

Argument Text: _____

Evaluating an Argument

Thesis: Find the thesis of the passage. Remember this may be more than one sentence. Keep in mind that for rhetorical purposes thesis is the subject or major claim expressed in the text.

Purpose: Find where the purpose is stated or implied in the text. Remember purpose and thesis are NOT necessarily the same statement.

Organization: Outline the basic organization of the argument. When outlining the organization consider the following aspects that may be present: background and contextual information, addressing counter-argument, premise and support, chronology, conclusion, order of importance, point/counter-point, and other organizational elements. Use para. #'s

Modes of Discourse: Identify the rhetorical patterns used to develop this argument. List the paragraph #'s and the mode employed. (Narrative, Descriptive, Cause/Effect, Compare/Contrast, Exemplification, Definition, Classification)

Claims/Premises: List the Premises or Claims employed as arguments by the author to support his thesis and/or purpose. List each claim/premise then identify what type of claim/premise it is. (Legal, Religious, Moral/Ethical, Economic, Pragmatic, Gender-Based, Political, Historical, Scientific, Psychological) Include the paragraph number for each claim/premise

Support/Rhetorical methods: For each claim/premise, list the method(s) of support the author employs.

Counter-argument: Underline and list (para. #) where the counter-argument(s) is/are addressed in the argument (if it addresses). Identify HOW the author addresses each counter-argument. If the counter-argument isn't addressed explain how that affects the strength of the argument.

Conclusion:

-Identify the "So What?" element: (Often a call to action or a warning)