

THESIS

DEVELOPING EMERGING ARGUMENTATION: USING DISPARATE FORMS OF
EVIDENCE TO CREATE INSTRUCTIONAL INROADS

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING EMERGING ARGUMENTATION: USING DISPARATE FORMS OF EVIDENCE TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONAL INROADS

Argumentation should be approached as a practice that is woven into the larger instructional practices across the core educational disciplines. With the advent of The Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the ability to analyze and write an argument is now a predominant skill students are required to repeatedly demonstrate. As student achievement is now being used to reflect the larger portion of teacher accountability, it is essential that educators better understand how to make argumentation a disciplinary practice. I suggest that students should first be able to examine, identify, and understand the necessary function of evidence as a primary element of argumentation in order to more effectively construct a meaningful, sustainable argument. Through the categorization and analysis of explicit and implicit evidence, students are able to establish more meaningful claims. While this procedure elicits more student engagement and requires educators to reorient their instructional considerations, it also provides a practical starting point for all stakeholders when dealing with emerging argumentation in the classroom.

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INTRODUCTION

The poet Juan Ramon Jimenez advises that, when given ruled paper, we should write the other way.¹ While there is much to be said in attempting to gain a measure of deliverance from a small act of defiance, doing so can prove to be a rather daunting challenge when faced with systemic change. Because systemic change occurs over time like a broad, slow stroke of a pendulum, we most often only realize the true scope of the change after the fact. And it is at that point of realization when we are faced with a decision: are we to accept the newly understood scope of change without qualification? Or, are we to begin what could prove to be a rather long and arduous journey in the attempt to meaningfully effect change?

It is from this very general view that a more practical approach be taken to both teaching and implementing argumentation in the classroom. The formal rhetorical origins or argumentation reach back well over 2000 years.² Initially studied and honed by the likes of Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, and adapted through the more current styles of Carl Rogers and Stephen Toulmin, argumentation is the common language shared among academics. But while language continually evolves among the cultures and people who share it, the instruction of argumentation is found relatively unchanged and waiting at a curious crossroad with public education.

We are at a critical juncture in determining what the shape of public education looks like, how instruction is delivered, what our students need to know, and how best to address their needs. As legislators and administrators invariably work toward measurable uniformity and conformity in public education, we become ever-more bound by the resulting stagnant

¹ This is the epigraph to Ray Bradbury's dystopian novel *Fahrenheit 451*, which is widely taught to tenth grade high school students throughout the country.

² According to William M. Keith and Christian O. Lundberg, the term *rhetoric* originated in Athens, Greece sometime around the fifth century BCE. Many scholars credit Aristotle as being the first theorist of rhetoric.

mediocrity.³ However, the latest changes are structured to provide a more national conformity through what some call national educational standards.⁴ For many state boards of education, these standards raise the expectations at many levels the most important of which is in the classroom. These expectations bear what I believe to be an immense opportunity beyond the more traditional causes of teacher effectiveness, student assessment, and district accountability: argumentation should be the cornerstone of how we teach our students to read, write, and think.

The students best prepared for college or the workforce are those who can clearly articulate a point of view through evidence and reasoning. Therefore, it is important for students to understand argumentation (the process) in order to create an argument (the product).^{5 6 7} But it is vital that both the process and the product are synthesized into a *practice* across curricula and articulated throughout the grade levels. Students who can knowingly synthesize the other modes of writing when constructing an argument will be better prepared for the post-secondary environment and the work place.⁸ At the confluence of The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) rests this possibility for change.⁹ It is not the kind of fly-by-night or fell swoop change that lends cause for a brief pause and then business proceeding as usual. Rather, it is the kind of

³ Here I am speaking broadly of education legislation such as The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the current Elementary and Secondary Education Act from which several states have begun to apply for waivers.

⁴ The Common Core State Standards essentially attempt to provide a more uniform framework of state educational standards in order to address the gaps in proficiency ratings among state assessments.

⁵ Jonassen and Kim define argumentation as “the means by which we rationally resolve questions, issues, and disputes and solve problems” (439).

⁶ Further, Jonassen and Kim offer that the most common form of argumentation is that of the rhetorical argument in which there is a dialogue between an arguer and an audience with the goal being “to persuade or convince others of a claim or proposition that the arguer believes in without regard to positions that others hold” (443).

⁷ According to Kuhn and Udell: “Argument, however, can be both product and process. An individual constructs an argument to support a claim. The dialogic process in which two or more people engage in debate of opposing claims can be referred to as argumentation or argumentative discourse to distinguish it from argument as product” (90).

⁸ When introducing students to the modes of writing, teachers may ask for specific pieces of writing demonstrating a single mode (descriptive, definition, comparison, contrast, process, problem-solution) culminating with an argumentative or persuasive piece.

⁹ With the intent to be “fully prepared,” The Common Core State Standards mission indicates they are intended to “provide a consistent, clear, understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.”

change that comes from a fossil find which, after much academic debate, subsequently restructures our thinking about the evolutionary order of things. In this case, the specific issue deals with how teachers might integrate specific argumentative skills and concepts as set forth by these newly revised K-12 standards. For many teachers, however, these argumentative concepts are instructionally new, and how one might embed these skills within current instruction can suddenly become a very daunting task.¹⁰

In this paper, I will argue the necessity of teaching students to identify disparate forms of evidence in order to foster emerging argumentation in the classroom. I draw on the work of E.D. Hirsch and Gerald Graff to frame the discussion about what curricular changes might look like in the face of new standards. Additionally, I use Mary Louise Pratt's contact zones alongside Kenneth Bruffee's communities of knowledgeable peers to further establish the dialogic component conducive to more openly applying argumentation, and therefore the construction of knowledge, in the classroom setting. In examining the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), I highlight examples of argument's new-found place along with the expectations teachers now face in ensuring these new skills and concepts are properly instructed. I will connect ideas about argumentation from Robert Kraft and visit a valuable conversation by David Johnassen and Bosung Kim regarding argumentation and pedagogy. Finally, I will conclude with a discussion about fostering emerging argumentation by exploring with students the essential role that explicit and implicit evidence plays in argumentation.

Before I begin to work through how one might address emerging argumentation, it must be clear where the idea comes from and how it is essentially embedded in what many teachers

¹⁰ Given the requisite shifts based on newly adopted state standards, the need for fundamental training in argumentation is desperately needed among most secondary grades (6-12) faculty. Depending on the cohesiveness and collaborative nature of staff in departments and buildings, opportunities for obtaining instruction in argumentative writing should be a primary goal for building leaders and district administrators.

already do. I find it necessary to admit that I backed into teaching as the profession essentially found me. Through several years of volunteer classroom hours and subsequently marrying into a family of teachers, I discovered the intrinsic reward that comes not from just teaching, but also from learning alongside students and empowering them on their academic journeys. Eleven years into my second career, I still feel this way. I come to this topic playing several roles: teacher, student, collaborator, and leader. Through many collegial conversations, student assignments, instructional alignment seminars, and curricular review meetings has emerged an acute awareness of the need for an air-clearing conversation not just about what students need to know about the process of argumentation, but also about how secondary English teachers might begin to implement the practice of argumentation in their classrooms.

The confines of new standards, assessment, and evaluation coupled with the urgency of the impending vortex they stand to create have many teachers and administrators alike scurrying about in hopes of meeting just the minimal requirements to maintain control of classrooms, schools, and to some extents entire districts.¹¹ It is not that all of this urgency is unfounded, but rather unfocused. Implementing top-down procedural mandates with expectations of genuine instructional change to occur is unrealistic. There must be a more authentic attempt to cultivate a more organic instructional approach that can yield greater developmental growth for both students and teachers. Instead of working top down from the outside in, we must begin working from the inside out and the ground up.

¹¹ In the state of Colorado these “confines” come in the form of recently passed legislation: SB-191 educator effectiveness evaluation, SB-212 standards and assessment, and SB-163 accountability and accreditation. When these new laws converge in the 2014 school year, they will be in full implementation ushering in what some central administrators refer to as unprecedented educational reform. Although I agree that reform is necessary, I find it disconcerting when those most directly affected by this reform (i.e., teachers) are not receiving the requisite professional development in teaching the argumentative skills and concepts that were absent from their own educational experience.

Although our training as English teachers certainly contained some semblance of argumentation found in the general college composition courses, albeit more on the English side than the teaching side, we may have only truly engaged the actual process when dragging students through a research unit. And while in our training we were most likely asked to demonstrate support for a claim through the use of contextual evidence, we might have only asked our students to do this once or twice prior to sending them off to the next grade. It is not that this is necessarily a dirty little secret, but rather a function of how we, as teachers, were taught as students and subsequently trained as educators.¹² Mike Schmoker and Gerald Graff assert:

Argument not only makes subject matter more interesting; it also dramatically increases our ability to retain, retrieve, apply, and synthesize knowledge. It works for all students—from lowest- to highest-achieving. Yet many educators never learn this. And they never learn that argument is the unrivaled key to effective reading, writing, and speaking. (32).

In making this comment, Schmoker and Graff clearly call for educators to begin learning what they were evidently never taught. Along the same lines while establishing why good students and good citizens must be both good rhetorical analysts and rhetorical critics, David Jolliffe lists several relevant reasons as to why students encounter difficulty with the practices of analytical reading and writing, all of which point first to the teacher lacking the means, motive, or opportunity to properly teach analytic reading and writing (7).^{13 14} Further, David Jonassen and

¹² I do not recall being exposed to any formal instruction in argumentation in either my undergraduate work or through my teacher education coursework.

¹³ Kuhn finds that “[m]any of the functions education performs—making the discriminations that regulate access to occupations, serving special needs of subgroups—rest on human differences. Developing the competencies that enable people to participate fully as citizens in a democracy remains the unifying purpose, and great promise, of public education” (*Developmental* 16).

