

Argumentation in User-Generated Content: Annotation Guidelines

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April, 2014 (rev r8445)

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1 Introduction

Debate The process of inquiry and advocacy; the seeking of a reasoned judgment on a proposition.
[Freeley and Steinberg, 2008, p. 2]

Controversy Controversy is an essential prerequisite of debate. Where there is no clash of ideas, proposals, interests, or expressed positions on issues, there is no debate.
[Freeley and Steinberg, 2008, p. 43]

Argumentation Reason giving in communicative situations by people whose purpose is the justification of acts, beliefs, attitudes, and values.
[Freeley and Steinberg, 2008, p. 2]

Persuasion Communication intended to influence the acts, beliefs, attitudes, and values of others.
[Freeley and Steinberg, 2008, p. 2]

Persuasion and argumentation are the essence of any debate about controversies. Whether on-line or face-to-face, people try to convince others about their opinions, values, and attitude towards that particular controversy using various kinds of argumentation.

Let's assume a made-up example from a discussion forum about *single-sex education*, a quite controversial topic. In one post, the author (i.e. *Jack*) writes:

#ex1 (forumpost, single-sex education) I'm completely against single-sex education. This does not prepare students for real life where men and women live together!! –Jack

Jack's intention here is not only to share his opinion but also to persuade other users in the debate (and potentially all readers on the Internet). We can thus treat his message as *persuasive* (also cf. definition above). The means he uses to persuade is *argumentation*, because he also gives some reasons to support his stance towards the discussed topic.

However, the way people argue is not always as clear as in the example above. Suppose we have the following text from an actual debate about home-schooling:

#203 (artcomment, homeschooling) Teaching is not just subject knowledge (although I'd be the last to downplay that). It is also meeting other people from all walks of life, dealing with new situations, finding friends etc. I've always felt sorry for home-schooled kids. They are being denied their childhood and adolescence by parents who want to exercise total power of them, deny them the pains and pleasures that social experience brings. –JuniusPublicus

The author does not say explicitly that he/she is against home-schooling. However, he/she provides some examples (necessity of social interaction, total power of parents) and expresses feelings (sorry for home-schooled kids), so we can infer out the *implicit* message. This example is thus also *persuasive* and *argumentative*.

The goal of this annotation study is to identify argumentation in user-generated content in online sources, such as discussion forums, article comments, blogs, etc.

On the other hand, even in discussions about controversies, we can find many contributions whose intention is not to persuade others. Such texts may contain story-sharing, personal worries, user interaction (asking questions, expressing agreement), among others. We will discuss these in the following section.

2 Some notes on the discussed controversies

The dataset contains six controversial topics; while some of them are clear and self-explanatory, some desire a little introduction.

Homeschooling The debate here is whether home schooling (teaching children at home) is a better way of education than public schools.

Public-vs-private Discussion about private schools versus public schools; another controversy in education.

Redshirting *“Redshirting is the practice of postponing entrance into kindergarten of age-eligible children in order to allow extra time for socioemotional, intellectual, or physical growth. This occurs most frequently where children’s birthdays are so close to the cut-off dates that they are very likely to be among the youngest in their kindergarten class.”*¹ The debate is basically about whether “holding back” helps or harms the children.

Prayer-in-schools The debate is whether prayer in schools should be allowed and taken as a part of education or banned.

Single-sex-education The influence of single-sex classes (males and females separate) versus mixed-sex classes (“co-ed”) on education.

Mainstreaming Discussion about benefits or disadvantages of including children with special needs into regular classes; this means regular education classes are combined with special education classes.

3 Topic-related persuasiveness

The task: Distinguish, whether the comment is persuasive regarding the discussed topic. The key question to answer is: *Does the author intend to convince us clearly about his/her attitude or opinion towards the topic?* If the answer is *yes*, we classify the comment as *persuasive*.

There are two main categories in this task, namely **P1:Persuasive** and **P2:Non-persuasive**. The second category is further divided into more categories, that basically cover the various phenomena that may be encountered in the data.

However, It is not necessary to categorize the data *exactly* into one of the categories under **P2:Non-persuasive**. For example, a particular text may be both **off-topic** and **out-of-context**; in that case, choose either of these categories.

Remember: we are mainly interested in finding the **P1:Persuasive** documents that represent on-topic texts with intentions to persuade and convince the readers.

Quick overview of possible distinct categories:

P1: Persuasive

P2: Non-persuasive

P2.1: Out-of-context or reaction to other comment

P2.3: Off-topic

P2.4: Personal worries

P2.5: Story-sharing without intentions to persuade

P2.7: Impossible to decide about persuasiveness
without deep background knowledge

Note that the numbers of subsections in P2 are assigned non-systematically as they evolved over time; these are not really important.

3.1 Examples

3.1.1 Persuasive (P1)

Here are few examples of typical texts marked as P1.

#2013 (forumpost, single-sex-education) School should be co-ed. Some children are awkward with others of their own gender. For example, certain girls who are tom-boys might not be comfortable in a room full of girls. The mixed genders are preparing kids for the real world, where things are not segregated.

¹[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redshirting_\(academic\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redshirting_(academic))

In #2013, the author states that schools should not be single-sex, also provides reasons why he/she thinks so.

#2017 (artcomment, single-sex-education) Co-ed schools, obviously! I would NEVER want to be unprepared for the real world, and I would NEVER send my kids to one either! GO CO-ED SCHOOLS!

In #2017, the author is against single-sex schools, also giving some reasons.

#1692 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools) I believe that prayer being banned from the public school systems was by far the most uneducated and most of all immoral thing that could have been done. Not only has it affected the schools it has also affected the homes and the homes and its inhabitants. Me being a young teen in school, have witnessed first hand to this and i can truly say that prayer should be allowed in schools. Every one does not have to pray if you choose not to then that is your choice. Please don't let the ignorance of 10 people ruin a nations well being!!!

In #1692, the author thinks that prayer in schools should be allowed. He/she supports his/her stance by personal experience and emotions.

#2010 What i prefer is single-gender school. You may post something for this topic as you have done it against

Here, the author clearly express his/her attitude towards the topic (he prefers single-sex education). Although he/she does not provide any good arguments for his opinion (only that he/she likes it), we still treat this text as persuasive.

Another example (#203) was already mentioned in the introduction.

3.1.2 Problematic examples in category Persuasive (P1)

This section discusses some examples that were marked as P1 by two annotators but as P2 by a third annotator. We will explain, where the third annotator made an error.

#300 (artcomment, homeschooling) This is not representative of most homeschoolers. This is a very, very small minority. Let's compare that to entire schools in the public school system that cater their teaching to make sure their kids pass the standardized tests so they can keep funding, meanwhile the kids can't understand concepts that aren't covered on the tests.

I was homeschooled in Texas, where there is no government oversight of homeschooling. I graduated high school at age 16 with 24 college credits under my belt, was accepted into every university I applied to (all the major schools in Texas), and graduated college in three years at age 19 after being on the Dean's List every semester except one. Neither of my parents has a college degree and would not be deemed "qualified" to teach me. Somehow I didn't just make it, I thrived. Parental involvement works.

The second paragraph in #300 contains a statement "*parental involvement works*", which is clearly in favor of home schooling.

3.1.3 Non-persuasive, out-of-context or reaction to other comment (P2.1)

#3245 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Why are they bad, they still pay taxes but don't use the service so there is more money for the system to use on fixing its issues. Even when everyone is doing everything they can to fix something does not mean it will be fixed.

In #3245, without any context, we can only roughly guess what the author is writing about.

#5065, (artcomment, redshirting) But that's exactly my point Mary. Those kids shouldn't have been put into kindergarten a year late by their parents, because I would find it incredibly hard to believe that every child was held back because they weren't ready. I truly do understand that by holding your child back a year, it makes it hard for others NOT to, but that still doesn't make it right, it shouldn't be being done to begin with by those parents. It's just one more reason why I'm seriously considering homeschooling! lol

In #5065, the author directly reacts to other comment (by Mary). Again, the context is missing for understanding the author's argumentation (referencing to *"those kids"*, *"those parents"*, *"it makes it hard"*, etc.).

3.1.4 Non-persuasive, off-topic (P2.3)

#476 (forumpost, homeschooling) A great book to read is Coloring Outside the Lines by Roger Schank. It's very eye-opening.

Maybe I should add it to the Debate Team Book Clubs list of potential October reads!

