



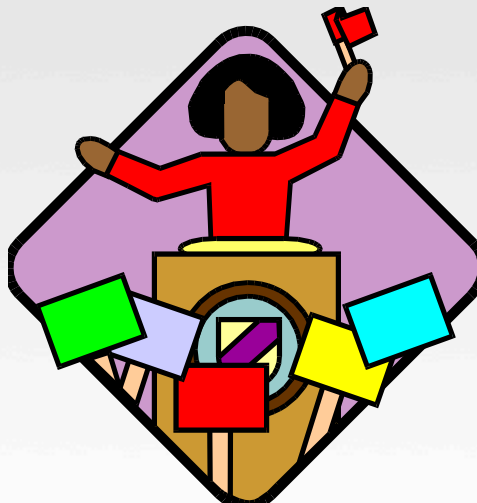
# Reading and Evaluating Arguments

---

# Learning Objectives:

---

- To recognize the elements of an argument
- To recognize types of arguments
- To evaluate arguments
- To recognize errors in logical reasoning



---

**An argument presents logical reasons  
and evidence to support a viewpoint**



# Parts of an Argument

---

- **ISSUE** - problem or controversy about which people disagree
  - **CLAIM** - the position on the issue
  - **SUPPORT** - reasons and evidence that the claim is reasonable and should be accepted
  - **REFUTATION** - opposing viewpoints
-

# Types of Claims

---

- **CLAIM OF FACT** - statement that can be proven or verified by observation or research
- *“Within ten years, destruction of rain forests will cause hundreds of plant and animal species to become extinct.”*



# Types of Claims

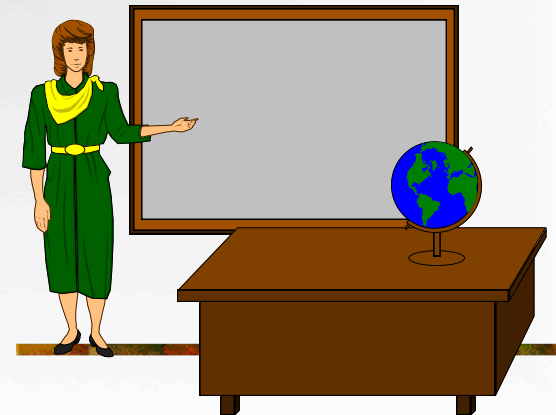
---

- **CLAIM OF VALUE** - states that one thing or idea is better or more desirable than another.
- *“Requiring community service in high school will produce more community-aware graduates.”*



# Types of Claims

- **CLAIM OF POLICY** - suggests what should or ought to be done to solve a problem.
- *“To reduce school violence, more gun and metal detectors should be installed in public schools.”*



# Types of Support

---

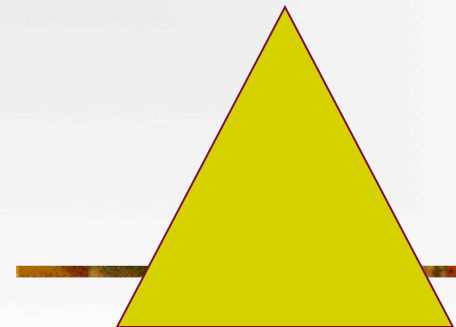
- **REASON** - a general statement that supports a claim.
  - **EVIDENCE** - consists of facts, statistics, experiences, comparisons, and examples that show why the claim is valid.
  - **EMOTIONAL APPEALS** - ideas that are targeted toward needs or values that readers are likely to care about.
-



# Inductive and Deductive Arguments

---

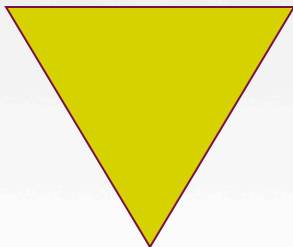
- **INDUCTIVE** - reaches a general conclusion from observed specifics.
- “By observing the performance of a large number of athletes, you could conclude that athletes possess physical stamina.”



# Inductive and Deductive Arguments

---

- **DEDUCTIVE** - begins with a major premise and moves toward a more specific statement or minor premise.
- “Athletes possess physical stamina. Because Anthony is an athlete, he must possess physical stamina.”



# Strategies for Reading an Argument

---

## Think Before You Read

- What does the title suggest? Preview!
  - Who is the author, and what are his or her qualifications?
  - What is the date of publication?
  - What do I already know about the issue?
-

# Strategies for Reading an Argument

---

## Read Actively

- Read once for an initial impression.
  - Read the argument several more times.
  - Annotate as you read.
  - Highlight key terms.
  - Diagram or map to analyze structure.
-

# Strategies for Evaluating Arguments

---

- Evaluate Types of Evidence - Is it sufficient to support the claim?
- Personal Experience - may be biased, so do not accept it
- Examples - should not be used by themselves

# Strategies for Evaluating Arguments

---

- **Statistics** - can be misused, manipulated or misinterpreted.
  - **Comparisons and Analogies** - reliability depends on how closely they correspond to the situation.
  - **Relevancy and Sufficiency of Evidence** - is there enough of the right kind to support the claim?
-

# Strategies for Evaluating Arguments

---

- **Definition of Terms** - should be carefully defined and used consistently
  - **Cause-Effect Relationships** - evidence that the relationship exists should be present
  - **Implied or Stated Value System** - are they consistent with your personal value system?
-

# Strategies for Evaluating Arguments

---

- Recognizing and Refuting Opposing Viewpoints
    - Question the accuracy, relevancy or sufficiency of the opponent's evidence.
    - Does the author address opposing viewpoints clearly and fairly?
    - Does the author refute the opposing viewpoint with logic and relevant evidence?
-



# Strategies for Evaluating Arguments

---

## ■ Unfair Emotional Appeals

- Emotionally Charged or Biased Language
  - False Authority
    - athletes endorsing underwear
    - movie stars selling shampoo
  - Association
    - a car being named a Cougar to remind you of a sleek animal
    - a cigarette advertisement featuring a scenic waterfall
-

# Strategies for Evaluating Arguments

---

## ■ Unfair Emotional Appeals

- Appeal to “Common Folk”
    - an ad showing a product being used in an average household
    - a politician suggesting he is like everyone else
  - Ad Hominem - attack on the person rather than his/her viewpoint
  - “Join the Crowd” Appeal or Bandwagon
-

# For Each Argument:

---

- Identify the claim.
  - Outline the reasons to support the claim.
  - What types of evidence are used?
  - Evaluate the adequacy and sufficiency of the evidence.
  - What emotional appeals are used?
  - Does the author recognize or refute counter arguments?
-