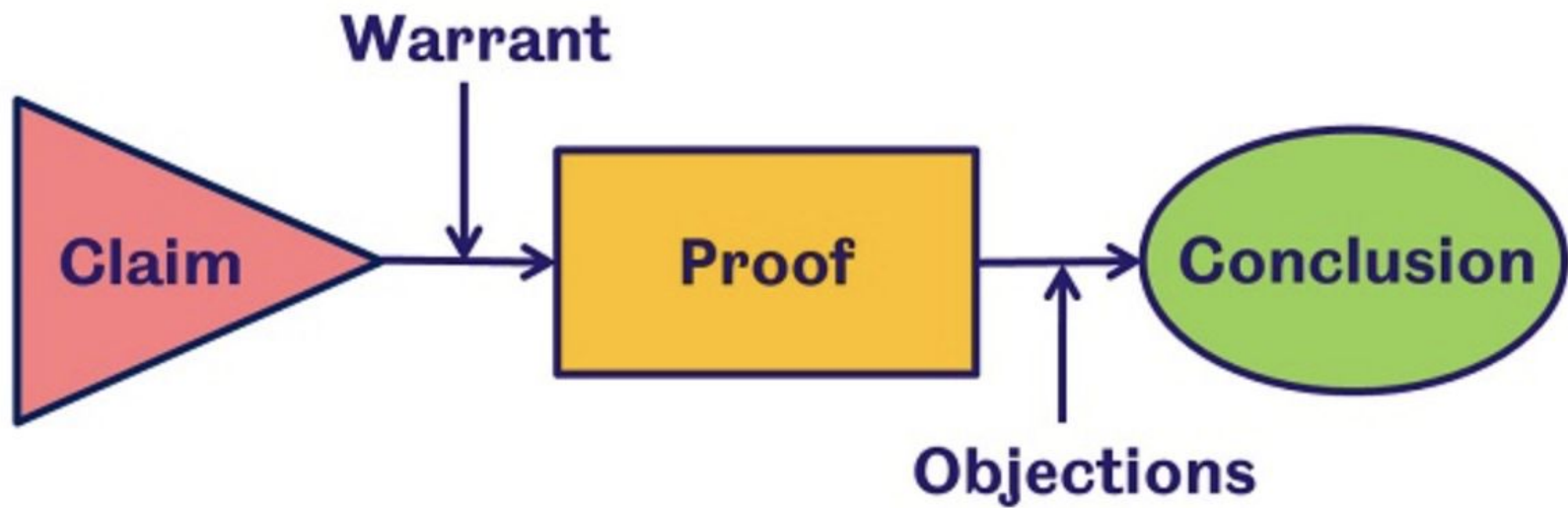
- You're doing two things in an argumentative paper:
  - a. Taking a stance
  - b. Providing evidence that supports that stance
- But you're also starting a conversation
  - Keep in mind that there are many ways to solve an issue
    - The orchestration is just as important as the solution; an argument's **development** is critical

# Making an Argument: It's More Than Stating an Opinion

- Opinions can guide arguments, but a well-reasoned, smart paper will take it a step further
  - Take the energy of the opinion — i.e., “This situation is XYZ, and makes me feel ABC” — and apply it to logic
  - What action can be taken? Why?
- An effective paper will be more than persuasive — it will be evidence-based and rely on formal logic

# Basic Elements of an Argument

- Claim
  - What you're arguing
- Evidence
  - The information you use to support the claim
  - Can also be called "proof"
- Warrant
  - The assumptions that link the evidence to the claims
  - Can be implicit or explicit



# Let's Take a Look

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/opinion/the-lonely-goalkeeper-bob-wilson-arsenal.html>

# Pre-Argument



# Step 1: Identify the purpose

As with writing any sort of paper, ask yourself:

- What is the prompt asking me to do?
- What challenges lie ahead?
- Who am I writing for?
- What, exactly, am I being asked to argue?
  - From there, you can start to formulate a plan