#2044 (artcomment, single-sex-education) im writing a speach on single gender education and this did not help me

#2049 (artcomment, single-sex-education) Single-sex education. A poem./ Dearest people, the people/ always arguing and full of hate,/ why oh why should we ever/ turn out this way? Single-sex,/ co-educational, why does it matter?/ Girls, boys, everyone;/ WE CANNOT REMAIN LIKE THIS/ do you hear me?

These were some examples of off-topic messages.

3.1.5 Non-persuasive, personal worries (P2.4)

#5024 (artcomment, redshirting) Oh boy... oh my little (but very tall) girl. I've chosen to put her into a second year of preschool next year (5 days instead of 3) because I feel that's what is right for her. She's a late October baby, but I'm not sure she's ready for kindergarten. But I worry. Will she be the giant of her class every year? Will there be an opportunity to skip her a grade? She's quite bright, but socially still a little awkward. I don't feel I'm 'holding her back', yet if she has brand new twin sisters arriving in July, should I totally turn her world upside down and ship her off to another school with mostly older kids? I'm torn (and totally on the fence) both ways. I want her to excel academically, but I don't want to throw too many changes at her at once. I'm with you, Erica. I'm torn, and I chose the now unpopular 'redshirting', but not so she can be a hockey superstar... :) I just thought this was a better pace for her. In ten years, I'm sure the 'experts' will be telling me I should have held her back, because all the young kids are struggling... You can't win.

In #5024, the author only expresses her worries about her child, but she neither takes stance on the topic nor argues about that.

3.1.6 Non-persuasive, story-sharing without intentions to persuade (P2.5)

#5030 (artcomment, redshirting) Born in November, my youngest sister was among the oldest children in her peer group until she skipped a grade (I believe she skipped grade one but it may have been grade two). My other sister, also born in November and two years older, showed my youngest sister her homework and my youngest sister proved such a quick learner the teacher had no choice but to recommend she be moved up. She's still achieving plenty and has never been intimidated by anyone older. She has a competitive drive and enjoys pushing herself forward.

The purpose of #5030 was to share the story without taking stance towards the topic or persuading others (the story of her sister skipping a grade and doing well could be also too far from the redshirting topic).

3.1.7 Non-persuasive, impossible to decide about persuasiveness without deep background knowledge (P2.7)

#164 (artcomment, homeschooling): Child abuse in the name of religious freedom. Just like parents who refuse medical treatment for their children. It makes me wish there was a hell.

In #164, without knowing the context that homeschooling and religion education are somehow related issues in some communities, it is not possible to decide about persuasiveness of this document.

3.2 Commented disagreements encountered during first round of annotations

3.2.1 Obvious mistakes/errors/misunderstandings

#84 (artcomment, homeschooling) The withholding of a viable education, regardless of religious beliefs, is just another form of child abuse.

A1 wrongly labeled as P1, but *viable education* is undefined.

#324 (artcomment, homeschooling) An article pointing out the problems inherent in home schooling will always attract comments from home schoolers who say it's the greatest thing.

Some make money off the movement—like Mike Farris out in Loudoun County—others just want to rationalize the fact that they treat their children as intellectual slaves.

A1 wrongly labeled as P21, but the last sentence is clearly persuasive.

#1084 (artcomment, homeschooling) @eileenphoto . School can be very bad for you. For some people it can be a catastrophic experience from which they never recover. To claim otherwise is rank ignorance.

A1 wrongly labeled as off-topic, but the content is clearly persuasive.

#2635 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Public schools vary greatly across the nation; some are as good as "elite" private schools, and others can be deplorable. Neighbors, peer groups, and the educators they attract are critical. Lost in this discussion seems to be the fundamental reason our nation has public schools: to develop citizens who embody knowledge, skills, and character along with a continued thirst for learning. We all support public schools through tax dollars, and we all have a stake in the outcome of any child's education. Our schools are here not just to serve the public but to create a "public." A private school also might accomplish this, but has no civic obligation to do so, and many don't. If your public schools fall short, then we all need to work for change. When a nation does this well, we have reconciled and found the essential balance between "individualism" and "republicanism."

A1 wrongly labeled as P2.5 (story telling), but the content is persuasive, e.g. *"...the fundamental reason our nation has public schools: to develop citizens who embody knowledge, skills, and character along with a continued thirst for learning."*

#3586 (artcomment, public-private-schools) This person failed to mention the most important reason to send your kids to a private college is for your children to gain an advantage over other children. If everyone was given the same education there would be more competition. Parents have every right to send their kids wherever they want.

A1 misinterpreted the text and wrongly marked as P21; Should be P1.

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A1 wrongly annotated as P2.5, but is P1; authors is in favor of public schools, i.e. *"Our schools are here not just to serve the public but to create a public."*

#4371 (artcomment, public-private-schools) That is by far the most convoluted line of reasoning I have ever heard. Very short sighted and downright foolish. GONE are the days of parent controlled school boards where parents actually have a say in what occurs in schools. Our local public school just sent a letter to incoming Kindy parents "please do not attempt to engage the teacher in conversation" ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!. Parents are not even allowed in the building. Good luck trying to make reforms. I for one, don't believe in public education at all. HA! Contrary to the premises of this article, maybe we should scrap the entire "crappy" public school system.

A1 wrongly labeled as P2.1, but is P1 with clear stance against public schools.

#4518 (artcomment, public-private-schools) When 2 parents are working and already paying for daycare ,most private schools seem cheap.plus they will discipline your kids for ya as well bargain.

A1 misinterpreted the second sentence and annotated wrongly as P2.5.

#4022 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Why are the people "Bad People" who send their kids to private school? Quite judgemental on your part don't you think. Who put you in charge of who's good and bad because of the choices they make for their children. Just because YOU don't like it doesn't equal "bad people". You seem to think VERY highly of yourself to be able to judge a persons character by what type of school the send their kids to. The beautiful thing about America is that everyone should have the personal freedom to choose private school, pubic school(which everyone is required to support weather they like it or not BTW through taxes) or to homeschooling. The only "bad people" in my opinion would be the people who believe.. that the overcrowded public school system should be the ONLY way. our taxes already support the schools now the "bad people" believe the only way to make the schools better is to send children from private school to public? Are they going to be teaching the classes? how would that make it better?

A2 and A3 overlooked the sentence *"The only "bad people" in my opinion would be the people who believe.. that the overcrowded public school system should be the ONLY way.* and labeled is wrongly as P2.

#3522 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Anyone that would force a person to use a public school when they want to use a private school is a bad person. If you really want to improve public education, stop treating it as an institution and start treating it as a business. Institute school vouchers where the money to educate each child goes with the child from school to school. If I pull my child from Edison Elementary, they lose the funding for my child. The funding would then go to whatever public school I choose. Additionally, If I choose to send my kid to private school, I get a school voucher worth up to 50% of the amount to educate a child in a public school (ie. public school costs \$10K per child per year, property tax refund max = \$5K), since my property taxes would then be wasted on a system I don't support. When a school discovers that poor performance can cost the school funding and possibly cost people their jobs, you'll see a turn around and responsiveness to parents in short order.

A2 wrongly annotated as P1; this is however too off-topic discussion.

3.2.2 Some discussed examples, one annotator changed his mind afterwards

#38 (artcomment, homeschooling) In the age of technology, school can be anywhere and everywhere people choose. The quality of private or public education both depend on the assets, knowledge resources, ambition and the persistence that a student can have access to. The sky has no limits. In the digital divide over whether or not computers should be used for teaching and learning, parents can provide a classroom that is free of distractions. Children can learn with or without technology. It is a choice. Independent choice is what makes American values so precious.

A3 wrongly labeled as P1 – the emphasis here is not on homeschooling, but technology.

#4151 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Sad that someone would actually post this. In many parts of this country it's the bad parents that don't care about their children education or support the teachers that make public schools so bad and drive hard working people to work two jobs so they can afford to send their children to better schools. Where teachers can focus on teaching rather than riot control and less time to help struggling kids or kids that excel. Best way to improve education is to attach tax dollars to students which

drives competition to attract students and provide schools to meet different learning needs. 20/20 did a piece on Education in the US that says it all. Some European schools do this very thing at elementary level and their students test years ahead of US schools. We do fund college students with money to the student and they choose the best schools why not at lower levels?