¹⁴ Jolliffe offers several suggestions: “Because rhetoric was downplayed in most undergraduate curriculums during the bulk of the twentieth century, many teachers (and therefore many students) are unfamiliar with the principles of rhetorical theory that guide reading and writing analytically. Because reading and writing analytically go by many names in high school and college courses, teachers and students may fail to realize what an analytic reading or writing assignment calls for them to do. Because the course called “*reading*” tends to drop out of school

Bosung Kim offer three major instructional causes as to why student arguments are so insufficient:

Teachers lack the pedagogical skills to foster argumentation in the classroom, so there exists a lack of opportunities to practice argumentation; external pressures to cover material leaving no time for skill development; and deficient prior knowledge on the part of learners. (442)

This issue of teachers being able to teach argument only stands to intensify as currently 45 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards which mandate that different elements of argumentation are introduced and reinforced as skills and concepts multiple times across disciplines throughout K-12 education.

My primary suggestion is not to be mistaken as speaking against the implementation of argumentation as put forth by the CCSS.¹⁵ In fact, I believe that we may leverage this necessary shift in classroom instruction in order to more firmly establish a common foundation from which we may begin to address student writing, and therefore student thinking, in a much more effective way. Further, were argumentation used as the primary curricular framework of inquiry across disciplines, I submit that our students would be much more academically engaged, academically responsible, and therefore academically prepared for the next step of their academic journey. While this raises issues of both the frequency and methodology of teaching argumentation in both core academic classrooms and teacher education programs, it is necessary to note that these matters warrant a more critical examination than the scope of this paper.

curriculums in middle or junior high school, many high school and college teachers don't realize that they must continue to teach reading, which means they must consciously and explicitly teach analysis—they must teach *reading*, not *readings*. And, finally, because teachers note that there's a paucity of effective strategies that they can use, many of them don't actually know how to teach analytic reading and writing" (7).

¹⁵ It is important to note, however, that even with this new direction, the CCSS, according to Hirsch, are still lacking the necessary focus that prescribes precisely what content students should know by what grade level. It is here where Schmoker and Graff become critical, too, of the CCSS but because they are "overlong, redundant, and often confusing" (32).

We must come to this process as archaeologists would approach a find: willing to dig. I do not see a need to restructure entire curricula or purchase vast forests of new texts. Regardless of the numerous arguments about the validity of high-stakes testing, or how the ever-increasing, post-secondary remediation rates are determined, by all accounts student writing is not where it should be.^{16 17 18} But through some concession and authentic collegial dialogue, I believe there to be some hope amid the chaos of the current systemic changes being made to public education. With the understanding that there will never be a silver bullet, we have to be willing to acknowledge that what has been done in the past to influence classroom instruction will no longer effectively prepare the students of today, especially with the requisite changes coming in the near future.

A primary element found among the various definitions of argument is the primary focus: evidence.¹⁹ My intention is to address an inroad, a good road I believe, in developing emerging argumentative skills by first teaching students how to examine, identify, and organize evidence presented in a text.²⁰ Proceeding in this way proves to assist students new to the process of

¹⁶ High-stakes testing is the reference to the mandated annual state assessments the results of which are used to determine not just student growth, but also how schools and districts are fairing in closing the achievement gaps among select demographics of student populations.

¹⁷ The remediation rates of incoming college freshmen are steadily increasing, and it is an issue no individual group has been able to meaningfully address. These rates are generally determined either by a low ACT sub score or a particular entrance exam given by the college or university to which the students apply.

¹⁸ The National Commission on Writing clearly offers that everyone be able to write, and that “despite much good work taking place in our classrooms, the level of writing in the United States is not what it should be.”

¹⁹ Shea, Scanlon, and Aufses define argument as “a statement put forth and supported by evidence.” Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters define argument as “the use of evidence and reason to discover some version of the truth, as distinct from *persuasion*, the attempt to change some else’s point of view.” Roskelly and Jolliffe find argument to be “a carefully constructed and well-supported representation of the way a writer sees an issue, problem, or subject.” Sunal, et al. define argument as “a web of skills used to organize evidence into a framework supporting a hypothesis viewpoint, or stance.” Crusius and Channell present the simple idea that argument means “mature reasoning” with *mature* referencing the attitude or approach one takes to the argument and *reasoning* being “an opinion plus a reason (or reasons) for holding that opinion.” For a good argument to be convincing, Crusius and Channell find that “reasons must be developed with evidence like specific facts and examples.” Rottenberg and Winchell define argument as “a process of reasoning and advancing proof about issues on which conflicting views may be held; also, a statement or statements providing support for a claim.”

²⁰ There is brief but valuable discussion to be had about what comprises a text. It is important for us as educators to see and explore text as symbols, words, articles, literature, images, or art, etc., conveying messages and ideas.

argumentation by allowing them to work more practically in identifying possible reasons for a claim being made. Once that has been completed, students may then begin to work toward establishing their own clear and debatable claims supported by the previously determined and available evidence connected through the narration of the remainder of their argument. I admit this is clearly easier said than done, but it is vital that students be exposed to this process in various disciplines in order to build the necessary capacity for the broader structural functions of argumentation to take root. Here it is important to note the observation of Robert Kraft who captured a very simple truth: argument deals with abstraction, and if abstractions are to be clear, we are reduced to description (551).²¹ And it is in that descriptive reduction that the newer forms of argument emerge as there is now more of a blend of traditional rhetoric and narration in the construction of argument than there used to be. In contrasting Kraft's definition of rhetoric as the persuasive use of language in which we "weigh the issues and the weight of the argument sits on this side or that," Michael Bernard-Donals offers rhetoric as simply another form of argumentative discourse: "If being rhetorical is what we have to be in the face of a contingent world [...] then argument is how we make sense of those contingencies" (2). Bernard-Donals then puts forward argument as a tool that can be used to probe statements, what people know, and how circumstances are understood through a direct reference to Aristotle's definition of rhetoric: "finding the available means of persuasion in any given case; argument is what you do once you've found them" (2-3). This, too, becomes a teachable moment in the lessons of argumentative construct. By consistently referencing the requisite synthesis of expository modal writing (e.g., comparison, contrast, process, problem-solution) rather than each mode being compartmentalized and independently taught, students stand to gain a deeper understanding of

²¹ Kraft illuminates the idea that is also found in the genre of new journalism which relies on a narrative form of literary techniques in very descriptive writing to establish and frame a story. This type of journalism is found more in magazines than in newspapers.

the inherent relationship among the writing modes. By teaching students to analyze, and subsequently synthesize, how specifically chosen modes contribute to revealing specific elements of a larger argumentative structure, we create an opportunity for students to mimic, and begin modeling, the argumentative discourse that we, as educators, would like to more consistently see.

CHAPTER 2: SHIFTING CURRICULA FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT

The teachers at View Park Preparatory High School tell us that, “the heart of good writing is good thinking,” and it is around good thinking, (i.e., critical thinking), that the school’s writing curriculum at is centered (Hernandez 48).²² In fact, the entire literacy program at View Park is centered on critical thinking using only Stephen Toulmin’s model for argument as a writing-across-the-curriculum program.^{23 24} Students are consistently applying the inherent common language of the model in their English, mathematics, and history classrooms effectively grounding their writing in one requisite inquiry and thinking tool. Coupled with the practices of Socratic discussion and essential questioning, View Park students are exposed to a very authentic academic experience that clearly prepares them for the college level. I believe that a similar authentic academic experience can, to a limited degree, be replicated in public education.²⁵

What happens at View Park is not in any way revolutionary, but it is extraordinary given what education is facing today. Some would argue that the only way to institute such a change is through the charter school model in order to cut through the red tape that comes along with departments of education, federal grant monies, and the agrarian model of our current public education system. However, with state and federal mandates looming in the year 2014, many school and district leaders are finding themselves willing to integrate instructional and curricular changes that would otherwise be dismissed.

²² A charter in South Los Angeles with an enrollment of 375 students grades 9-12 ninety-eight percent are African American. Half of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

²³ Toulmin’s model has four basic elements: claim, clarification, evidence, and warrant.

²⁴ For additional information about the View Park Preparatory program see “For the Sake of Argument” published in *Educational Leadership*, October 2006.

²⁵ One of the primary differences between a charter school and one that is within the bounds of public education is that the charter school has more flexibility due to its local control as it is not bound by the larger curricular structures of public schools; hence, a charter school is much more capable of innovatively responding to the needs of its students as View Park High School has done with its literacy program. While public education is bound by the larger bureaucratic issues of state-run programs, I believe integrating argumentation as a practice is still a practical possibility that educators can begin implementing in a practical and meaningful way.

There is middle ground that exists between the ideas of what the content of curricula can look like and what predominant instructional practices might be put in place.²⁶ I use E.D. Hirsch to illustrate curricular content and Gerald Graff to illustrate instructional practice. Hirsch addresses the need for broader change in curricula with specific regard to reading content (known as Core Knowledge), while Graff calls for the functional necessity of our students to be able to argue. Hirsch establishes the need for our students to be well-developed, widely-read readers, while Graff and Cathy Birkenstein offer essential plug-and-play templates of argumentative writing in *They Say/I Say*. It is in between Hirsch's cultural literacy and Graff's argumentative literacy that I believe exists a meaningful approach to providing students with authentic initial argumentative instruction that is transferrable across curricula that can be built upon and replicated.

E.D. Hirsch's approach originally started from the point of view of reading comprehension. Hirsch proposed how to move the reading comprehension of our students forward by determining both what our students should read and by when, expecting the background knowledge gained along the way would help students essentially build their comprehension skills. This led to the Core Knowledge Curricula, founded by Hirsch, which principally was structured around very prescribed grade-level content. Guided by his concept of Cultural Literacy, Hirsch argues for a curricular framework built of very specific content (Language Arts, history, visual and performing arts, science) and to date many schools ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade have adopted this curriculum.