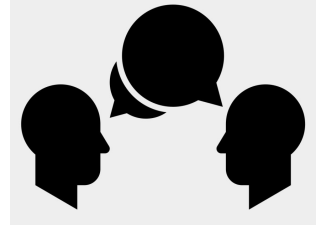


## Step 2: Familiarize Yourself With the Literature



- A key tenant of constructing an argument is understanding the existing literature
  - In this case, you'll want to comprehensively read through the Code of Ethics
  - Then ask yourself:
    - How can the Code of Ethics be applied to this situation?
    - Can the COE be used to guide my actions?
    - Are there any tenants of the COE that, at first glance, appear to be applicable, but upon further investigation maybe aren't so?

## Step 3: Formulate a Claim



- Think broadly:
  - What is it you're trying to persuade your audience of?
  - What course of action are you advocating for?
- Thesis statements should present a claim that is **debatable**
  - Your claim should invite critical thinking
  - You'll want to be familiar with the existing literature so that you can
  - And of course, you will spend the rest of the paper **elaborating**, **expanding**, and **supporting** this claim

## Step 4: Consider the Evidence



- The inclusion of evidence is a selective process
  - For example, you don't want to mention all components of the ECOE in your argument
  - Too much information can overwhelm; too little will weaken your argument
- Think about which pieces of evidence best support your argument

# ...But Evidence Itself Isn't Enough

- Facts alone don't create an argument
  - Your job as the author is to **contextualize**
    - Why is a fact significant?
    - What's the relation between the fact and the claim?



**Structure**

# Starting the Paper

- **Paragraph 1: Introduction**

- Give the lay of the land

- Synthesize background information

- Give enough information so that your reader understands the conundrum, but don't give so much that they're questioning the relevance

- Conclude introduction with your thesis statement

- Broadly speaking, identify your course of action
  - What are you doing (or not) for Elena?



# Expanding on Your Thesis



- **Body Paragraphs: Reasoning**

- Begin reasoning your course of action

- Engage the Code of Ethics

- How does your solution align with the COE?
  - Note that you'll likely spend 2-3 paragraphs explaining your reasoning
  - If you like, you can spend some time talking about why you didn't chose a course of action, so long as you stay on topic
- Consider discussing one piece of evidence per paragraph

# Expanding on Your Thesis



- **Penultimate Paragraph: Elena's Reaction**
  - How do you suspect that Elena will react to your course of action?
  - How do you anticipate responding to her reaction?
  
- Placing this paragraph at the end gives your reader time to understand your approach and shows that you're thinking through the inevitable
  - It's also a practice in knowing your audience



# Wrapping it Up



- Conclusion
  - Summarize your approach
    - Remind your reader of what you chose to do
  - **Don't give any new information!**
    - You're essentially synthesizing your argument here

# Now all together...

## 1. Introduction

- a. Thesis statement

## 2. Body paragraphs (2-3)

- a. Reasoning for your approach
  - i. One main point per paragraph
  - ii. Evidence!

## 3. Penultimate paragraph

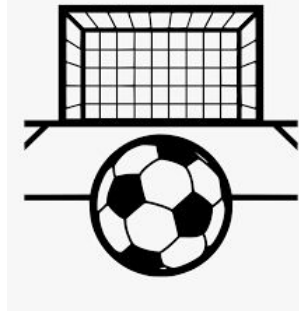
- a. How do you expect Elena to react?

## 4. Conclusion

- a. Wrapping it up
- b. Summarize the paper

## Keep in mind...

- The argumentative paper you write is the beginning of a conversation
  - It is not necessarily an end-all-be-all solution
  - Room for debate is inevitable
    - A good argumentative paper invites conversation



# **Planning Your Approach**

# Pre-Draft Worksheet

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UxdJK8SvZkD\\_beNhONGnD0vGg5OK7OpWvVHvXqnHg9s/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UxdJK8SvZkD_beNhONGnD0vGg5OK7OpWvVHvXqnHg9s/edit?usp=sharing)