

# Evaluating Arguments

## Vocabulary

NEATLY write down the vocabulary word and the definition.

There will be a quiz later, so THINK while you write.

Include examples when you think they are helpful.

# Ad hominem attack

An attack on a person rather than on his or her argument.

An ad hominem attack is a fallacy and weakens an argument

- Ex: Kristin: I think school should start later so kids will be rested at school. Steve: Of course you'd say that. You just want to sleep in.

# Argument

A position or viewpoint along with the claims and evidence used to support that position

# Claim

A statement that supports a position

- Ex: If school started later, kids would get more sleep

# Counterargument

A rebuttal, or argument against, an opposing viewpoint or claim

- Ex: Starting school later won't actually help kids get more sleep because kids will just stay up later at night.

# Emotional Appeal

Appealing to the readers' emotions by making the reader so upset, excited, or scared that the reader will just agree with them.

- Ex: Think of those poor, exhausted kids getting up at dawn every morning and shuffling to school half asleep!

# Evidence

Facts, statistics, examples, and comparisons that SHOW why a claim should be believed

- Ex: A 2012 study by the National Sleep Institute found that 47 percent of kids aren't getting enough sleep.

# Fallacy

A false or mistaken belief or claim, usually based on poor reasoning

- Ex: All kids are tired because the kids in my class are tired

# Opposing viewpoint

A position that is the opposite of another person

# Position (or viewpoint)

The central idea the author is trying to support in his or her argument; thesis

- Ex: School should start later.

# Rebut

To claim or prove  
that something is  
untrue or false

# Refute

To prove a statement, position, or claim is wrong or false

# Relevant

Having to do with the matter being considered; pertinent

When writers use claims and evidence that is irrelevant, or not relevant, they weaken their argument

# Tracing an argument

Identifying and exploring how an argument is made in an essay, a speech, or other text.