Unlike Hirsch in recommending what students should be exposed to by when, Gerald Graff comes at the issue from a different direction and advocates engaging students by training

²⁶ Here an instructional practice is understood to be a framework in which strategies are deployed in order to meet targeted outcomes as required by state and local standards.

them how to approach a topic, prescribed or otherwise, through argumentation. In short, Graff argues for argument. While he is not by any means alone, Graff has helped to broaden the conversation between secondary education and the university by exploring the larger puzzle of why students struggle to apply argumentation. Although many factors contribute to why students struggle to fundamentally engage content, Graff promotes capitalizing on the process of argumentation suggesting that students have a predisposition to taking a side and making a case. “Schools should be tapping far more than they do into students’ youthful argument cultures, which are not as far removed as they look from public forms of argument” (*Clueless* 155). It is this skill, according to Graff, that the majority of students have precious little experience with even though they have a natural tendency to apply it.

Hirsch, on the other hand, is adamant about building core knowledge among younger students in order to create accessible background or prior knowledge. This, Hirsch finds, is a process that will not happen on its own because, “reading and writing are cumulative skills” (C.L, 28). Practice does make perfect, and Hirsch recommends that these skills be broadened by increasing literacy through a “knowledge-oriented reading program” (*Knowledge*, 17). This is a call that is constantly reflected in his work. To that end, Hirsch espouses his belief that an aligned curriculum consisting of prescribed content knowledge with the intention of building students’ background knowledge (in the vein of Enlightenment rather than Romantic view of education) is, “necessary for functional literacy and effective national communication” (*Cultural* xi) . Hirsch believes that, “relevant background knowledge can be conceived as a stock of potential analogies that enable new ideas to be assimilated” (*Schools* 23). His point is that, in order to establish a deeper understanding, students must first have a background to which they may connect newly acquired ideas thereby making the newly prescribed information more

relevant and accessible. Hirsch is right to offer the idea of prior knowledge being a wealth of “potential analogies,” and it is here where I see a place for argumentation. As analogies establish varying degrees of explicit and implicit correlation and comparison, so too do differing forms of evidence within an argument.

In *Beyond the Culture Wars*, Graff questions Hirsch by arguing that, “it won’t matter whose list of books wins the debate if students remain disaffected from the life of books and intellectual discussion...” (11). This point matters if for no other reason than because students read information in a vastly different way now than any students ever have in the past due to the integration of technology. These are Marc Prensky’s “digital natives” who do not so easily fit in the current model of public education as have the previous generations known as digital immigrants.²⁷ Nevertheless, Graff forgoes the texts (the products) in favor of the process of how students engage them:

Most of the problems students encounter in the academy lie not in the kinds of texts being read [...] but in the peculiarly analytical ways in which the academy expects students to read and talk about all texts, regardless of their cultural understanding. As crucial as it may be to diversify the canon for reasons of cultural and intellectual breadth, such diversification in the past has usually had disappointingly little impact on the more intransigent educational problems. Exclusive preoccupation with the canon [...] has too often been a way of avoiding a serious examination of these problems. (*Beyond* 94-95)

What Graff asks is that we begin to analyze and implement the “peculiarly analytic ways” students should be expected to enter into the academic conversation. If we work to engage and enhance through the use of argumentation and its different parts, there stands to be a greater chance that students will be better prepared to engage on a more authentic academic level than by simply having been well-read. It is through using argumentation that students gain access to that intellectual discussion. And it is through the introductory analysis and use of evidence that our students should begin to understand argument.

²⁷ See *Digital Immigrants, Digital Natives*, by Marc Prensky 2001.

Graff further questions Hirsch's idea of prescribed content when he highlights the issue of post World War II teachers pushing for more modern texts to combat the "cultural remoteness" of some texts that caused students difficulty, which seems to suggest a degree of generational literacy exists. Regardless of however intimate or estranged students are with a text, Graff reiterates that they must still be able "to speak and write about it in a literary critical language that must be learned" (*Beyond* 97). In the similar spirit of Hirsch, David Bartholomae also recognizes the fundamental need for students to access the academic community. He argues for the necessity of students to be able to navigate more complex texts because the texts themselves function as a primary component of the discourse community of which students should strive to be a part. If students are to meaningfully engage in the larger academic conversations through the implementation of the argumentative process, it is important to concede that putting students through a prescriptive set of reading, complex or otherwise for no other reason than exposure, does not foster the ability to engage in an academic argument. While the complexity of reading may increase, Graff affords that complexity does not lie solely with the work itself:

For what creates difficulty [...] is not just the object of study but the kind of question being asked about it. There is no functional connection between the status level of a text (however this may be measured) and the degree of complexity or difficulty attained by the interpretation of it for some hypothetical average reader. [Therefore] it does not follow that culturally acknowledged great works generate a more substantial, challenging, and interesting critical or pedagogical discourse than do less valued works. (*Beyond* 100)

Graff tells us that it is not what we read, but more importantly how we read and then respond that matters. And for students to understand ways of reading and responding to texts, they need analytical instruction. This presses the idea of establishing a more consistent application of argumentation across content areas – essentially identifying the points where disciplines may

intersect within the practice of argumentation.²⁸ Graff argues against the idea that teaching is a solo performance and asserts that “teachers, departments, and colleges [...] have recognized that students need to see the connection between the different interpretations, ideas, and values in the curriculum if they are to enter actively into academic discussions” (*Beyond* 14). If we are to practice argumentation, we must understand the learning process as dialogic and communal. We need to establish a deeper commitment to a culture of learning, or a shared knowledge experience, rather than a compartmentalized cafeteria learning environment where we hope students will pick up what we provide. In a shared knowledge experience, students must demonstrate their understanding or claim, through support and evidence, to their peers, and it is at that moment when the debate begins. Graff reminds us that, “culture is a debate rather than a monologue,” and it is in that debate where students begin to learn to test and fight for their convictions; it is only when truth is disputed that students will begin trying to enter the debate (*Beyond* 15).²⁹ This truth dispute is a readily accessible point to introduce the structure of an argument. Whether it is a discussion about an author’s tone or a scientist’s hypothesis, students should be challenged to engage the group, classroom, or community discussion with their own claims backed with clear supporting evidence. This is the practice that is and will remain a fractured process until all associated with instruction in public education collectively move toward a common vocabulary and a consistent method of teaching argumentation at these intersections of opinion or cross-sections of truth.

²⁸ Jeffery Williams, while exploring theory anthologies in *Packaging Theory*, suggests Graff’s idea of teaching the conflicts “is perhaps a pedagogical inducement, but is limited to one dimension” and is therefore shortsighted (291). Rather than conflicts, Williams suggests “the model of a system of interstices, of various vectors of pressure, some distant, some near, some forceful, some innocuous or gentle, some directly opposing, some in the same direction, some curved, and some spotty and intermittent” (291). I find there to be a requisite measure of flexibility when applying argumentation or any of its specific elements, such as evidence, as a pedagogical structure. Williams is right to note that Graff’s conflicts are not the only way to approach a topic. However, I still follow Graff in using conflict as a catalyst, a beginning, for students to enter into a more academic discourse.

²⁹ I agree with Graff’s statement that, “In the absence of continuous public discussion and debate, doctrines harden and paranoid myths proliferate...” (*Beyond* 36).

Here I recall Mary Louise Pratt's contact zones and her reference to speech communities as being places where language lived.³⁰ I find these places to be where community members would have to work to describe, as Kraft noted, the abstractions of an argument. Too, these places are where members would find it necessary to dispute truth. These communities can be found in classrooms where student-driven discussions are fertile ground for the elements of argument, especially when the students are "pupiling," finds Pratt, rather than the traditional classroom format of the teacher teaching. Pratt suggests:

Looking for the pedagogical arts of the contact zone [along with] ways to move *into and out of* rhetorics of authenticity; ground rules for communication across lines of difference and hierarchy that go beyond politeness but maintain mutual respect; [and] a systematic approach to the all-important concept of *cultural mediation*. (6)

Although this is not the space to fully engage the ideas of Pratt's cultural mediation and Hirsch's cultural literacy, there is an interdependency that I believe exists: cultural mediation suggests an intersection of certain ideas working to find a more solid acceptance among a community, which then suggests a fundamental cultural literacy needing to exist or be instituted in order for a more clearly established dialogue to take place. This is to draw the illustration of a classroom community in which argumentation is alive and well rather than the place where truth is kept in the textbook, undisputed, for no other reason than to be memorized, regurgitated, and blindly accepted.

Kenneth Bruffee establishes a connection to something very similar to Pratt's contact zones in his discussion of collaborative learning with specific reference to communities of knowledgeable peers. Bruffee offers that these communities work as "a group of people who accept, and whose work is guided by, the same paradigms and the same code of values and assumptions" (642). Essentially, we might easily again be discussing the contact zone, the

³⁰ Pratt's speech communities are "theorized as discrete self-defined, coherent entities held together by a homogeneous competence or grammar shared identically and equally among all the members" (4).

intersection of ideas, and the debate of truth, all of which should be inherently present in the classroom providing a safe place for the expression of well-grounded student opinion. Bruffee tells us that the goal of developing mastery of the discourse of a “knowledge community” is a qualification for becoming part of that community (643). This then becomes the exercise, the field of practice, whereby students may first observe, then model, and finally integrate their ability to engage in the necessary level of discourse where, according to Bruffee, “knowledge is maintained and established ” (646).³¹

David Bartholomae offers a very clear frame of what defines the discourse of the university and reminds us that students face the challenge of having to learn the language, how to speak it, and “try on the particular ways of knowing, selecting evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community” (403). As such, when something is so new as the idea of argumentation, there must be a relevant place to begin that is both pragmatic and tangible. If students are to “try on” the structure of argumentation, they should do so as one would shop for new shoes: starting with a known size. In beginning with what we know, we can then isolate what we do not. In describing what we understand, we reveal what we must work to learn. In effect, we begin to address the abstractness of a concept by stating the obvious, observing the explicit, to determine with what or whom we might consult to better establish a new understanding or new knowledge.