A1: P25, A2: P1, A3: P1 (in the first part he advocates private schools)

#4335 (artcomment, public-private-schools) no, although the school in money areas are way better in everyway, this is one of the perks of achieving success,

A1: P1, A2: P21, A3: P21

#4745 (forumpost, public-private-schools) teachers have to make a living, you know. being passionate about teaching is definitely a plus, but if a teacher is being paid insufficiently at a public school, one would think they'd look elsewhere (suburban or private schools) where they could make more money for being qualified to work at such a school.

A1: P1, A2: P23, A3: P23 (teacher's wage)

#3212 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Then I think we should take all private transportation away. If people were not allowed to have cars then the public transportation system would be better. By letting people own automobile, bicycles, motorcycles, etc. we are doing a great disservice to the public transportation system. Another person that has the dream of a utopian society through socialist radical transformation. Let just take all the competition away so we are never aware of how poor the education our kids are receiving. Lets make it even more corrupt, and easier for the government to waste money, and use the media to lie to us that our children are getting great education and how efficient our tax dollars are working. Where does this crap end. Competition in schools (public vs. private), in business, in healthcare, keeps everyone a little more honest. It creates efficiency, innovation, and makes progress take place naturally. If you are the only game in town then you get to gouge, keep your crappy product or service the same because you're the only one supplying it. In Kentucky the very worst school system in the United States our children read at a 5th grade level (maybe) as graduating seniors. The waste, corruption, fraud, and inside deals, makes the mafia look honest. They now want to create public boarding schools so that parents do not influence the child's learning experience in a poor or damaging way. The school board believes it is the parents keeping children from making progress. Last year in order to show improvement in our children testing scores they decided to grade on a curve and to remove difficult content. It was necessary to do this in order to keep from disenfranchising students with lower scores. The belief is that poor little Johnny only got 2 out of a 100 questions correct and the psychological damage it is doing to him when compared to other students that got 80 out of a 100 correct was just cruel. They are no longer teach cursive writing, spelling, and soon math because computers take care of the spelling and calculations needed. So all our children need to learn is how to use a condom, get federal assistance, and some altered facts of history. Lastly, and you will not believe me but in Jefferson County Public Schools they gave all the 5th grade children a handout say the Martin Luther King invented Christmas. I kid you not I have a copy of the handout that was given to my child.

A1: P25, A2: P1, A3: P1 (nice persuasive argumentation...)

#314 (artcomment, homeschooling) Computers and home schooling can meld. Rosetta Stone is way better than, "Class, repeat after me..."

A1: P1, A2: P21, A3: P1 (very implicit, but "Rosetta Stone is way better than, "Class, repeat after me..."")

#2510 (artcomment, public-private-schools) The parents of the kids in private schools still pay the property taxes (80% goes for public schools). So in reality its better for the public schools, less customers but still getting the same amount of money.

A1: P1, A2: P21 (Could also fall in the category of sharing a story (or in this case an info) without intentions to persuade.), A3: P1 (paying taxes for private schools support public)

A2 - changed mind; it's probably an reaction to complains about private schools and answers clearly in favor of private schools

#3405 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Wow, try sending your kid to public school in Los Angeles, oh yeah and I guess you have no religious values too, you were so high when you wrote this.

A1: P21, A2: P1, A3: P21 (...some irony, hard to say...)
A2 - changed decision (offending the author)

#647 (forumpost, homeschooling) *It is not the fault of homeschooling families that the system isn't properly designed* Eh. It's arguable. If someone drops a hundred dollar bill, should you keep it? A hundred dollar bill is not a public service. A better analogy would be something like a city fire department. Suppose I live in a neighborhood which has been recently annexed by a city. I am now included in that city's coverage area for fire department services. However, there are still some issues between the city and the state regarding the funding of the department. (Much of the department's funding is via local property taxes, but there is supplementation from the state.) Should I refrain from calling the fire department when I need their services, if I am aware that the funding issues are not yet resolved? Or should I call them to come and put out a fire in my home when I need it? Obviously, I should use the service that is provided. The solution is not for me to forego the service; the solution is for those who are involved with the funding process to fix the issues that are occurring.

A1: P1, A2: P1, A3: P21

A3 - changed decision; the last paragraphs was that public schools is ok even with problems

In general, many disagreement by A1 was due to mistakes in rather clear cases and misinterpretation.

3.2.3 Quotations

#547 (forumpost, homeschooling) *Why would it irritate you for a family to "work the system" in order to provide the best possible education for a child?*

The same way it irritates me when people cheat to get something for their child that wouldn't be available to children in general? I consider that poor play, regardless of where it occurs.

A resident of a school district who utilizes a service or program that the school district offers is not, in any way, cheating. That's just ridiculous.

A1: P21, A2: P1, A3: P21

A2 - wasn't sure about the quote part

3.2.4 The rest

#326 (artcomment, homeschooling) Firmly believe that Josh's parents can inculcate him with belief in the Great Pumpkin, that the colour purple keeps away cooties or anything else they want. However, if they decided pumpkin pulp was the food of life and denied him access to fruit, veg, meat, milk and other dietary necessities the state would rightly step in for denying him the necessities of life. Same with schooling. Period, No argument.

- annotator1: P21
 - annotator2: P27
 - annotator3: P1 arg. by example
- A3 gave up - too implicit

#469 (forumpost, homeschooling) I would shell out the money for private school before I homeschool. I simply don't have the desire or patience to be THAT present. Maybe that makes me awful but I cannot and will not be everything to them 24/7. Imo it's not healthy for anyone. I am homeschooling and I am not under any illusion that I am "everything" for my kids 24/7. They have lots of great adults in their lives.

A1: P1, A2: P1, A3: P25; mistake by A3

#2681 (artcomment, public-private-schools) This is a false premise. The schools are messed up due to politics and not a lack of funds or participation. If schools would take the politics out of the classrooms and just teach kids basic skills a lot of people would return. Why on earth should I allow my precious child to be indoctrinated into liberal political non-sense and also be exposed to the misbehaving, cretinous off-spring of liberal parents?

A1: P27, A2: P27 (Not clear if he intends 'public schools' when he talks about 'politics in the classrooms'), A3: P1 (last sentence)

A2 changed mind after discussion; A1 changed mind after discussion; was not sure, maybe the background was missing

#3750 (artcomment, public-private-schools) SO FAR I HAVE NOT NOTICED PEOPLE THAT SEND THERE KIDS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL REALLY GETTING A CHOICE IN WHAT IS TAUGHT THERE. MANY COMPAIN ABOUT IT AND TRY BUT ARE KURBED BY LAW MAKERS AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS THAT ARE SMALL BUT HAVE THE MONEY SO ARGUMENT IS NULL AND VOID

A1: P23, A2: P1, A3: P23 (not clear whether he favors private)
A2, A3 - changed to P1 (because of the first sentence)

3.2.5 Problematic documents

#3646 (artcomment, public-private-schools) Unbelievable.....This lady is an absolute idiot. You cannot expect a broken system to change just like we cannot expect the government to live within a budget. This was shown in the last election when the makers were outnumbered by the takers. We live in an entitlement society at present perpetuated by our current administration. The change we are making by pulling our kids out of public schools is exactly the message that needs to get sent. To whomever wrote this stupid article.....Better to be silent and thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt. You have just succeeded in the latter..... congratulations.

No agreement reached even after discussion.

#2807 (artcomment, public-private-schools) What a BS! I will be an irresponsible parent if I do not do what is best for my son when I can afford to send him to best school available public or private. Allison Benedikt is probably not a parent or is jealous of parents that can afford to send their kids to private school.

A1: P21, A2: P1, A3: P21

- we have to assume certain context to understand that - hard one...

3.3 Commented disagreements encountered during the second round of annotations (batch1-second200)

3.3.1 No overall stance, but discussing both sides

We are also interested in documents that discuss both sides of the problem, but the author remains neutral. Although the document is not persuasive by definition, it also contains argumentation in favor of each side and thus is relevant for further argumentation extraction. Therefore, these documents should be labeled as P1 (persuasive) too.

#5025 (artcomment, redshirting) As a teacher and parent I feel it isn't black and white, but completely depends on the child. I don't necessarily agree with holding a child back for an athletic advantage. I do see holding them back if they are not socially and academically ready. I can usually pick out the September- November babies within the first week of school and I teach fourth grade. If you decide to put your children through and they are socially immature they will catch up eventually. Once you enter the workforce you are surrounded by people of all ages and it no longer matters. I think either way is ok, whatever works best for the parents and children.

