

Making a Good Argument / Types of Arguments

Claims need to be **specific, arguable, focused, and interesting.** *And they need to be claims!*

- ☹ This paper is about the Occupy Wall Street movement.
- ☹ There are good sides and bad sides to how the economy works in America today, and it's up to the reader to decide. What do you think?
- ☹ There are a lot of problems with poverty today.
- ☺ Early in his second term, President Obama needs to update the federal definition of what it means to be poor, that is, to raise the "poverty line," based upon the recent recommendations by the National Academy of Sciences.

Types of Logical Arguments to consider for your essays:

DEFINITION	$x = y$ or $x \neq y$	where the essay argues the definition of words matter
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- Cheerleading is a sport.
- "Enhanced interrogation" is torture.
- Forcing students to buy a dining plan is unfair.

EVALUATION	$x > y$ or $x < y$	where the essay establishes criteria to decide whether one thing is preferable to another
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- Cheerleading is a better sport than golf.
- Freedom is ultimately better than security.

CAUSAL	$x \rightarrow y$	where the essay argues that one thing leads (or will lead) to another
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- Cheerleading develops participants into community leaders.
- Increased awareness of concussions in football will lead to the demise of the NFL.
- Republicans' poor outreach to Latinos lost them the 2012 Presidential election.

PROPOSAL	$x!$	where the essay argues that someone should <i>do</i> something differently, or <i>think about</i> something differently
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Practical arguments (we should do x!)

- The NCAA should include cheerleading as a sport for Title IX purposes.
- Democrats should campaign more aggressively in the South.
- We should spend more time revising our essays for English class.

Conceptual arguments (we should think x about y!)

- We should understand colleges' attempts to classify cheerleading as a sport as an attempt to circumvent Title IX's goal of equal access to competitive sport for students of all genders.
- We should more thoughtfully consider whether or not it is ethically right to eat lobster.