In the same way, we might use the structure of argumentation as the standard model to which students may turn when engaging with a discourse community. Inherent in argumentation is the act of reflecting on the components of an argument (claim, evidence, etc.). Bruffee

³¹ Bruffee believes that students find two kinds of writing to be useful in college: 1) “the kind of writing most appropriate to work in [...] the professions” and 2) “the writing most appropriate to gaining competence in most academic fields” (643). He then identifies that both types of writing are “written within and addressed to a community of status equals: peers” (643).

connects the idea of reflective thought to social conversation and establishes that “the two are related functionally” (639). He goes on to suggest that, “[t]o think well as individuals we must learn to think well collectively – that is, we must learn to converse well” (640). This leads back to Hirsch in that we must first have something to converse about (i.e., background knowledge) before we may enter into the academic conversation, or one of Graff’s conflicts.

With the idea that the academic conversation is one founded upon a collaborative model, dialogic in nature, it is here where the practice of argument emerges. It then becomes the responsibility of the members of a given discourse community to determine the pressing academic issues, the relevant beliefs, and how those beliefs connect and challenge the collective literacy of the community. Again, Bruffee:

We establish knowledge or justify belief collaboratively by challenging each other’s biases and presuppositions; by negotiating collectively toward new paradigms of perception, thought, feeling, and expression; and by joining larger, more experienced communities of knowledgeable peers through assenting to those communities’ interests, values, language, and paradigms of perception and thought. (646)

If students are to engage a topic within a given community (i.e., a collaborative group in a classroom), understanding the use and application of an argumentative structure can assist them in working to share and explore the various claims that may be generated. In order to more deeply establish an authenticity to the content, curricula, or text, teachers should work to encourage students to explore and demonstrate, through the use of argumentation, a new understanding within the group, thereby broadening the invitation to join the academic conversation. Here is where Bruffee’s conversation about normal and abnormal discourse intersects. Relying on Richard Rorty’s idea that knowledge is a social artifact, Bruffee offers that, “the discourse involved in generating knowledge cannot be normal discourse, since normal

discourse maintains knowledge. It is inadequate for generating new knowledge” (647).³²

Following Rorty, the knowledge-generating discourse Bruffee finds necessary is that of abnormal discourse, which “occurs between coherent communities or within communities when consensus no longer exists with regard to rules, assumptions, goals, values, or mores” (648).³³ It is precisely the space of non-consensus that teachers should work to guide students, assist them to occupy that particular space on their own, among their peers, and use the practice of argumentation as a means of navigating the abnormal discourse. To that end, it would seem that specific types of problems are more creatively solved through abnormal discourse. David Jonassen and Bosung Kim distinguish how argumentation supports solving ill-structured problems: “Because ill-structured problems do not have convergent answers, learners must be able to construct arguments that justify their own solutions” (441).³⁴ There exists then, a symbiotic relationship between abnormal discourse and solutions for ill-structured problems as they are both interdependent on each other and are only able to emerge through argumentative discourse.

Michael Bernard-Donals, offers that while arguments are founded on knowledge (similar to Rorty’s normal discourse), “they’re also shaped by non-knowledge” (similar to Rorty’s abnormal discourse) (4). In referencing Aristotle, Bernard-Donals states, “a writer doesn’t need to be an expert in the topic he’s arguing, he’d better know enough to be able to hold his own with other non-experts” (4). Experts or otherwise, if students are working toward consensus, they must be working to offer elements of evidence to support a claim within the group (community)

³² Bruffee finds that “the generation of knowledge, what we call ‘creativity,’ must also be a social process” (647).

³³ Rorty provides that “the product of abnormal discourse can be anything from nonsense to intellectual revolution” (qtd. Bruffee, 648).

³⁴ Jonassen and Kim define ill-structured problems as “the kinds of problems that are encountered in everyday practice and are characterized as having (a) alternative solutions to problems, (b) vaguely defined or unclear goals and constraints, (c) multiple solutions paths, and (d) multiple criteria for evaluating solutions; so they are more difficult to solve” (441).

where Bernard-Donals, echoing Bruffee, reminds us, “[k]nowledge [...] is built in communities that share assumptions” (4-5).

Bernard-Donals illustrates the necessity for students to “see that when they write they make an argument, take a position among other positions, and that by writing they are establishing themselves as members of a community, a polis, a discipline” (8). Similarly, Graff encourages college-bound students to put their oar in the water. And for teachers, that is exactly where the task lies: we must motivate students to want to establish themselves among their peers with confident, consistent, and curious voices.

Graff tells us that, “a really clear vision would see that when what educated persons should know is deeply disputed, the dispute itself becomes part of what educated persons should know” (*Beyond* 44). It follows, Graff insists, that when ideas once readily accepted become disputed, it becomes hard for students to discern which (or whose) to believe: “And without a grasp of the conflicting stories, it is difficult to become competent at constructing your own story” (*Beyond* 59). Here is where I find that Hirsch’s prescribed, cumulative background knowledge converges. With the clear goal of creating space for students to enter into an abnormal discourse within their communities in order to work toward generating knowledge, Hirsch’s prescribed material, while not necessarily mandatory, provides for the particular content that many today believe students are lacking. More importantly, however, is that we recognize the clear necessity of implementing the consistent practice of argumentation throughout our secondary classrooms. This methodical exposure will create a more tangible academic structure that students can then carry with them into the university.

CHAPTER 3: ARGUMENTATION BEGINNING WITH EVIDENCE

In *Clueless in Academe*, Graff makes the case that, “the most fundamental conflict that needs to be taught in classrooms is the conflict between Intellectualspeak and Studentspeak.” He goes on to argue, “that teachers need to be explicit about this conflict and even to sharpen the contrast between academic and student discourse,” suggesting then, that the gap between the two forms of discourse is not as immense as it may seem (Graff *Clueless* 13). Graff finds there to be an “invidiousness” between the intellectuals and the non-intellectuals suggesting that this discontented envy has more to do with student “ambivalence about becoming an intellectual,” than the lack of skills or cultural literacy as Hirsch believes (Graff *Beyond* 92).

Hirsch, however, argues against the pay off of direct instruction in critical thinking given the amount of time devoted to it. He finds that it leads to only moderate increases and that, “the minor transfer effects of instruction in critical thinking are probably not worth the expenditure of significant extra instructional time” (Hirsch *Schools* 138). Hirsch presses further by suggesting that, “it isn’t the logical structure of people’s inferences that chiefly causes uncritical thinking but, rather, the uninformed or misinformed faultiness of their premises” (*Schools* 136). Graff tells us the issue falls to student ambivalence while Hirsch suggests students have a tendency to work within faulty premises. To simultaneously address both of these issues, a strong case can be made for instruction grounded in the realm of argumentation as it requires deep, critical thinking by virtue of the necessary elevated level of discourse. Further, as students are working within their peer groups, they are likely to develop more confidence not just in what they believe, but also how they might convey that belief. At the same time, students are more likely to test the premise of each group member to a greater degree. This is not to say that the problems Graff and Hirsch raise are entirely solved. Nonetheless, having students actively engaged in academic

discourse revolving around an academic issue lends itself to a prime example of a community of learners engaged in collaborative critical thinking at work. Observing peers pressing the claims of others, challenging the evidence being used, and offering a concession or counterargument fosters the necessary modeling of both the clear decisiveness and honed premises required to argue effectively. How then do we institute this model in a fashion that affords students the opportunity to exercise it?

Hirsch discusses the concepts of procedural learning and content learning. The former requires what Hirsch states as “overlearning” and “plenty of practice” while the latter is more flexible to a “diversity of methods” (*Schools* 173).³⁵ According to Hirsch, both types are, “best achieved in a focused environment which preponderantly emphasizes whole-class instruction but which is punctuated by small-group or individualized work” (*Schools* 173). With specific regard for emerging argumentation, this is the environment in which the practice should take place. The procedural learning builds the structural understanding of the elements of argument, whereas the content learning molds itself around the former structure. For example, a claim in the English classroom might also be seen as a hypothesis in the science lab or even as a statement in the math classroom, and evidence for the claim might also be viewed as data that supports the hypothesis or a proof that supports the mathematical statement. While these are three very different disciplines, the argumentative structure, the language itself, is not that fundamentally different. Further, they all reference an element in the classical model for arranging an argument, with a focus on *partitio*, or division, which benefits from the combination of these types of instruction. With regard for our interests here, I suggest an initial focus on the element

³⁵ In *The Knowledge Deficit*, Hirsch extends the conversation further by suggesting that abilities of skilled readers and critical thinkers are dependent on broad factual knowledge (12). Simply learning comprehension strategies will not, Hirsch criticizes, “give students a shortcut to gaining greater expertise...” (*Knowledge* 12). Hirsch continues in defining reading comprehension as “not a technical skill...,” and submits, “It is the other side of knowing how to speak and write in an understandable way to strangers within a particular speech community” (*Knowledge* 33).

of *confirmatio*, which is the section of proof or evidence presented in the classical model of argumentation. For students new to argumentation, a whole-group discussion about the presented elements of evidence and the explicit and implicit support it creates serves as a valuable point of access to the larger model of argumentation itself. A practical next move would be to have students dissect and list the evidence to the extent that they may then be allowed to establish a claim of their own based on the available means used in the initial argument. While this process in effect places *confirmatio* before *partio* in the process, the initial examination of evidence provides a more available avenue for students to engage the dialogue generated by what then emerges as a discourse community (See Appendix A). Jonassen tells us that, “Argumentation is an essential way of thinking about any discipline” (440). The more cross-curricular exposure our students have to these elements, linking them back in a recursive manner to the practice of argumentation, the better chance students will implement them later on in academia.