- annotator1: P25
- annotator2: P25 No stance, no persuasion.
- annotator3: P1 No overall stance, but some argumentation "I don't necessarily agree with holding a child back for an athletic advantage"
- There is no overall stance, but some aspects are discussed from both perspectives, see A3's comment

Result Will treat as P1 since arguing for both sides can be of interest.

#5307 (artcomment, redshirting) In our case, my daughter is born 1 day before cutoff date (8/30) making her the youngest in the class. She went to preschool for 2 years and had lot of social issues and anxiety issues. We were in the best school district and she was going to a very good school which my son attended too. We changed her to couple of other schools thinking it is with the school. She used to come home with complaints and never ever speaking in the class. She was academically doing good as per other kids but clearly lagging behind in other areas. Seeing her anxiety issues, my pediatrician begged me to hold her back. It was very hard as a parent to make the decision but we held her back after careful consideration. In the long run, I want my kid to be happy and confident. Since the school began (3 months), she adjusted so well in the new school and all her anxiety and social issues were gone. She is happy, made so many friends and speaking up in the class. She is extremely social and zero complaints. I am thankful to my pediatrician for bringing this up. We are glad we made this decision and held her back because i don't want her to carry these issues all her life. Finally, I am not against or for holding back but it depends on each kids case.

- annotator1: P1
- annotator2: P25 The last sentence.
- annotator3: P1 their story - suffering first, then RS and ok
- Seems that on this topic (redshirting) the persuasiveness is rather problematic!!

Result Although the last sentence ("I'm not for or against") makes the stance neutral (so it can be considered as non-persuasive), it still contains some argumentation... The problem is that defining the task either "find persuasive ones" or "find argumentative ones" is not self-explanatory.

#3262 (artcomment, public-private-schools) I went to public school and it was rated the best in California at the time. My son went to parochial school because the school system we lived in was not good. But since we were not Catholic he had to take a 4 hour test. He got in and I paid \$40 a month at that time it was a lot of money, 1970's. Can you imagine what it was like to take that test at 5. I paid taxes just like everyone else during this time. When he went to high school I moved to Oklahoma so he could attend a public high school in the country I couldn't afford to send him to parochial high school cost too much but I knew he would get a better one on one in a small town and he did. He went on to college finished in four years, which many don't do. I was a single parent and they give odds that single parent kids don't go to college well mine did and finished. He has a good job and a family now and is debating on sending his kids to private school. I would do it again. This is America we all have a choice where we want to send our kids, some public schools are great but if you can and want to send them to private why not.

- annotator1: P25
- annotator2: P25
- annotator3: P1 some public schools are great but if you can and want to send them to private why not.
- He favors private: "He has a good job and a family now and is debating on sending his kids to private school. I would do it again." "This is America we all have a choice where we want to send our kids, some public schools are great but if you can and want to send them to private why not."

A1: After reading the comment, I still feel a bit confused about the sentence, it's not really clear that she/he favors the private school. She/he just says if you can afford it and you want to send your kids then it's your choice, there is freedom in America.

Result "I would do it again" means she would send kids to public. Anyway, this is pretty badly written, IMHO. So it fits probably more to P25, I agree.

#3538 (artcomment, public-private-schools) If you want your child to receive the best education they can get, send them to a private/parochial school. If you want them to have more diverse co- and extracurriculars, and go to a school where you don't have to pray for 10 minutes each day, or have to attend mass on occasion, send them to a LARGER public school. There is such a thing called "Advanced Placement", offered in both types of schools for the more gifted students.

- annotator1: P1 from first sentence.
- annotator2: P25 She doesn't argue for one particular school system. Gives pros for both the systems.
- annotator3: P1 "If you want your child to receive the best education they can get, send them to a private/parochial school"
- this kind of pro/con for each side should be also considered

Result A2 agreed, thus P1.

#3587 (artcomment, public-private-schools) From a single parent who does not send her child to a private school. Note: There are reasons why I would if I could and there are reasons why I wouldn't. But that's not why I'm posting this 'comment'... 1. To label all parents as 'bad' for sending their kids to a private school is, simply put, prejudice. 2. Not all parents that send their children to a private school have the same agenda (hidden or open). I see/know of some who genuinely feel that a private school will give their child a better chance at a better career. There are others that I see/know of that appear to feel it puts them in a classier category. 3. I know many people who have gone to public schools and became very successful in their career and I know many people who have gone to private schools that haven't been so successful. 4. What would happen if EVERYONE wanted to and could send their kids to a private school?? Private schools would be like public schools? Would we remove the entire 'public school' system, build more smaller schools w/ smaller classes? What? 5. How a child turns out, in attitude, career, common sense, intelligence, etc.... Depends only some on the school... A bigger part of it is reliant on the PARENTS and what they teach them at home! Also on the child's natural ability and desire to learn. You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. Doesn't matter if you are educated publicly or privately, in the end the child makes his/her own choice starting with what they've learned at home. If a child is pushed too hard, many times when they are set free they fail simply because they chose to finally enjoy the relief from the pressures they had at home. They choose to begin living their childhood that they never had. If a child isn't pushed hard enough, they don't learn the value of working hard at something. Really... There's no perfect parenting, no perfect education system. HAPPY MIDDLE seems to be a good working system for many things. Educate, Love, Discipline and teach your children to RESPECT. Everything else will eventually fall into place from there. Parents as a whole need to stop judging and analyzing each other and each other's children. Stop judging based on what school they or their kid went to. Stop judging based on the success of their schools' athletic successes. Stop teaching their children to compete and instead teach them to work together. Start teaching them equality. Start teaching them by leading good examples themselves.

- annotator1: P23
- annotator2: P25 1. "Doesn't matter if you are educated publicly or privately, in the end the child makes his/her own choice starting with what they've learned at home" 2. "There's no perfect parenting, no perfect education system" No stance, no argumentation, Non-Persuasive.
- annotator3: P1 Discusses both sides, remains neutral
– same as above

#4073 (artcomment, public-private-schools) There are good and bad in this argument. Just because a parent(s) can afford to send their kids to a private school doesn't mean they are more or less involved with their kids schooling. Some send the kids to private schools because they can't/won't be bothered with getting involved. Others because they can and have more say in the schools' teachers and curriculum than they do in the public schools. And most public school administrators don't want to fight teachers unions over a bad teacher, nor take the time and put forth the effort to fire one so they continue to teach. No one should blame a parent for wanting the best education for their child, and certainly you can argue that if all parents had their kids in public schools they would be better, but that is not reality and there is no way one can logically argue that, nor should people blindly believe it. There are politics in education and when the school system is overseen by a bunch of ineffectual congressional leaders that can't agree on anything, how can Allison really believe it will make a difference?

- annotator1: P25 I see where he gives examples for pros and cons but I couldn't find a clear point where he favored one over the other.

- annotator2: P1 "most public school administrators don't want to fight teachers unions over a bad teacher, nor take the time and put forth the effort to fire one so they continue to teach."
 - annotator3: P1 some argumentation pros/cons
 - A1's reasons?
- Result** – same as above

3.3.2 Narratives in persuasion

#5035 (artcomment, redshirting) I have four kids, a girl 15, a boy 12, a boy 11, and a girl 10. I held the boys back but not the girls. For my 12 year old, I held him back because he was so tiny, he is either going to be very short or he has late onset puberty where he will grow very late. If he was in his own grade he would be the shortest in the class by A Lot. Now he is in the lower middle. He doesn't play sports, he is more of an artist/musician so I didn't do it for any competitive advantage. That being said, I shouldn't have held him back because he is more EMOTIONALLY mature than his peers. I didn't want him to be bullied or picked on for his short stature, but now because he is more mature than his peers, he doesn't have as many friends in his grade. His friends are actually a few years older than him. He is also very intelligent and he is bored in school, now this may not have mattered if he was in a higher grade, but I think it does. We will see how it pans out. My other son, who has high functioning autism, I held back and it was the best decision I ever made. He fits in better, his emotional maturity is more on point and he is happy with his peer group. The girls mature faster, are more wired for the way the school system works and is set up and thrive at grade level. My oldest actually will start college next year spending 1/2 day at high school, 1/2 day at college. I guess the moral of the story. Know your kids, make informed, thoughtful decisions. Don't judge others choices, we are all doing the best we can.

