

ARGUMENT STRUCTURES

When developing an argument, use these lines of reasoning that academic audiences will find familiar.

Descriptive Techniques

1. Use a compelling descriptive example.
2. Suggest a possible application or illustration of a principle you hold or advocate.
3. Set up or refer to a model for action or behavior that you wish to propose.
4. Set up an ideal for action or a principle you wish to promote.

Narrative Techniques

1. Show that one event is the cause or effect of another.
2. Show that an act or event will have favorable or unfavorable consequences.
3. Show that one thing is the means and the other the end.
4. Argue that waste would occur if some action already begun is abandoned or if some talent or presence is lost.
5. Show the direction of any stage in a long process.
6. Show the connection between persons and their actions or lack of connection between them.
7. use the authority of a person, based on his or her creditable actions or experience.
8. Use a narrative example to support your focus.

Classification Techniques

1. Use an analogy, showing how a relationship in one sphere that supports your focus resembles a relationship in another sphere.
2. Classify someone in a group and show the implications of membership in that group.
3. Use comparison or contrast to support your focus.

These techniques come from Four Worlds of Writing 2nd ed. by Janice M. Lauer, et al.