# Claims and Evidence Handout

Type your name here: Yar Nuul Reech

Every persuasive argument is composed of claims and evidence. A claim is a statement that the author is trying to convince the audience is true. Evidence is information used to support the claim. Often, there are differences in how well a claim is supported by evidence. A claim can have strong support from evidence, weak support from evidence, and no evidence at all.

To begin, choose one of the following persuasive arguments:

* [How to Make Stress Your Friend](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend/transcript) (To access the transcript for the video, click on the word “Transcript” below the video.)
* [Global Warming Is Not A Serious Problem](http://ezproxy.snhu.edu/login?url=https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/EJ3010280205/OVIC?u=nhc_main&sid=OVIC&xid=763e368c)

Then, follow the instructions below to separate claims from evidence and identify claims with strong support from evidence, claims without support from evidence, and claims with weak support from evidence.

**Name of Selected Argument**

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| How to Make Stress Your Friend: https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly\_mcgonigal\_how\_to\_make\_stress\_your\_friend  by Kelly McGonigal |

1. List **four examples of claims** and **four examples of evidence** in the appropriate columns of the table.

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| **Claims** | **Evidence** |
| 1. “Stress makes you social” | 1. “Oxytocin is a neuron-hormone. It fine-tunes your brain's social instincts. It primes you to do things that strengthen close relationships. Oxytocin makes you crave physical contact with your friends and family.  It enhances your empathy. It even makes you more willing to help and support the people you care about.  Some people have even suggested we should snort oxytocin...  to become more compassionate and caring. But here's what most people don't understand about oxytocin.  It's a stress hormone. Your pituitary gland pumps this stuff out as part of the stress response.  It's as much a part of your stress response as the adrenaline that makes your heart pound. And when oxytocin is released in the stress response, it is motivating you to seek support. Your biological stress response is nudging you to tell someone how you feel,  instead of bottling it up. Your stress response wants to make sure you notice when someone else in your life is struggling so that you can support each other. When life is difficult, your stress response wants you to be surrounded by people who care about you.” |
| 2."People who view stress as harmful have a higher risk of premature death compared to those who view stress as enhancing.”[NIH](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3374921/" \l ":~:text=In this study,death by 43%25.) | 2.”T[his study tracked 30,000](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend/transcript" \l ":~:text=Let me start,out who died.) adults in the United States for eight years, and they started by asking people, "How much stress have you experienced in the last year?" They also asked, "Do you believe that stress is harmful for your health?" And then they used public death records to find out who died.... [People who experienced a lot of stress in the previous year had a 43 percent increased risk of dying.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3374921/" \l ":~:text=In this study,death by 43%25.) But that was only true for the people who also believed that stress is harmful for your health.  People who experienced a lot of stress but did not view stress as harmful were no more likely to die. In fact, they had the lowest risk of dying of anyone in the study, including people who had relatively little stress.” |
| 3. "Stress can make your creates resilience which make the brain stronger" | 3. "How you think and how you act can transform your experience of stress. When you choose to view your stress response as helpful, you create the biology of courage. And when you choose to connect with others under stress, you can create resilience. Now I wouldn't necessarily ask for more stressful experiences in my life, but this science has given me a whole new,” |
| 4. “Changing mindset about about stress can change one’s body response to stress.” | 4. "Now that is exactly what participants were told in a study conducted at [Harvard University](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend/transcript" \l ":~:text=But what if,stress response changed.). Before they went through the social stress test, they were taught to rethink their stress response as helpful. That pounding heart is preparing you for action. If you're breathing faster, it's no problem. It's getting more oxygen to your brain. And participants who learned to view the stress response as helpful for their performance, well, they were less stressed out, less anxious, more confident, but the most fascinating finding to me was how their physical stress response changed. Now in a typical stress response, you heart rate goes up, and your blood vessels constrict like this. And this is one of the reasons that chronic stress is sometimes associated with cardiovascular disease. It's not really healthy to be in this state all the time. But in the study, when participants viewed their stress response as helpful, their blood vessels stayed relaxed like this. Their heart was still pounding, but this is a much healthier cardiovascular profile. It actually looks a lot like what happens in moments of joy and courage.” |

2. Identify **two claims that have strong support from evidence and identify the supporting evidence**. Give an explanation of why you think the support for the claim is strong. You may use responses from question 1. To identify claims with strong support from evidence, consider the following:

* Is a reasonable connection made between the evidence and the claim?
* Is the evidence clearly presented?
* Is the evidence complete?