- annotator1: P25 It wasn't clear as she shared a story about 2 of her sons, one who she thinks that she shouldn't have held back for a year and the other where she thinks it was a great idea to hold back. For me it was story sharing since she didn't really take a stance and just shared stories about her sons.
 - annotator2: P25 No persuasion FOR or AGAINST redshirting.
 - annotator3: P1 she held back for some reasons, now he's bored etc.
 - I thinks she also gives some reasons against RS: "I held him back because he was [...] That being said, I shouldn't have held him back because he is more EMOTIONALLY mature than his peers. I didn't want him to be bullied or picked on for his short stature, but now because he is more mature than his peers, he doesn't have as many friends in his grade."
- A2: She also says: "My other son, who has high functioning autism, I held back and it was the best decision I ever made."

Result If there is persuasion and argumentation, it's expressed very implicitly by telling a story. This might be, in some cases, very good part of the arguments, while just sharing experiences in others. I would now probably decide P25. **Interesting phenomena: Narratives as a means of persuasion.**

#4971 (forumpost, mainstreaming) Hi I have a little boy who turns 10 next week, who has Mosaic Downs Syndrome. He is also Blind and Deaf on one side. Hes currently in a very good normal mainstream school. There has been a massive decline in his performance at school and even more so in his maturity levels. I've already held him back a year in school... hes just so much younger in actions etc than all the other kids in his class. On friday he came home with a piece of paper from school. The whole class were doing an exercise where they had the childs name in the middle of the paper and their friends wrote something nice about them and why they like them as a friend. He had three on his paper.and one of them said

"your silly. Not a lot of people like you, but I do". Its really knocked him and has proper upset me. Ive been to see his teacher today. 1st to let the teacher know how P**sed off I am that she allowed him to see this but also to try and understand how deep the problem goes. Turns out none of the kids in the class really like him, he has one friend who doesnt take the mikey and thats it. Teacher says hes struggling with his work. Always gets picked last in PEetc... Hes a very happy boy who hasnt really picked up on any of this. I'm really worried how hard its going to be as he approaches late juniors and into seniors.... Anyone got any experience of special needs schools. Its a really tough decision to make.. as he has Mosiac downs, his features arent typical of that of a child with Downs, but the E.N are now starting to show.... For the first time since he was born, I'm lost and do not know what road to take...

- annotator1: P25 I honestly still think she was sharing a story about her son who happened to suffer in his class. At the end she wasn't also sure if she should go to special needs school or not. I think it's hard to decide.
- annotator2: P24 The reason I put it P24 is because she doesn't have any experience of how a special needs school will turn out for her kid. She isn't sure about that yet either. "I'm lost and don't know what to take."
- annotator3: P1 her son suffers in mainstreamed school, "Turns out none of the kids in the class really like him"

- MS is another hard topic - this is her story but also some suffering in MS school

Result cf. #5035 (Narratives as a means of persuasion)

#4979 (forumpost, mainstreaming) Hi. I am a teacher in a special school but I am going to give you my experience as a sibling. My youngest brother has just turned 18 and like your son has mosaic Downs Syndrome. He coped fine all the way through primary school, he was in mainstream, and the majority of the kids loved him. The staff were fantastic too but obviously we had a few problems with some parents, saying he shouldn't be there. Our problems came when he moved to secondary school, he went to mainstream. He started to fall behind and as the other children matured they started to grow away from him. He did years, 7,8 and 9. In that time he went from being a happy child who would try anything and had lots of friends, to a child withdrawn, unhappy and lonely. He wasn't going out at playtimes and lunchtimes, he sat inside in his form room and he ate his lunch away from everyone else too. It even got to the point where my mum had to pick him up at 2:00 everyday as they didn't have anyone to support him. Throughout that 3 years, from the time he first showed signs of being unhappy, my mum fought to get him into our local special school. He eventually joined special school in year 10. The change was incredible within a few months. After 4 weeks he was eating in the school hall, after 6 weeks he was going outside at playtimes and lunchtimes. The Christmas after he started in the September, he was in his first school concert, he was so happy and confident, back to the boy he used to be. Myself and my parents and our 6 other siblings were in the audience, all with tears streaming down our faces, even our 3 brothers who were at the time aged, 29, 22 and 21. My mum always says her biggest regret is not sending him to special school for year 7. My brother now has a large network of friends, he is going into his 3rd year of post 16 in September. He has completed qualifications and awards, and is doing work experience at the local riding stables and Greggs bakery. He attends a drama club and a sports club after school and enjoys playing for the schools boccia team and he is in the samba band. He goes on trips and outings all over the county we live in. My brother also has a good social life out of school. He has a girlfriend who also has Downs Syndrome. He goes to WWE shows and has a season ticket for Manchester United, he goes with 2 of his big brothers, he goes to the pub with his brothers. He also has 2 friends still from mainstream who have no special needs but they take him to the cinema with them or the local driving range and they come round and have boys nights in with him when my parents go out for the evening. Sorry I've got carried away. I also teach in the special school that my brother

attends. Can I just say to the lady who complained about us. I can honestly say, on my grandads grave, that we work to the best of the each individual child's ability. If your son is still on p levels then I am afraid that is the level he is reaching, do you do any educational things with him at home? Read etc, do you think he is more capable, if so please talk to the school or discuss it in his next annual review. Same with writing, we can't force children to write, not all children will. My daughter who is 8 moved to a special school just after Christmas, she is doing very well and is extremely happy. I understand that she will never go to university but I personally feel it is more important to teach her life skills, ie, make a drink or a sandwich and wash properly than to read and write, I want her to enjoy her life. Sorry for waffling. There is no right or wrong answer, you have to do what is right for you and your son.

- annotator1: P25
- annotator2: P25 Shares his brother's story, then about her little daughter. no argumentation.
- annotator3: P1
 - story telling as arguments? I.e. "Our problems came when he moved to secondary school, he went to mainstream. He started to fall behind and as the other children matured they started to grow away from him. He did years, 7,8 and 9. In that time he went from being a happy child who would try anything and had lots of friends, to a child withdrawn, unhappy and lonely."

Result cf. #5035 (Narratives as a means of persuasion)

3.3.3 Implicitness

#5053 (artcomment, redshirting) That is an alarming thought! I didn't turn 18 until I was away at college! Molly will $j\dot{u}bej/i\dot{u}$ 5 when she starts kindergarten, and turn 6 in mid-November. Which will make her 18, getting to turn 19 when she starts college (providing she stays true to the current age requirements). On the up side for her - she won't be one of the last of her friends to get her driver's license, or be able to legally drink. Not exactly a mother's fondest wish for her kid, but I do remember being frustrated with those little issue myself. A lot of my friends could go out to bars halfway through junior year, and I had to wait until the fall of my senior year. That did suck!

- annotator1: P23
- annotator2: P1 Implicit. But she does have an inclination towards redshirting as she did in her kid's case as well. She gives her own frustrating experiences when she wasn't able to do something due to her age while her fellow friends could.
- annotator3: P27 although "On the up side for her - she won't be one of the last of her friends to get her driver's license, or be able to legally drink." - this is too implicit for me...

Result She doesn't want her Moly not to suffer the same as she did (and that's why she redshirted): "Not exactly a mother's fondest wish for her kid, but I do remember being frustrated with those little issue myself. A lot of my friends could go out to bars halfway through junior year, and I had to wait until the fall of my senior year. That did suck!" Can be thus seen as P1.

#5154 (forumpost, redshirting) I swear if I hear one more time (and I know I will) about how advanced her kid is ... I'm just going to say "so why not move her to 3rd grade where she belongs?" Oooo - I had to bite my tongue to keep from saying almost the same thing, in a similar situation recent! I have a July '07 girl whom I am sending to kindergarten this fall. I got into a conversation with another mom whose child was the same age, who was holding her daughter back. She was actually totally cool, said she was still kind of conflicted about her decision, respected others choices, etc. It was the other women there who jumped into our conversation and assured her that she was DEFINITELY doing the right thing, who annoyed me. It went unsaid, but the message I got was that I was not doing the right thing,

by sending mine. The example one of them gave was, "My neighbor held back her child, and now she's in first grade, and reading at a 4th grade level!" And I thought, sure, because she's a bright kid who's supposed to be in 2nd grade. But I didn't say it.

- annotator1: P1
- annotator2: P25
- annotator3: P1 against RS, upset at other moms that RS
 - She's implicitly against redshirting, complains about other mother's behavior

Result A2 argued "The stance was clear from the beginning; she is not holding back; I don't see any arguments. She merely complains/criticizes about others judging her". Given this sentence: "It went unsaid, but the message I got was that I was not doing the right thing, by sending mine." – she send hers and she insists on doing the right thing by that.