In 1975 Robert Kraft published his reflective article about the death of argument in which he confessed, simply, that he wanted his students to learn writing that would help them succeed in college. As he moved through his struggles to teach argument as he too was taught, he identified that within arguments are inevitable abstractions which, in order to be made clear, must be reduced to descriptions. It is in description that Kraft saw a synthesis of argument through both description and narration pointing to the best news and magazine writers of the time, culminating in what was the birth of new journalism (550). In the end, Kraft was reluctant to bury the process of teaching argument entirely but was seemingly resigned to the idea that the format of the way that the facts of an argument are stated, labeled as *narratio* in the classical model, has changed. What is compelling is that Graff, 19 years later in *Beyond The Culture Wars*, finds that:

Conflict is reproduced in the tension between academic writing, in which the pressure is to leave no complication unexplored, and journalism, in which the pressure is to reduce and simplify to the bottom line.³⁶ The culture war has exposed the huge gulf between these kinds of writing, but it has also exposed the new convergence of their interests. (103)

Based on these two observations, we might say that the structure of argumentation has undergone a shift. It no longer necessarily follows the formal Aristotelian structure, Toulmin's method, or is structured in the Rogerian way. While these three formats have specific processes geared toward specific ends, there is also a synthesis of sorts that has transpired that, coupled with the fundamental similarities, our students should come to understand as a viable means of academically engaging the multitude of curricular topics they face. I am not advocating that all three forms be extensively taught to our secondary students, but rather that because all three forms use evidence in a way that performs a fundamental function within argumentation, there should be cross-disciplinary instruction as to how to use the element of evidence as a point of access to the necessary academic discourse in order to function within the classroom community.

In partnership with Hillel Crandus, a high school teacher, Graff encourages students to inventory the "hidden intellectualism" within themselves (*Clueless* 241). Both instructors encourage their students to "wrestle with what they want to do with it, that is decide what kind of voice they wish to give it," with the idea being to get students "to reflect on their own contradictory feelings about becoming intellectuals and talking Intellectualspeak" (Graff "Hidden" 35). Crandus and Graff then put forward the premise, "that it is such reflection more than anything the teacher may say that will induce students to discover the hidden intellectual in themselves" (36). This reflection is also necessary when looking at what may be interpreted as a

³⁶ Interestingly, Graff offers that "[A] result of the culture war will be to help journalists become more complicated and academics more accessible..." (*Beyond* 104). This brings to mind how particle physicists are able to convey such complex ideas as gravity's effect on light and the Higgs boson in such basic terms that most anyone might be able to grasp them, if only for a fleeting moment.

consensus or a conflict.³⁷ Jonassen and Kim find that, “Argumentation is associated with a social constructivist conception of meaning making where students learn through reflective interactions (arguments) that engage the social construction of knowledge” (440).

Before students can agree, disagree, or qualify their view points, they must first reflect on their position in order to then advance it. It is important for our students to begin the exercise of their contrary ideas with respect to how they relate to that which is being discussed. I submit that the relationship lies within the type of support being presented. As teachers we must be vigilant about what our students comprehend and how they engage by asking ourselves, “What evidence are they presenting and what is its relationship to the specific claim being made?” We need to see our students’ thinking as more than simply levels of requisite, state-wide proficiency while feverishly working to ensure that they have completed all of the units on the district curriculum pacing chart. As much as we should encourage our students to reflect on what they write, so too should we reflect on how we teach.

³⁷ Graff identifies that even teachers have fallen victim to not seeing or reflecting enough when engaging students. “[W]hat teachers have perceived as “harassment” is simply the novel experience of being in a minority and having to argue for one’s beliefs instead of taking them for granted” (*Beyond* 8). “Good teachers, after all, want their students to talk back” (*Beyond* 9).

CHAPTER FOUR: DELINIATING AND CONNECTING EVIDENCE

It is in classical rhetoric, out of which traditional legalistic argument comes, that we must seek to “see” what is persuasive in order to persuade according to Aristotle.³⁸ A broadly accepted Aristotelian definition of rhetoric further encourages the observation of the “available means of persuasion.”³⁹ A syllogistic explanation for approaching emerging argumentation might be:

Constructive arguments require functional evidence.

Students must be able to construct arguments.

If students are to constructively argue, they must first understand how evidence functions. In the form of the syllogism, a deductive argument, the major premise and the minor premise coupled with the conclusion respectively, present why students must have a clear grasp of the function of evidence. Evidence, then, serves as reason at which point we must discuss the classical appeal of *logos*.⁴⁰ The logical appeal, as Andrea Lundsford et al. refer to it, is a strategy in which a writer uses facts, evidence, and reason to make audience members accept a claim” (1044). Therefore, for students new to the process of argumentation, the observation and examination of the evidence presented in an argument is a very accessible means of engaging the more stated or implied ideas embedded in the narrative.

³⁸ The classic rhetorical approach calls for ability to “see what is persuasive.” (“Aristotle defines the rhetorician as someone who is always able to see what is persuasive (*Topics* VI.12, 149b25). Correspondingly, rhetoric is defined as the ability to see what is possibly persuasive in every given case (*Rhet.* I.2, 1355b26f.)” (Rapp).

³⁹ The specific definition of Aristotelian rhetoric states: the faculty of observing, in any given case, the available means of persuasion. This definition is widely used in many texts as one of the primary definitions of rhetoric (Goggin).

⁴⁰ Roskelly and Jolliffe define *logos* as “the appeal of a text based on the logical structure of its argument or central ideas” (346). Jolliffe offers that “[a] writer or speaker builds logos, according to Aristotle, using enthymemes or examples, and that’s all (1393a), so the rhetorical analyst must, initially or ultimately, be able to show, in any text, how the writer or speaker capitalizes on unspoken assumptions he or she thinks the audience already believes about the issue at hand; incorporates facts, data, reasoning, and perspectives about the issue; and then substantiates a claim, a generalization, or a point about the issue” (9-10).

It is in Rogerian Argument, born out of a therapeutic counseling model, that we begin with a clear intention to compromise.⁴¹ Using the Toulmin model we might state, “*Because* students must now be exposed to the more practical skills and concepts associated with developing an academic argument (the fact), *therefore* educators should work to determine how to better foster argumentation in the classroom (the claim), *since* argument now holds a more central position among the Common Core State Standards (the warrant).”⁴² The Toulmin model is a practical application for identifying the assumption and the warrant of an argument. The aforementioned structure may be plugged into a *because...., therefore...., since...* template which can help to more clearly reveal the assumption being argued and the justification for doing so.⁴³ Thinking of breadcrumbs leading back to the table, identifying pieces of evidence enables students to more readily identify the more relevant and hopefully logical claims. Jonassen and Kim tell us, “Most scholars agree that providing evidence in support of claims is an important criterion for constructing arguments...[h]owever, arguers often use insufficient or inconclusive evidence to support their arguments” (441). It is not uncommon for students to overlook a theme or a larger idea of a text especially if there has been no real ground work laid in trying to determine the function(s) of the given evidence. To that end, if students learn to more thoroughly identify and investigate the presented pieces of support, there is a greater possibility for them to establish a more convincing claim. An additional benefit is the authentic student voice that emerges. Invariably the writing voices of students are drowned out, if existent at all, in the regurgitation of summary that is laden with sequential transitional structures resulting from

⁴¹ Rogerian argument assumes that a common ground can be reached, relies on neutral language, and is used primarily for “emotionally charged, highly divisive issues” (Kiefer).

⁴² Toulmin logic involves the four elements of reason, claim, warrant, and proof. This method may be used to “test” the argument and determine the validity of the reason and claim offered.

⁴³ Jonassen and Kim, however, find Toulmin’s model somewhat problematic first because it depicts only the proponent’s side, it minimizes the opponent’s role in the process, and second because “warrants are often implicit and therefore hard to distinguish from backing” (443).

a disjointed observation or simply missing the point entirely.⁴⁴ Whatever the case, without deliberately engaging the material, students will continue to produce flat, perfunctory writing that is devoid of voice and reason unless there is exposure to methods that will effectively increase academic engagement.

It is not difficult to begin the instructional dialogue about the basic structure of an argument especially if students are shown that argument exists in their everyday lives. Be it pleading for a new toy, negotiating an increase in allowance, or hoping to extend a curfew, many of the fundamental elements of an argument are available to be more thoroughly explored. And it is from these accessible topics that students can very readily create a workable, disputable claim. Unfortunately, students begin to lose the ability to ground an argument when it comes time to articulate statements of support, proof, or evidence. It is as if they began the race without knowing the route. Students often seek the path of least resistance being that of a very explicit or overt piece of evidence that, while important when measuring the implied evidence, often becomes a minor tangential thought. However, if students can begin to see how pieces of explicit evidence are integrated with the implicit evidence, a more authentic line of thinking can be established with respect to how the evidenced is attached to and thereby supports a claim. Students most certainly can be prompted to provide some semblance of evidence simply by asking, “Why do you deserve an extended curfew?” but it almost always results with initial responses of “because.”⁴⁵ In the basic examination of a claim, students may find that the initial degree of support is modest at best and requires further thought before the discussion can move

⁴⁴ Here I am referring to the ordinal sequence of conjunctions that most students excessively use being *first*, *second*, *third*, and *finally*, or the dreaded concluding transitions of *now you know* or *as you can see*.

