

Analyzing Arguments

Instructions: Fill in the table below to determine which video provides the most effective argument about school uniforms.

Video #1	Video #2
What is the video arguing for?	What is the video arguing for?
List the reasons and evidence provided.	List the reasons and evidence provided.
How well does the video explain those reasons/evidence?	How well does the video explain those reasons/evidence?
Which video provides the most persuasive argument? Explain your answer.	

Argument Concepts – Anchor Chart

Debatable Claim – an opinion that is a matter of personal experience and values that must be backed up with evidence. Others can disagree with this claim. Also known as an opinion.

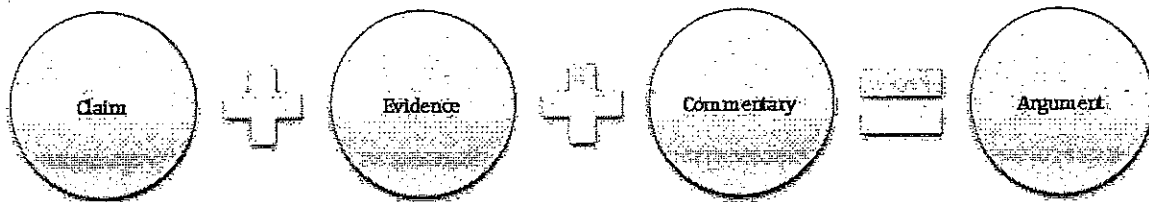
Evidence – details, facts, and reasons that directly relate to and support a debatable claim.

Commentary – sentences in an argument paragraph that explain what is important about the evidence and tell the reader how it proves and supports the claim.

Argument

- In life – conflicts that use language.
- In writing – opinions that can be backed up with evidence.

Persuasion – to move another person or group to agree with a belief or position through argument, appeal, or course of action.



Claim = opinion on a topic

Evidence = facts, reasons, details

Commentary = explanation

Explain Your Argument

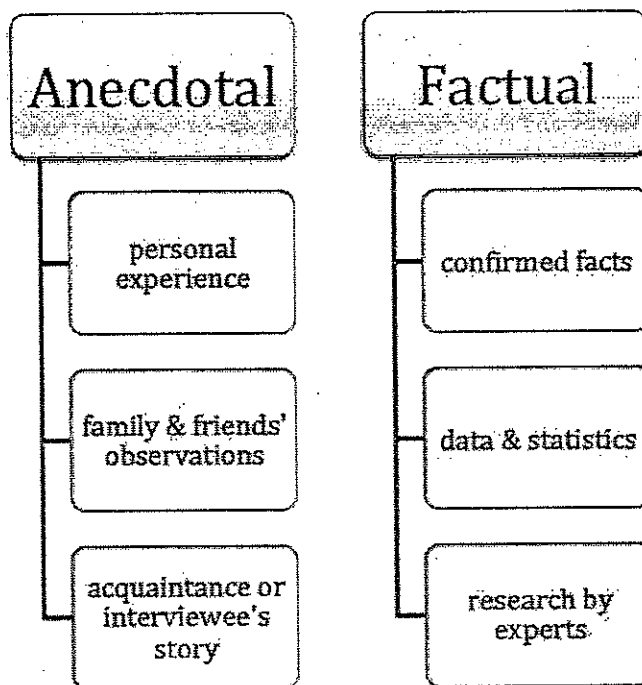
Directions:

1. CLAIM - For each item, state your opinion/preference one way or the other.
(Yes, you must pick one.)
2. EVIDENCE - Give two (2) pieces of effective evidence (facts, reasons, details)
for why you feel this way.
3. COMMENTARY - Explain how your evidence supports your opinion.