#5407 (artcomment, redshirting) It sounds like he is ready to me! The cut off date here is September 30. My son has an August birthday, and school starts at the end of July, so he turned 5 in Kindergarten. He is now thriving in 3rd grade, and doing better than one of his redshirted classmates. He would've been so bored with an extra year of preschool. My eldest girl is a January baby, and will start Kindergarten this year. My youngest girl is only two, and has a mid-September birthday. We're moving this summer, and I don't know what the cutoff is in our new district, but I'm hoping that it's the same and she'll be ready at almost five. I worry she'll be bored too, plus it will be nice to stop paying \$800 per month for daycare.

- annotator1: P1
- annotator2: P24
- annotator3: P24
 - There is missing clear the persuasive part... this is more just a story. Again - redshirting - interesting phenomena!!

Result A1 agreed.

#1247 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools) Keep church and state separate. Period. Anything else = chaos

- annotator1: P1
- annotator2: P23
- annotator3: P1
 - A1 and A3 assume the relation state = public schools, therefore "separate church and state" = no prayer in the schools

Result A2 agrees, given this assumption.

#1485 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools) Their are already Catholic Schools, Jewish Schools, and Muslim Schools in Toronto. So if students in a public school want to bring their faith into the school, then transfer to a religous school.

- annotator1: P1
- annotator2: P27 Cannot be decided whether "bring their faith into the school" is implied as praying in the school by the author.
- annotator3: P1 against prayer in public schools

Result A2 agreed.

#1514 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools) Either allow everyone to practice their religion at school, or allow nobody. It's not hard.

- annotator1: P25
 - annotator2: P21
 - annotator3: P1 HARD...
 - Does mean "allow everyone to practice religion at school" the same as prayer in schools?
- Result** It's more a reaction to others, hard to see taking any side. Thus P2.

#112 (artcomment, homeschooling) Purposely raising your children to be outcasts is child abuse, I don't care what kind of cult you belong to.

- annotator1: P1
 - annotator2: P27 "outcast" - probably due to lack of social interaction among the children who are homeschooled. Quite implicit, unable to decide without knowing the context / or what it actually is in response to.
 - annotator3: P1
 - "outcast" probably means home-schooled
- Result** A2 agrees.

#366 (artcomment, homeschooling) If a kindly person had imprisoned the Powell children against their will and refused to provide them education or the freedom to participate in society as they wished, it would have been a dramatic case of kidnapping that the Post would have reported extensively. Editorials would have been written. Legislators would be outraged. What is the difference here? Why is it allowable for parents to emulate the Taliban and keep their children in ignorant servitude but not strangers?

- annotator1: P24
- annotator2: P1 It was implicit. But I think the parents he refers to here are the ones who HS their kids. His stance is clear against HS.
- annotator3: P23
 - Implicitly against HS?

Result The implicitness varies from case to case and it's hard to draw a strict line given any general rule. After repeated reading, it's clear he is against HS. (P1) But another point of view is also valid – in that case I would say P2.7 (needs deep background knowledge, e.g. "emulate the Taliban"). This is quite a "border" example.

#882 (artcomment, homeschooling) This is code for they want to check that your child is not being taught unsuitable material, and by that I mean your own morals and political opinions. When a child is being home schooled the government has no access to that child's mind. The government are afraid of having a generation of people with 'free thinking' that have not received state control codes.

- annotator1: P27 "The government are afraid of having a generation of people with 'free thinking' that have not received state control codes" I am not really sure here if the author is claiming that homeschooling leads to free thinkers or he is just replying to some other person's question.
- annotator2: P23 Quite implicit. The author mentions the possibility of teaching the children your own morals and political opinions by homeschooling. However, it also seems as if (s)he is just mentioning his opinion on the view of the government about homeschooling, which takes it off the topic.

- annotator3: P1 for hs
- In my opinion, it's argumentation for home-schooling that produces free thinkers independent of the government

Result A1 and A2 agrees with P1

#2834 (artcomment, public-private-schools) So, in summary, I should sacrifice my children for the good of the public school system as a whole? That is like saying I should buy a house in a bad neighborhood because it would make the bad neighborhood better? No thanks.

- annotator1: P1
- annotator2: P1 Assumption was that "sacrifice my children for the good of the public school system" = sending kids to a public school. IMHO it is against public school system.
- annotator3: P23
- Does he mean "sacrifice my children for the good of the public school system" = sending kids to a public school?

#2916 (artcomment, public-private-schools) How is it possible for someone with an idea this moronic to actually have an article printed on a major news site. It is the liberal mindset that there is no right or wrong, that students cannot be disciplined in school and that teachers who perform badly cannot be fired that has destroyed the public education system in the first place. To write an article that states that parents wanting their children to get a good education and are willing to sacrifice to pay for it are bad is absolutely ridiculous. I have 5 children that all go to private school. I don't own a car that has less than 190,000 miles on it. I don't go on vacations. I don't have a 50" TV and my mortgage payment was decided by what I can afford not by what the bank would lend me. I have neighbors with pools in their yard driving Mercedes who go on cruises twice a year tell me they can't afford private school for their kids. It's a priority choice. For me the education for my children is more important than the new car. The idea that I should sacrifice the education for my kids for the greater good of society as stated in the article is liberal (socialist) bunk. The fact that the article was printed at all shows the leanings of the media as a whole.

- annotator1: P21 It was hard to decide when I read it for the first time, It was somehow implicit, not really sure.
- annotator2: P1 "The idea that I should sacrifice the education for my kids for the greater good of society as stated in the article is liberal (socialist) bunk" - supports private schools
- annotator3: P1 NOT SURE; not explicitly for private, but "For me the education for my children is more important than the new car."
- implicit to some extent

Result Implicit argumentation but supports private schools. P1

#4099 (artcomment, public-private-schools) I personally just don't want my kid to get shot, knifed, or be surrounded by drugs everyday.

- annotator1: P24
- annotator2: P21
- annotator3: P1 One must know the background of public schools
- too implicit, assumes knowledge about the situation at public schools; but compare with #831 – very similar, in fact...

Result A1 and A2 might have changed their mind. On the other hand, the reference to public schools is very implicit and impossible to infer without knowing the social context. Probably P1.

#4363 (artcomment, public-private-schools) So I am now expected to sacrifice an education for my child so that possibly other children in 25 years can have a better education? No thanks, I will continue to sacrifice so that MY child gets the most that HE can get. I still pay my taxes and I still pay for the school system. I am guessing the author does not have a child.

- annotator1: P1 She was asking in a sarcastic way if she should sacrifice her child's future by sending them to public school so that in 25 years another child MIGHT benefit from that? Then she mentions she paid her taxes also which still support the public school but she's definitely for private.
- annotator2: P1 I think it's quite similar to a document where the author supports her stance on sending her kids to private school by saying that she still pays her taxes which go for public schools, meaning thereby: public schools get more money while having less children so those parents are still doing a good thing for a public schools system
- annotator3: P21 Not clear even from "I still pay my taxes and I still pay for the school system"
– "Sacrificing an education for my child" = support public schools? I think this is too implicit...

Result The problem here is that "public schools get more money while having less children so those parents are still doing a good thing for a public schools system" mentioned by A2 is an implicit background assumption. If this was a reaction to "If you REALLY want to improve the public system, why don't you send your kids there?", then this would be probably a good answer. Otherwise, I'm afraid this (although implicit) context might be unclear. Anyway, this is a hard case, because the common ground of knowledge varies and for some it's clearly argumentative while for others not. So I also might treat it as P1.

3.3.4 Jokes, sarcasm, etc.

#5377 (artcomment, redshirting) When I go to the grocery store and the check out gal says "\$22.54 please" and I hand her a ten and a five and she rings it up before I can hand her the 54 cents, she is completely lost. Can't figure out to hand me 3 dollars back. Without the register, she stands there with a completely lost look on her face. I'm starting to think they should ALL be held back.

- annotator1: P23
- annotator2: P1
- annotator3: P23 Good joke :)
– I think he's joking - people (which ones?) are dumb, so holding back all would help – this is rather off-topic for our purposes

Result Will be considered as off-topic.

#23 (artcomment, homeschooling) Does it not strike anyone as ironic that the parents who are considered idiots and uneducated are most likely all products of the public school system? Home schooling as it is known today is a fairly recent (80's and on) trend.