⁴⁵ It is here that I often enjoy a brief but valuable classroom conversation about the grammatical use of the subordinating conjunction *because* and its rhetorical implication. While the word itself is informally used as an answer, “because, I said so,” it is valuable to model the word being correctly used at the beginning of a sentence and thereby creating both a complex sentence and a template for concession or rebuttal: “Because the finding of the study is so narrow, it is necessary that the current conditions be kept in place.” Or the more popular favorite, “Because I got good grades, I should get an increase in my allowance.”

forward. It is at this precise juncture that the discussion and exploration of available evidence to support a given claim can yield a more resonant dialogue that can contribute to the cultivation of an argument.

Once students begin to find their way into an argument, they are sometimes apt to provide evidence that solely supports their points of view rather than include opposing evidence which forces concession and ultimately balance. Jonassen and Kim reference Perkins et al. and their conversation about the “my-side” bias that students tend to display when constructing an argument. This bias demonstrates, “a greater conviction to personal beliefs than counter evidence, overgeneralization from a single source of evidence, and making assertions that are unsupported by any evidence” (442). Jonassen and Kim explain the occurrence happening because “students are more inclined to support their own arguments based on their own beliefs than to dig for confirming or disconfirming evidence” (442). And digging is what we, as teachers, should continually be having our students do. At the secondary level in public education, students are now expected to assess if the evidence presented is relevant and sufficient (See Appendix B for an example of the sequencing).

While different types of claims may be made and the models of argument will vary based on their intended aim, the element of evidence must still be very present and clear in order to move the argument forward.^{46 47 48 49} How evidence is selected and organized, its inherent strengths or weaknesses, and how it may contradict opposing viewpoints are all necessary conversations that can help to lessen the often confusing, shot-in-the-dark process that students

⁴⁶ Claims of fact, value, and policy as categorized by Rottenberg and Winchell in *Elements of Argument*

⁴⁷ Because arguments are made with a particular purpose in mind, they are structured differently with three primary examples being those of Aristotle, Carl Rogers, and Stephen Toulmin.

⁴⁸ Whether it be to inquire, to convince, to persuade, or mediate, an argument is intended to accomplish one of these four “aims,” offered by Crusius and Channell, in *The Aims of Argument*.

⁴⁹ The word *aim* also finds reference in discussion about a writer’s intention or purpose.

display when working to establish a claim. To define evidence, it simply can be seen as that which provides support or detail to a given statement, claim, or thesis.⁵⁰

Because evidence is also different than a reason or motive, it is important to see both *how* and *what* it contributes to providing support for a claim. Evidence can take several forms depending on the intended function of the argument. These different forms may offer varying degrees of credibility depending on the type of support the claim calls for and how the specifically supported claim fits into the larger argument being established. Examples of evidence and its credibility are generally more easily interpreted when explicit examples are identified. Explicit evidence is concrete and usually denotes forms of data, statistics, direct clues of a crime scene, formal authorities, or professional opinions. This type of evidence may also be considered substantive in nature.⁵¹ The other type of evidence can be categorized as implicit. Implicit evidence is generally more abstract and at times more distal than explicit evidence with some examples being analogies, anecdotes, and personal experience. The use of this type of evidence usually requires the reader or audience to bridge the implied space between other elements of evidence and the claim with some degree of background knowledge. This is an area where groups of knowledgeable peers may assist with generating the knowledge necessary, in the space of abnormal discourse, to make the connections implied by this type of evidence that is more abstract. By simultaneously incorporating the larger cultural or social circumstances at

⁵⁰ Rottenberg and Winchell define evidence as “facts or opinions that support an issue or claim; may consist of statistics, reports of personal experience, or views of experts” (854). Crusius and Channell offer that “evidence includes anything that confirms a good reason or that might increase your readers’ acceptance of a reason” (233). Lundsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters define see evidence as simply “material offered to support an argument” (1042). Roskelly and Jolliffe, discuss the forms of narrative, logic, and data as examples of evidence “that a speaker or writer offers in support of a claim, generalization, or conclusion” (343).

⁵¹ While statistics are considered to be explicit in nature, Alan Boyle offers that there are various degrees of statistical evidence: “When physicists talk about their confidence, they talk in terms of statistical “sigma” levels. The higher the sigma, the less likely that the results are just a fluke. In particle physics, 3 sigma constitutes strong evidence, but it takes 5 sigma to accept the results as a discovery. At the 5-sigma level, statisticians say there’s roughly one chance out of 3 million that you’re leaping to the wrong conclusion, as opposed to a 1-in-1,000 chance at the 3-sigma level” (Boyle).

play at any given time, implicit evidence also serves as a more complex conversation for students to engage in for no other reason than to observe the larger interconnected implications that may underlie the presented claim.

Providing clear supporting evidence is expected and should be a well-established, ongoing conversation in the course of writing instruction. As the discussion goes, academic writing invariably includes some form of analysis, argument, and research. With this understood, students should be taught to identify how evidence both appears and functions for each of these forms. Writing analytically relies on both the use of evidence found in the text and on some outside observational or anecdotal evidence, which can then be connected back to a claim. In this way, students should learn how to select and integrate quotes, clarifying examples, and general background knowledge that is universally acknowledged.

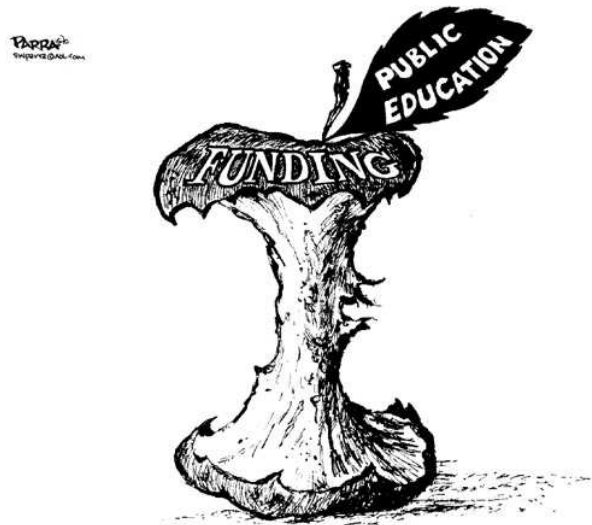
The various ways that evidence appears within an argument may be categorized more broadly into either explicit or implicit. While this is not necessarily always a clear delineation, the ability to determine and describe which group a form of evidence may belong to suggests both a degree of relevance and support that pertains to the claim. Additionally, when students identify the implicit nature of evidence, they engage more deeply in critical and abstract levels of thinking. The following continuum is an example of how certain elements of evidence might be categorized:

Explicit <-----> Implicit

Statistics, Facts, Expert Testimony, Textual, Corroborate/Contradictory, Common Knowledge, Similes, Anecdotes

In order to foster this type of analysis, students must start with the assessment of evidence, which usually begins with the identification of the more explicit pieces of evidence. For example, I have used the following visual in conjunction with the template found in Appendix A to work on

both categorizing explicit and implicit evidence and then analyzing the observable evidence to create a claim:



The premise is straight forward: identify the evidence used and determine its explicit and/or implicit value. The viability of the central claim should become apparent for students. By working through the presented evidence students should be encouraged to find points of access with which to engage the claim, and thereby the argument, being made by categorizing the explicit and implicit evidence. Student responses will be as varied as the evidence they locate. Some students will quickly see the more explicit support being offered in the argument, while others will more readily engage the implicit ideas. This exercise usually reveals the concrete and the abstract thinkers among the class.

Whether working as a whole group, collaborative group, or independently, students should be prompted to first determine the relationship of the identified evidence to the claim. Initially, this exercise may be simply to develop an explanatory statement shared with the group, which usually stems from a more explicit form of evidence (e.g., statistics, facts, direct quotes). This will create the beginning of consensus as some students will offer similar observations thereby

creating the foundation for the necessary learning community. As additional evidence explanations start to include the identification of more implied pieces of evidence (e.g., common/background knowledge, anecdotes, analogies), the teacher should work to shift the explanatory statements to those of comparison and contrast. This shift is necessary because it requires students to take more responsibility for the identifications they make. The application of comparing and contrasting is to 1) clarify generalizations and 2) draw conclusions. Students may then be asked to test their statements, or premises, and conclusions in the form of syllogisms or against those of other group members.

Depending on the level of the students being taught, this process may need to be reduced to the straightforward demonstration of relationships. Simply put, students need to show *how* what they are saying is connected to *what* is being said, which can be established through questioning the presented evidence (See Appendix F). Students may then work to drive the observable evidence toward coherent, relevant conclusions. More importantly, this is where students can effectively begin to defend, challenge, or qualify what is being said in a manner that is focused and contained within the parameters provided by the presented issue, which leads to the emergence of a concession or rebuttal. To extend the exercise, students might then be prompted to explore the cause and effect relationships established not only by the identified evidence but also their generalizations and emerging conclusions. Here is where interrelationships between other elements of evidence or other claims may be found. The exercise of determining cause and effect involves additional critical thinking all the while honing the skills of careful observation and reflective thinking.

Another exercise centered on the examination of evidence is to have students collect groups of articles and images that support a claim. Students then independently review their

source materials and establish the relationships and connections among them by examining and categorizing the available evidence. Students must be clear in their identification of both explicit and implicit information and how each piece contributes to a claim that may be effectively established. The exercise may also be repeated by allowing students to exchange the compiled source material to see what other conclusions or claims, if any, may be reached. This exchange affords students the opportunity to weigh the claims they created against the counter view points of their peers. The significance of this analysis is demonstrated in the observation of Jonassen and Kim that, “[...] students must learn to evaluate alternative arguments and support the stronger argument based on the weight of evidence on that side of the issue (which side is stronger and why?)” (446).