Should students be able to use cell phones at school?	CLAIM
	EVIDENCE
	COMMENTARY
Should the school day begin later?	CLAIM
	EVIDENCE
	COMMENTARY
Should all schools go to year-round school?	CLAIM
	EVIDENCE
	COMMENTARY

Evidence Types

Evidence = details, reasons, and facts



EXAMPLE

<p style="text-align: center;">DEBATABLE CLAIM</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>School uniforms take away students' individuality and creativity.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">details, brief stories, personal observations</p>
<p><u>Writer's personal observation/experience</u> – I used to enjoy deciding what to wear every day because it was an expression of who I was, but now I get up every day and put on the same pants and shirt.</p>
<p><u>Friends' experience</u> – My friend Latrice said, "Since our school went to uniforms, the only way I get to express myself is through my hair and my shoes. And even our shoes have to be closed toe. Everybody looks like everybody else."</p>
<p><u>Acquaintance's story</u> – Joanna, who sits next to me in English, was so desperate to have some way to express her individuality that she painted each of her fingernails a different color.</p>

DEBATABLE CLAIM

School uniforms take away students' individuality and creativity.

FACTUAL EVIDENCE

Facts, data, statistics, research by experts

Confirmed facts – Schools cannot censor students' selfexpression. In the *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969) case, the Supreme Court ruled that public school officials could not censor student expression — the wearing of black armbands, in that case — unless they could reasonably forecast that the student expression would cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities or would invade the rights of others. (First Amendment Center)

Data/Statistics – In 2007, Only 22.1% of students surveyed in the Harford County, Maryland Public Schools believed that students should be required to wear a uniform. (*The Baltimore Sun*)

Research by experts – “Some schools thrive on permissiveness and individuality, while others have to be more restrictive to contain a restless student body.’ Before making the uniform decision, he suggests that schools carefully consider their unique populations; what kind of message they want to send; and whether or not they think their kids will go for it. Dr. Hilfer warns, ‘By instituting a uniform policy, schools are taking away kids' individuality – schools need to decide if that sacrifice is worth making.’” (FamilyEducation.com)

Challenge Question: Why is it important to have a mix of both anecdotal and factual evidence in an argument paragraph or essay?

NAME THAT EVIDENCE TYPE!

- Label the pieces of evidence below as **A** for anecdotal or **F** for factual.
- For bonus points:
 - Indicate whether the **Anecdotal Evidence** is
 - **P** = personal
 - **F** = family or friends
 - **A/I** = acquaintance or interviewee
 - Indicate whether the **Factual Evidence** is
 - **C** = confirmed facts
 - **D/S** = data or statistics
 - **R** = research by experts

CLAIM: School uniforms reduce violence in schools.

A/F?	Bonus!	Evidence
		Five years after the Long Beach School District mandated uniforms, overall crime in the school district has dropped by a startling 91%. Suspensions were down 90%, and vandalism decreased by 69%. (<i>Psychology Today</i>)
		My friend Robert said he thinks uniforms have limited the bullying that goes on at school. Other boys used to bully him for wearing nerdy clothes, but since everyone wears the same thing now, there's nothing to bother him about.
		"Arnold Goldstein, Ph.D., head of the Center for Research on Aggression at Syracuse University, believes uniforms work by promoting a sense of community, allowing troubled students to feel part of a supportive whole. Says Goldstein: 'There is a sense of belonging.'" (<i>Psychology Today</i>)
		There was a girl in my math class who used to wear really short skirts and low cut shirts, and the boys would say and do inappropriate things around her. But now we all wear pants, so there's not much they can say.
		Mrs. Betty Johnson, a teacher at Athens Middle School explained, "Kids are better behaved now. They take school more seriously because of the uniforms. And the ones who are interested in gangs—it's not as much of an issue in the classroom because the students all wear navy blue pants and white shirts."
		"School uniforms can help reduce theft, violence, and the negative effects of peer pressure caused when some students come to school wearing designer clothing and expensive sneakers. A uniform code also prevents gang members from wearing colors and insignia that could cause trouble and helps school officials recognize intruders who do not belong on campus." (U.S. Department of Education Study/Constitutional Rights Foundation)

Evidence Types Mini-Task

	DEBATABLE CLAIM:
Anecdotal	EVIDENCE #1
Factual	EVIDENCE #2
Anecdotal	EVIDENCE #3
Factual	EVIDENCE #4