- annotator1: P1
- annotator2: P21
- annotator3: P1 for his "Does it not strike anyone as ironic that the parents who are considered idiots and uneducated are most likely all products of the public school system?"
– A2 is probably right. "Idiots are products of public schools, not homeschooling" — is that an argument for or against?

#174 (artcomment, homeschooling) Most people don't know the difference between weight and mass, good luck home schoolers.

- annotator1: P27
- annotator2: P21
- annotator3: P1 sarcastic
- He's sarcastic but some context is missing

#831 (artcomment, homeschooling) But how will your children become involved in drugs, gangs, and knife/gun crime, if you insist on schooling them at home?

- annotator1: P1 Sarcasm against sending kids to school claiming they would be involved in drugs, gangs and knife crime.
- annotator2: P1
- annotator3: P23 very sarcastic :)
- Ok, this is persuasive using sarcasm

#2790 (artcomment, public-private-schools) What an idiot. Send your kid to a public school in Delaware and watch what happens.

- annotator1: P21
 - annotator2: P21
 - annotator3: P1
 - But this is IMHO totally persuasive: "Send your kid to a public school in Delaware" (even the meaning is somehow ironical)
- Result** A1 and A2 changed their minds. Is P1.

4 Annotation of argument structure

In this phase, the documents selected as persuasive will be further annotated in more detail. The goal is to find appropriate argument concepts in the documents and assigns the label.

The elementary text unit is token (word), but we will mostly use the existing automatically pre-identified sentences.

4.1 Argument components

Argument consists of the following components: Claim, Grounds, Backing, Rebuttal, Refutation

4.1.1 Claim

- The conclusion we seek to establish by our arguments. [Freeley and Steinberg, 2008, p. 153]
- Assertion put forward publicly for general acceptance. [Toulmin et al., 1984, p. 29]
- Assertion (which has to be supported), you want it to be accepted by some audience, and therefore, you have to make it public. [Schiappa and Nordin, 2013, p. 34]

The following definitions of claim types are taken from [Schiappa and Nordin, 2013].

There are three types of claims: Fact claims, Value claims and Policy claims.

Fact claims assert that something is true or false, was true or false or will be true or false. Remember, what we are talking about are "factual claims" not "things everyone accepts as a fact." "Al Gore received more votes in Florida in 2000 than George Bush" is a factual claim that is disputed. "Continents move" is a factual claim that used to be viewed as false, even ridiculous. However more research was conducted and gradually, sometime in the late 1950s or 1960s, this became accepted scientific fact. But, also remember, that having an active, on-going dispute is

not necessary to make something a factual claim. “Two plus two is four” is a factual claim. No adult disputes this, but you might have to prove it to a three year old. Fact claims are proved by offering evidence or logic about the way the world is. Doing so draws on the shared inheritance of the Enlightenment and often would use the methods of science.

A **value claim** asserts the worth of something (e.g, an idea, a behavior, a thing). They often have one of the following forms: “X is right”, “X is good (in a moral, aesthetic, or ethical sense)” or “X is valuable.” Some call these “evaluation claims.” The person making a claim is evaluating something. Calling something a “value” is sometimes used as a way of saying “it’s just my opinion” or “no one can prove it”, but this is erroneous. A value claim is not a dispute over facts. And a value claim is not a dispute over your right to be an autonomous person, either. It is a dispute about things like esthetics, justice, meaning or purpose.

A **policy claim** is a claim that advocates a course of action – that this action be done or not done. Policy claims often have the form of “We should (should not) do X.” You can have policy claims about national political issues as well as what you personally intend to do. Example of policy claims (using the same topics we did for fact and value claims): “Abortion should be made illegal.” “Models appearing in mass media should have a BMI above 18.” “You should buy Pepsi.” “Our troops should be withdrawn from Iraq within a year.” “We should open more sales offices in Asia.”

As you could mix fact and value claims, so also you can confuse value and policy claims. For example, debates about what should be illegal (a policy decision) are often made in terms for what is immoral (a value decision). The abortion debate comes to mind. It is perfectly legitimate to have values inform what public policy you argue for, the problem occurs specifically when you ignore the practical issues by focusing entirely on the value argument.

Opinions are judgments about the truth or falsehood of a fact. They can be evaluated by others.

Value claims will often involve factual issues (as we will see), but value claims are about something else. They are about meaning, purpose, what is good, virtuous or moral. They are sometimes called “evaluation arguments” because they ask for a judgment on something: is this a good movie? Is that the proper behavior? So value claims certainly are about ethics and morals but they include more than that.

The simplest form of a value claim would be: C: “X is good.” (in a moral or ethical sense)

Given the previous discussion, we are interested in identifying value and policy claims as they reflect the author’s stance towards the controversies.

4.1.2 Grounds

- Evidence and reasoning to establish the foundation of our claim. We have to provide good reasons to establish that our claim is solid and reliable. The grounds represent what we have to go on. [Schiappa and Nordin, 2013]
- Grounds for a claim can include a number of different types of information. It can be quotes or data provided by a source or something you create. Grounds can be numbers or conceptual information or even visual evidence. Grounds, can in fact, also be claims: subsidiary or secondary claims that are used to build up a larger argument. Grounds have to match your claims. [Schiappa and Nordin, 2013]

4.1.3 Backing

Backing is additional evidence to support the argument.

4.1.4 Rebuttal and Refutation

Rebuttal attacks the Claim by presenting opposing view (or contra-argument). Refutation attacks Rebuttal.

4.1.5 Example

This is a condensed version of the argument; it contains all the mentioned concepts but they have been rephrased.

#4733 (forumpost, public-private-schools) I want to persuade you that [claim: public schools are good] because [grounds: students in private schools are only source of money.] I can back-up my argument by my experience: [backing: I have always gone to public schools and when I finished I got into University. I do not feel disadvantaged at all.] On the other hand, [rebuttal: some mentioned that those who are educated in the public schools are less educated.] However, [refutation: I actually think it would be in the reverse.]

Here follows the original text:

#4733 (forumpost, public-private-schools) [claim: The public schooling system is not as bad as some may think.] [rebuttal: Some mentioned that those who are educated in the public schools are less educated.] [refutation: well I actually think it would be in the reverse.] [grounds: Student who study in the private sector actually pay a fair amount of fees to do so and I believe that the students actually get let off for a lot more than anyone would in a public school. And its all because of the money.
In a private school, a student being expelled or suspended is not just one student out the door, its the rest of that students schooling life fees gone. Whereas in a public school, its just the student gone.]
[backing: I have always gone to public schools and when I finished I got into University. I do not feel disadvantaged at all.]

4.2 Identifying Claim

The claim should be always seen from the perspective of the discussed issue, e.g. "home schooling – yes or no" (see the description above). Therefore, the Claim reflects the author's overall stance to that controversy.

How to find the claim: Rephrasing it as **I want to persuade you that *claim*** will help.

As argumentation is the vehicle for persuasion, the Claim should reflect the main idea of what is the author persuading the readers. Imperatives ("Do X!", where X is the discussed controversy) play the role of persuasion very explicitly and should be considered as a Claim.

- Rhetorical questions are not Claims.
- Specificity: Y is subpart of X, it's the claim too. For example "Public schools in the US are the best in the world." – clear statement that the author advocates public schools, even the restriction to the U.S.
- "Doing X was the best think ever." is a Claim
- Sometimes the document contains the same Claim twice – both appearances should be labeled.

4.2.1 Claim with respect to the discussed issue

Claim: a) "I did XXX" vs. b) "I will/would do XXX" vs. c) "I believe XXX is good/bad" – they all express opinion towards XXX

- a) mostly implicitly, he did it, because he believed in it
- b) also implicitly, but is being communicated
- c) explicitly
- only b) and c) should be claims

Some performed action (e.g. "I pulled my child from public school") should not be marked as Claim. Think this is something that is not going to be discuss about – that's a fact (an event) and doesn't need to be supported. If the function is not clearly Grounds (directly supporting the Claim), is should be marked as Backing.

Notes But what about "*I'm glad I did XXX*"?? – This is Claim. Similar to "*Doing X was the best think ever.*"

4.2.2 Implicit Claim

In many cases, the author's stance is not explicitly stated (it must be inferred by the reader) and thus the Claim is implicit. In this case, add Implicit Claim and write the author's stance.

4.2.3 Claim and missing stance

If there is no overall stance (the author remains objective), we should annotate both perspectives (for X because XX, against X because YY). In that case, ignore Rebuttal!