It is important to also have students consider how statistical evidence is used to make an argument. In the world of sports, if we were to add in the paid opinions of the talking heads and mix in the past professional (and often times anecdotal) experiences of the more well-spoken players and coaches, the recipe then becomes that of data and tangible evidence mixed with the anecdotal evidence. While this combination creates an initial explicit presentation regarding what’s what about who’s who in the world of athletics, there is usually an implied undertone that is captured in the phrase “On any given Sunday” meaning that anywhere, at anytime, an individual or team may beat another regardless of what the numbers say. This phrase, too, functions as a broad qualifier of the evidence presented which lessens the credibility of the source. A curious contrast in the use of evidence in this manner exists between sports analysts and political analysts. While both rely heavily on numbers, there seems to be more of a tendency to use statistics in an explicit manner in the athletic arena; whereas, there is more speculation and

therefore an implicit use of statistics in the political theatre leading to what would be referred to as *spin* the media world.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS OF STANDARDS ON INSTRUCTION

I have been arguing that in order to foster emerging argumentation in the classroom, students stand to gain a foothold by first examining the evidence presented and then proceeding to indentify how the evidence, both implicit and explicit, supports the claim. By using this approach, students should find a manageable point to access the argument by then composing a claim or counterclaim of their own based on what they are able to discern from the aggregate evidence, which usually stems from a collaborative or whole-group discussion. As secondary teachers, we need to establish and foster the practice of argumentation across disciplines in order to address the larger systemic changes prompted by both the new standards and the underlying issue of many educators simply not having a sound base from which to teach argumentation.

Built in to the Common Core State Standards, and therefore the vast majority of new state standards, is the focus on the ability of students to structure an effective argument. From understanding audience and classical appeals to understanding claims and providing evidence, students, and thereby teachers, are to begin wading much more deeply into the waters of argumentation. And as this journey unfolds, it is critical to view argumentation not just as a writing structure but as a thinking structure existing across grade levels and curricula. Whether written, spoken, or read, arguments abound in culture and among societies and as such, argumentation has gained a primary seat among the CCSS ahead of narrative and expository modes.⁵² To that end, work must be done to establish argumentation as a sound instructional tool if it is to be effectively integrated into the better practices of classroom instruction. If the structure of argument is to be more broadly applied across disciplines, teachers must begin to see its relevance from classroom to classroom: that is to say that a hypothesis in science is a claim in

⁵² A general search of the CCSS English Language Arts Standards turns up the word “argument” 46 times, with the word “evidence” appearing 136 times.

English or social studies, and that a math teacher's endless demand for students to show their work is a clear call for proof, support, or evidence tied to the initial moves of mathematical explanation.

The Depth of Knowledge Chart, developed as an alignment tool by Norman Webb, helps to further frame not only the relevant need for the instruction of argumentation, but also how the application of argumentation is already embedded in the many reading, writing, and thinking activities currently found in many classrooms. When analyzing the four Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Levels of Recall, Skill/Concept, Strategic Thinking, and Extended Thinking, it is easy to identify the presence of argumentation in over seventy-five percent of the four categories of listed verbs (see Appendix E). When these categories are interpreted to identify specifically explicit evidence, the primary groups represented are those clearly found at Level One (recall) and Level Two (Skill/Concept). When these categories are interpreted to identify specifically implicit evidence, the primary groups represented are those clearly found at Level Two (Skill/Concept) and Level Three (Strategic Thinking). Webb's DOK Chart frames a cross section of core disciplines that share common foundational activities among the four levels, most of which noticeably dovetail with both argumentation and the need for students to further engage in identifying and using different types of evidence necessary to support their academic positions, claims, or proofs. It is at Level Four (Extended Thinking) where students are to demonstrate understanding through the acts of designing, conducting, creating, synthesizing, critiquing, analyzing or proving. Several of these higher level activities may be found in extended projects requiring both additional instruction and research. Jonassen and Kim are clear about the requisite method of instruction that is more conducive when incorporating argumentation into a lesson:

[A]rgumentation will be more successful when student [sic] are engaged in project-based or problem-based learning environments where there exist legitimate alternatives that require argumentation. Students who are required to memorize information have little reason to engage in argumentation, so it is unlikely to be productive of learning. Authentic learning environments are those that present alternative claims or solutions that learners must resolve. (445)⁵³

A further examination of the reading and writing standards reveals a progression of the study and instruction of argumentation and its elements of claims, evidence, reasons, counterclaims and conclusions. Interestingly, the English Language Arts reading standards in the CCSS seem to simultaneously echo both Hirsch's *Cultural Literacy* and Graff's promotion of argument:

Through wide and deep reading of literature and literary nonfiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students gain a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references, and images; the ability to evaluate intricate arguments; and the capacity to surmount the challenges posed by complex texts. ("Common" 35)

Similarly, the English Language Arts writing standards suggest what Kraft had resigned himself to in the mid 1970s when he professed the death (or shift, rather) of argument. It is suggested of our students that "[t]hey need to know how to combine elements of different kinds of writing—for example, to use narrative strategies within argument and explanation within narrative—to produce complex and nuanced writing" ("Common" 41). For the most part, secondary students are required to be able to trace, or delineate and/or evaluate arguments to some progressive degree throughout both the reading and writing standards (for further examination, see Appendices B, C, and D). Examples of additional note are:

In reading literature, students in grades 6 through 10 must "Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text," ("Common" 36, 38).

⁵³ This brings to mind the very flexible, student-centered, multi-genre research ideas of Tom Romano while simultaneously questioning the relevance of rote drills and exercises that leave little room for the need to persuade, convince, or even inquire.

While grades 11 & 12 must also “Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text,” they must also work toward “including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain,” (“Common” 38).

Grade 7 Reading students will be “emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts,” (“Common” 39).

Grade 8 Reading students must be able to determine how an “author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints,” (“Common” 39).

All Secondary students will “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning” (“Common 39-41”)

Students must also be able to “Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research,” (“Common” 41).

The place of argument, and therefore evidence, among The Common Core State Standards is very clear. With these new standards, come new responsibilities. For teachers, it is vital to reevaluate, revisit, and recommit to the fundamental elements of argumentation as the driving structure of lesson design, especially given that the vast majority of teachers who have never been formally required to do so are now clearly being called to do so, and in the coming years will be professionally evaluated for how effectively they have done so.

Teachers of public education today face increasingly greater obstacles in the form of new standards, assessment, and evaluations. Nevertheless, teachers are consistent in their ability to keep showing up every day, every month, year after year. It is important to acknowledge that there exists a tenacious spirit among teachers who truly care about what their students are learning, how their students learn, and the manner by which instruction is delivered. Further, this tenaciousness, this innate resolute focus, is precisely what must be tapped if the backbone of

new standards (both state and national) is to firmly exist not as a means of staking down a lock-step curriculum, but more so as a bellwether to which both curriculum and instruction must firmly and willingly be tethered.

Jonassen and Kim offer that Kuhn provides the most comprehensive conception of the skills of argumentation in which she offers the five essential skills of argumentation as being: “the skill to generate causal theories to support claims (supportive theory); the skill to offer evidence to support theories (evidence); the skill to generate alternative theories (alternative theory); the skill to envision conditions that would undermine the theories they hold (counterarguments); and the skill to rebut alternative theories (rebuttal).” (441). Further, Jonassen and Kim remind us that it is important to understand the difference between rhetorical arguments and dialectical arguments. If the learning goal requires promotion or persuasion, then rhetorical argumentation is the appropriate approach whereas resolving a difference of opinion calls for dialectical argumentation.^{54 55} Coupled with secondary teachers beginning to understand argumentation, and its types and structures, should also be an understanding of what I see as a convergence of sorts among three paradigms of writing instruction: current traditional rhetoric, expressivism, and social constructionism. I submit this idea because I see not only the necessity to focus on the text that students produce (current traditional rhetoric), nor simply the idea that writing is solely the means of creative self-discovery and reflection (expressivism), but that when combined with discourse communities and groups of knowledgeable peers (social

⁵⁴ “Rhetorical arguments are conceived as a dialogue between an arguer and an audience and are the most common form of argumentation. The goal of rhetorical arguments, otherwise known as monological arguments, is to persuade or convince others of a claim or proposition that the arguer believes in without regard to positions that others hold. A rhetorical argument is successful if it gains the approval of the target audience. Therefore, most rhetorical arguments concentrate on developing effective persuasive argumentation techniques” (Jonassen 443).

⁵⁵ “[D]ialectical argumentation represents a dialogue between proponents of alternative claims during a dialogue game or a discussion.” These arguments may be adversarial, seek a compromise, or take place within individuals or social groups (Jonassen 443).

constructionism), the messy business of writing and thinking through argumentation becomes a very real and tangible process for both students and teachers.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

I do not offer grand solutions to the school board or the superintendent's cabinet because in their respective positions they must maintain a larger scope than I. However, being closer to the ground and "in the trenches on the front lines" as we classroom teachers are reminded, I see a clear way to make a sustainable impact not just on the engagement and achievement of students, but more importantly on the way students think and how they manage their academic selves.^{56 57} I see an immediate relevance to the implementation of argumentation across disciplines and also an immediate action that should be taken for the sake of our students. Writing instruction should be established around the practice of argumentation while consistently using the subordinate modes of writing to illustrate specific portions of the classical argument like that of *confirmatio* (i.e., evidence).

