

## Presenting an Argument

**Argument** – a stated position, with support for or against an idea or issues

1. **Claim** – states the speaker’s conclusion, based on evidence, about some state of affairs

- Often stated as thesis statements
- Answers the question “what are you trying to prove?”
- Asserts the state of affairs but unless your listeners already agree with the claim, it’s unlikely that they’ll accept it at face value
- To make the claim believable, the speaker must provide proof, or evidence in support of the claim

2. **Evidence** – substantiates the claim

- Material that provides grounds for belief
- The goal of using evidence is to make a claim more acceptable, or believable, to the audience
- If the evidence is believable, then the claim is more likely to be found acceptable by the audience
- If the audience questions the evidence, then it too must be treated as a claim and some other evidence must be provide to substantiate it

3. **Warrants** – provide reasons that evidence supports the claim

- Help both to support a claim and to substantiate the link between the claim and the evidence
- Another term for warrants is “reasoning”

- Although a piece of evidence may provide strong support for a claim, in order for the audience to accept the argument, the connection between the claim and the evidence must be made clear
- Serves as a bridge between a claim and evidence

## **Diagramming the Argument**

1. Write down the claim
2. List each possible piece of evidence you have in support of the claim
3. Write down the corresponding warrants, or reason, that link the evidence to the claim