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| Claim 1:  Stress makes you social |
| Supporting evidence for claim 1:  1. "[Some people have even suggested we should snort oxytocin](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend/transcript" \l ":~:text=social instincts.,people who care)… to become more compassionate and caring. But here's what most people don't understand about oxytocin. It's a stress hormone. Your pituitary gland pumps this stuff out as part of the stress response. It's as much a part of your stress response as the adrenaline that makes your heart pound. And when oxytocin is released in the stress response, it is motivating you to seek support. Your biological stress response is nudging you to tell someone how you feel, instead of bottling it up. Your stress response wants to make sure you notice when someone else in your life is struggling so that you can support each other. When life is difficult, your stress response wants you to be surrounded by people who care about you.” |
| Explanation of why support for the claim is strong:  The evidence clearly links the release of oxytocin, a social bonding hormone, with stress. The connection between oxytocin and its role in promoting social behavior is well-established in scientific research, thus providing strong support for the claim. |
| Claim 2: ”Stress gives us access to our hearts.” |
| Supporting evidence for claim 2:  ”Stress gives us access to our hearts. The compassionate heart that finds joy and meaning in connecting with others, and yes, your pounding physical heart, working so hard to give you strength and energy. And when you choose to view stress in this way, you're not just getting better at stress, you're actually making a pretty profound statement. You can trust yourself to handle life's challenges. And you're remembering that you don't have to face them alone. |
| Explanation of why support for the claim is strong:  The evidence demonstrates a positive correlation between perceiving stress as beneficial and creating resilience, implying that stress can contribute to mental strength. The link between mindset, social support, and resilience is supported by psychological studies, making the evidence robust in supporting the claim. |

3. Identify an **unsupported claim**, which is a claim for which no evidence is given.

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| Unsupported claim:  Claim: "Stress can be good for your health" Evidence: "And your stress response has a built-in mechanism for stress resilience, and that mechanism is human connection."  Explanation: While the evidence suggests that human connection can aid in stress resilience, it doesn't directly support the claim that stress is inherently good for health. The link between stress and health benefits is not clearly established in the provided evidence. Additionally, the statement does not address other potential negative effects of stress on health, making the support for the claim weak. |

4. Identify a **claim with weak support and its supporting evidence**. Give an explanation of why you think the support for the claim is weak. To identify a claim with weak support, consider the following:

* Is the claim exaggerated? Does it go beyond what the evidence can reasonably support?
* Is the evidence presented in a confusing way?
* Could the evidence be used easily to support a different claim?
* Is information missing from the evidence that would make the support stronger?

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| Claim:  The claim is the harmful effects of stress on your health are not inevitable |
| Supporting evidence:  The discussion of a study conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is my supporting evidence, where it says according to ms Kelly McGonigal that the participants who experienced high levels of stress but did not view stress as harmful had a lower risk of dying than those who experienced high levels of stress and believed it was harmful. While this study provides some support for the claim, the evidence is limited to one study and does not account for other potential factors that could influence health outcomes. Additionally, the evidence could be used to support a different claim, such as the impact of mindset on health outcomes, rather than specifically addressing the inevitability of harmful effects from stress. Therefore, the support for this claim is weak due to its narrow focus and lack of comprehensive evidence. |
| Explanation of why support for the claim is weak:  The evidence presented in the talk is not confusing, but it lacks depth and breadth. The talk would benefit from including a broader range of studies and research to strengthen the support for this claim. Additionally, information about potential confounding variables or alternative explanations for the study’s findings would make the support stronger. |

**REFERENCE**

1. https://hbr.org/2015/09/stress-can-be-a-good-thing-if-you-know-how-to-use-it
2. https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly\_mcgonigal\_how\_to\_make\_stress\_your\_friend
3. https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly\_mcgonigal\_how\_to\_make\_stress\_your\_friend/transcript#:~:text=Let%20me%20start,out%20who%20died.