Whether they admit it or not, most students are innately curious, but the majority lack the ability to tap into that curiosity; they do not know *how* to construct their knowing. This is a point of access where their learning might be initially met – with the power of inquiry. Students should be afforded the luxury of being able to effectively wonder and then be exposed to the process of how to transform that wonder, that curiosity, into an application or reflection that leads to "What do I think about this and why?" and, "What do they think about this and why?" and, "How can I make these ideas talk to each other to represent my own point of view?"

⁵⁶ One irony of being "in the trenches on the front lines" is that those with boots on the ground must be entrusted with the flexibility to respond to a given situation. However, the rigidity of the systemic changes facing public education today do not seem to speak to the requisite instructional flexibility necessary to move student achievement forward when teachers are faced with following pacing charts, curriculum maps, and common district assessments developed by private, for-profit companies outside of the state in which they are being used.

⁵⁷ For students to discover their academic selves, they must first be willing to shed the apathetic shroud that invariably befalls students when they approach a learning opportunity: with academic awareness comes academic responsibility. I believe, by encouraging students to value their opinions and then make them academically relevant, we will begin to hear what students have to say rather than hear the sound of students sleeping.

On day one, palpable instruction in argumentation should begin in earnest in the content area classrooms. The method through which an instructor approaches the process may simply start with soliciting student opinions, require students to identify both types of explicit and implicit evidence that buoy more readily accepted opinions among larger groups (learning communities generating knowledge), and finish by working to establish more formally structured claims.

A more traditional form of teaching research has required students to pick a topic of interest, educate themselves about the topic (i.e., reading) and develop, maybe through three modes of writing, an informed piece of research demonstrating, but mostly summarizing and regurgitating, neatly organized facts. Further, if this traditional method were required to be in a problem solution format, with argument and sometimes persuasion implied, students most likely would rehash topics around the traditional hot-button issues without ever integrating their own essential views on the topic. I find that students with a greater understanding of both explicit and implicit evidence stand to create and defend more authentic self-made claims than if they are left to their own devices.⁵⁸

Working toward the consistent practice of requiring students to provide clear evidence or proof in supporting any opinion or claim, the “*why* I think *what* I think,” should be a standard classroom procedure that can be accomplished through several means across content areas. If teachers among content areas are persistent in this effort, the current gap in what Gerald Graff calls “argument literacy” can slowly be made up. To be clear, this is not new and may in fact

⁵⁸ Here I refer to a more passive practice of research which invariably results in students listing relatively random evidence with minimal concern as to however loosely it supports their claim. I argue that students must first understand the almost symbiotic relationship between evidence and claims before they can begin working to link the two elements together.

draw thoughts and utterances of “I already do that,” and “I have done that for years.”⁵⁹ But more importantly, what this realization should also lead to is the understanding that it is the beginning of argumentation for our students. And the sooner teachers present the process, the more beginnings students will have. And the sooner we all can begin to effectively apply the practice across content areas in ways that are not mutually exclusive, the more likely we are to have a hand in creating better readers, writers, and thinkers.

The current problem with implementing argumentation in the secondary classroom is establishing the practice itself. I do not want to sound so idealistic as to suggest this implementation to be easy. In reality, there lies a gap between the pedagogical understanding and the practical application of argumentation in today’s classrooms. However, conversations must begin among teacher education programs, English departments, and the social sciences regarding the both instruction and implementation of the practice of argumentation. Alignment must be considered. Articulation must be communicated. Argument must be conjoined with the type of thinking now being mandated by newly designed standards. While these considerations are critical, they only prove to address the long-term issues of teacher preparation. The pressing and troublesome short-term issue revolves around how to empower current secondary classroom teachers to teach argumentation. This is not to be taken lightly: these professionals are suddenly finding themselves responsible for teaching to standards the content of which they have a limited capacity due to no fault of their own. This issue should bother us. Is this fair? Isn’t this important?

In order to address this circumstance, there must be honest conversations about what argumentation should look like across curricula – in both reading and writing. There must be

⁵⁹ Here I am thinking simultaneously of what Robert Kraft acknowledges in *The Death of Argument* and what current teachers of composition most likely struggle with when teaching argumentation: we teach the way we were taught and that we want our “students to learn to writing that would help them in college” (549).

professional learning opportunities given to current district faculties with specific regard to argumentation in order to address this looming pedagogical deficit. Unfortunately, this requires time and money – both of which few public school districts possess.

Aristotle reminds us that rhetoric is “the faculty of *observing* in any given case the available means of persuasion.” I offer that before we can teach rhetoric, we must first be able to observe, identify, and discuss the evidence being presented. We must teach our students how evidence itself can function as a vehicle for the initial exploration of an argument while simultaneously establishing an open dialogue with district administration about how argumentation might reshape curricula. As argumentation is a dialogic process with the requisite ingredient being some form of community, we cannot afford to be excluded. “We need not to be let alone. We need to be really bothered once in a while. How long is it since you were really bothered? About something important, about something real?”⁶⁰

⁶⁰ From Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* protagonist, Guy Montag, when he questions his wife, Mildred, about her demand to be left alone and, ironically, not be bothered by reality (52).

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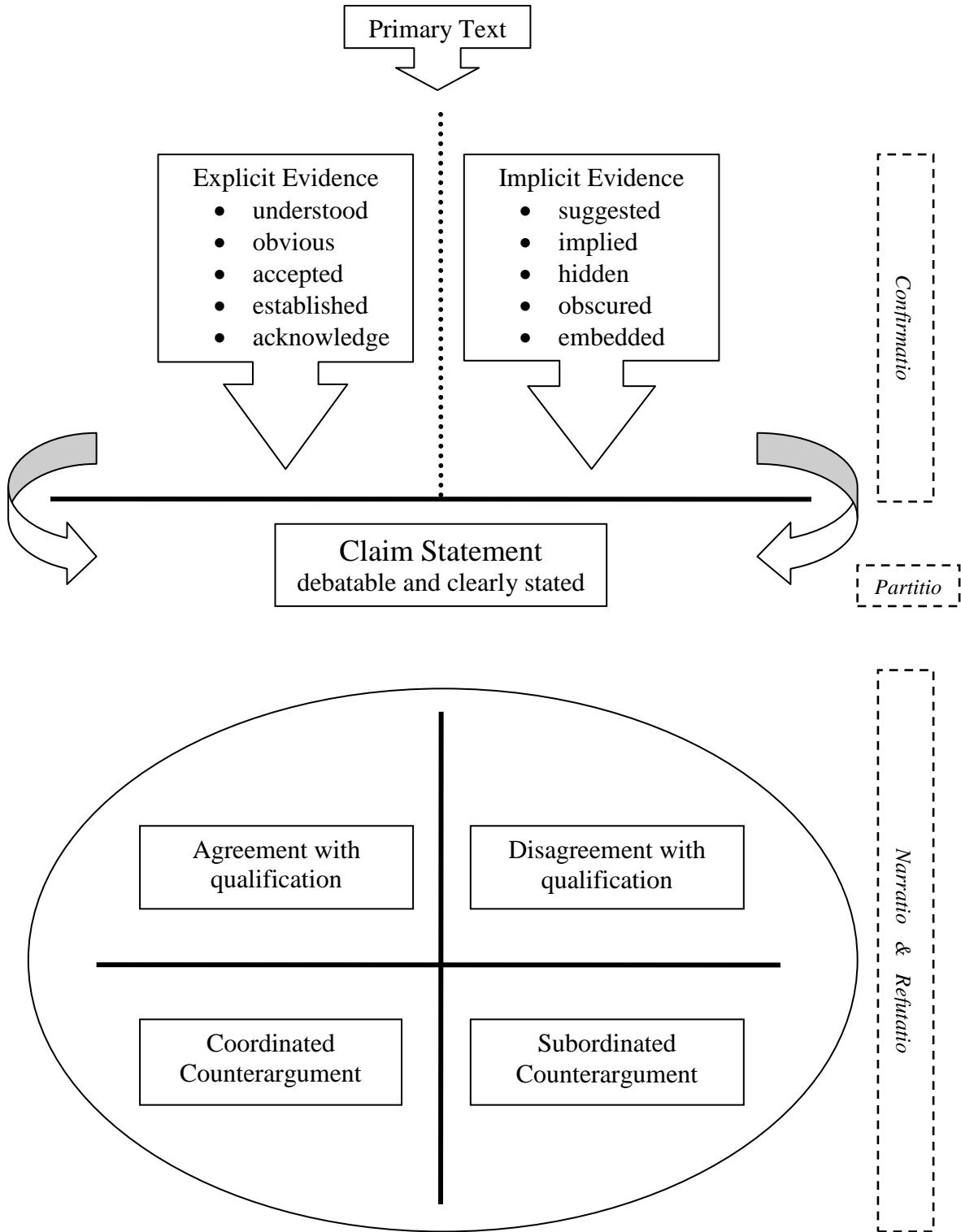
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APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

For Grade 6:

Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

For Grade 7:

Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

For Grade 8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Grades 9 & 10: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

Grades 11 & 12: Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., *The Federalist*, presidential addresses).

APPENDIX C

For Grade 6: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.

b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

For Grade 7: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

For Grade 8: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

APPENDIX D

For Grades 9 & 10: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

For Grades 11 & 12: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

APPENDIX F

Questions to pose to students about examining evidence:

What is the evidence intended to support (advance inquiry, convince, persuade, engage?)

What are the limitations of the evidence presented?

How is the evidence presented? Explicitly, Implicitly, Definitively, Dialogically, Interrogatively?

How does evidence relate to an identified fallacy? What are the gaps?

What and how does the evidence subordinate?

Define the proximity of the evidence to the claim it seems to support? What are the gaps?

How does the evidence affect the intended appeal? Does the evidence stand on its own appeal?

How does the evidence refute counterargument or contribute to concession?

What type of evidence is best used to perform the functions of concession and refutation?

How does the evidence used fit the degree of complexity in the argument?