Argumentative Essay: Building Blocks

Thesis

The thesis of an argumentative essay takes the form of a claim. A claim is the writer's opinion about the topic of the essay. It is a statement of position, belief, or judgment. A claim might be introduced with certain phrases that make the writer's point of view clear, such as "It is believed," "Most should," or "One must." An opinion cannot be proven to be true, but it can be supported with relevant evidence, facts, statistics, quotations from experts, examples, so that it seems true or logical. The claim of an argument typically appears in the introductory section, often as the last sentence.

Identification and Application:

A thesis statement or claim in an argumentative essay:
● states an opinion about the topic of the essay
● previews the ideas and evidence that will be presented in the body paragraphs of the essay
● gets stated in the introductory section, which usually consists of one paragraph

Thesis/Claim:

_____(hero/heroine) should be a hero because

_____ and _____.

Evidence and Analysis:

An effective argument provides readers with supporting details in the form of reasons and relevant evidence. Reasons are statements that answer the question, "Why?" They tell why the writer thinks that his or her claim is true. The writer provides reasons to support a claim, which makes it more believable. Relevant evidence includes facts, details, statistics, definitions, quotations from experts, observations, and examples. Evidence that supports the reasons and the claim is often found through research.

Research can be the key to presenting a successful argument. While researching, the writer deepens his or her understanding of the topic and finds evidence that supports the reasons and the claim. (Just as important—if the writer can't find enough evidence that supports the claim, then he or she knows it is time to rethink the claim and the reasons.) Without solid supporting evidence, the writer would simply be stating his or her opinion about a topic—and that's rarely convincing to readers.

Paragraph 1: Topic Sentence (Thesis/Claim Reason #1)

_____ is someone who _____

Evidence (quote):

Evidence (quote):

Paragraph 2: Topic Sentence (Thesis/Claim Reason #2)

_____ is someone who _____

Evidence (quote):

Evidence (quote):