4.2.4 Another Claim

Another claim that suggest or persuades about some related aspect ("We should do something XXX") – we should NOT annotate that

4.3 Grounds and Backing

Clear examples of backing:

- I'm an expert in this area (e.g. teacher)
- I have a successful/unsuccessful story
- Backing is meant to add more credibility or power to the argument

4.3.1 Grounds vs. Backing

If both are assumed to be present in the text, e.g. in the form of a narrative, then

- If the presented reasons are meant to be general, then this is Grounds
 - i.e. starts with a story of a friend (Backing) and then generalize to all such persons (Grounds)
 - or the author did that and that (Backing) and then presents the general reasons (Grounds)
- If the reasons are a singular case, this is Backing
- Sanity checking: The argument can work without the Backing, it will be only "weaker"
- If this singular case is the only reason for making the Claim and there are no other Grounds (i.e. "I support X because I did it" or "I'm doing X"), then it is still Backing; the argument will not work without this evidence, but we need to keep the approach to annotation consistent (ex #2616)
- Backing should be coherent in terms of one central idea (e.g. a story, personal experience). If the information is scattered, then the Backing is weak, does not help to support the argument, and should not be labeled
- Try to rephrase and summarize the backing; if this is not possible (i.e. many ideas are scattered through the text) then ignore it
- Rhetorical questions, as appeal to the reader (e.g., "Let's keep it that way!", #1444), do not contain any logical reasons for supporting the Claim. Should not belong to the Grounds.
- Backing should support the argument in logical way, no on the emotional level (in that case it is Appeal to emotion)

- Grounds as analogy to similar problems. The issue can be paraphrased by some analogy with complicated structure whose parts can resemble argumentation. The whole analogy should be labeled as Grounds without further distinction.
- URL as Backing: All separated URL should be ignored (if they are not a part of the discourse)

4.3.2 Granularity of Grounds/Backing

Each Grounds/Backings should express one consistent idea (reason). In the case of longer text, different reasons should be segmented into multiple Grounds/Backings.

4.4 Rebuttal and Refutation

Rebuttal represents opposing view to the author's Claim.

4.4.1 Refutation vs. Grounds

Rebuttal attacks the main claim by presenting an opponent's view. In most cases, the Rebuttal is again attack by the author using Refutation. Refutation thus supports the author's stance expressed by the Claim. So it can be confused with Grounds, as both provide reasons for the Claim.

Refutation thus only takes place if it is meant as a reaction to the Rebuttal. It follows the discussed matter and contradicts it. Such a discourse can be mainly expressed as:

[*rebuttal*: On the other hand, some people say that my Claim is wrong.] [*refutation*: But this is not true, because of that and that.]

4.5 Pathos Dimension — Appeal to emotion

- You can remove appeal to emotion and the argument should be still valid (if there is some logic, of course)
- sarcasm belongs to the Pathos dimension
- figurative language is a sign of pathos
- for example, the author obviously exaggerates to “spice up” the argument
- Grounds and Appeal to emotion at the same time? Possible. see i.e. #1966
- Appeal to emotion (figurative language — hyperbole² ”the most uneducated and most of all immoral thing that could have been done”)
- Distinction between Grounds and Appeal to emotion: level of plausibility (this is, however, very subjective)
- #1698 The complete argument is fallacy — it only appeals to readers by exaggerating and relying on rhetorical power.

4.5.1 Rhetorical questions

- Rhetorical questions: a figure of speech in the form of a question that is asked in order to make a point
- Rhetorical questions are really problematic as their role in argumentation is not clear and remains a part of research in social psychology
- In some cases, they appeal to the reader to accept the author's opinion (by leaving the questions unanswered), thus might be marked as appeal to emotion (the borderline is a bit fuzzy here).
- Opinionated expressions in the backing story do not usually belong to appeal to emotions

²Hyperbole is the use of exaggeration as a rhetorical device or figure of speech

4.6 Boundaries on the token level

- Cover as much as possible from the sentence, including ending punctuation. (Different from PDTB) –reasons: on Sentence level, the punctuation is a part of the span.
- Connectives: mostly the case of Rebuttal and Refutation – NO DO NOT INCLUDE THEM
 - Example: "[claim: I claim that and that] because of [grounds: some reasons.]"
 - Example "[rebuttal: Perhaps something,] but [refutation: something else too.]"
 - Example "[backing: I did that and that] and [claim: that's why I think X is bad.]"
- Stay on sentence level. Only if the sentence contains other concepts (e.g., Rebuttal, Grounds, etc.) switch to the token level and annotate the appropriate statement.

4.7 Suggested general actions

- If a concept is not a single short and clear statement, rephrase it. It would definitely help to check the sanity of the argument
- If a sentence contains a claim and another concept (e.g. grounds, backing, or rebuttal), should be splitted.
- If there is a concept that could start "On the other hand, ..." it probably represents Rebuttal.
- General requirements for argument concepts:
 - coherent
 - one central idea

4.8 Summarizing/rephrasing content of annotated concepts

If the annotated concept (Grounds, Backing, etc.) are longer than one sentence, summarize or rephrase the content into a single statement that captures the gist of the concept.

#2719 (artcomment, public-private-schools) How is it that sending a child to a private school for religious reasons makes a parent, "bad people"? [grounds: Our liberal, anti-Christian government and the small minority of whining atheists have cleansed our public schools of any positive values and moral teaching. Revisionist historians have changed the textbooks to honor the immoral and eliminate reference to godly individuals and the good contributions that religion and churches have made to our society. They, instead, use our public schools to promote a liberal agenda and brainwash our children to follow those principles.] And this author thinks we are "bad people" for shielding our children from this garbage and creating well-balanced, healthy minded adults who contribute greatly to help our communities? Give me a break!

The Grounds can be summarized e.g. as "*Religion has been eliminated from our public schools, they promote liberal agenda and brainwash children.*"

You do not have to summarize concepts in the Pathos dimension (appeal to emotion).

4.8.1 Claims

Explicit Claims Unless clearly stated (the stance is very obvious), the Claims should be summarized/rephrased as well.

Implicit Claims Must be always rephrased.

4.9 Blogs and longer documents

- Start with looking for the author's stance (Claim)
- If found (either explicit or implicit), then the roles of Grounds or Rebuttals are given
- If the author takes no stance, there are arguments for and against – in this case, one claim will be for X and another against X and will have their respective Grounds

5 Commented examples

#17 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos Ah yes, the shining examples of the ignorance of home-schooling is well displayed in the majority of these posts. I would respectfully recommend you actually take the time to learn about home-schooling before posting such ignorant and hateful words but alas, the products of a liberal and intolerant educational system cannot possibly fathom such a possibility.

Claim

- **In favour of Homeschooling**

Dimension: pathos Ah yes, the shining examples of the ignorance of home-schooling is well displayed in the majority of these posts. [app-to-emot: I would respectfully recommend you actually take the time to learn about home-schooling before posting such ignorant and hateful words but alas, the products of a liberal and intolerant educational system cannot possibly fathom such a possibility.]

AppealToEmotion

- “I would respectfully recommend you actually take the time to learn about home-schooling before posting such ignorant and hateful words but alas, the products of a liberal and intolerant educational system cannot possibly fathom such a possibility.”

Comments

- The main here intention was to attack the author, not give logical reasons for supporting homeschooling.

#45 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos Depriving your child of a basic education is a form of child abuse. It can ruin your child’s whole life.

[claim: Home schooling should be illegal] unless [rebuttal: the parent can demonstrate that they are providing the same level of education as a public school.] There should be a core national curriculum and testing to ensure children are achieving at least a basic level of education.

[grounds: In an increasingly complex, global technological society, all people need to have a basic understanding of science, technology and local and global culture, just to be able to function and make informed decisions.]

[claim: I don’t see any need for home schooling any child] unless [rebuttal: the child has special needs or learning difficulties.] If public schools are under-performing, then the public education system needs to be improved. [grounds: Public education in the US seems to be a self-perpetuating disaster, with ignorant, uneducated, unqualified people on school boards deciding what children should learn.]

Claim

- “Home schooling should be illegal”
- “I don’t see any need for home schooling any child”

Grounds

- **Science and technology are not taught in HS** “In an increasingly complex, global technological society, all people need to have a basic understanding of science, technology and local and global culture, just to be able to function and make informed decisions.”

- **Public school in the US is bad** “Public education in the US seems to be a self-perpetuating disaster, with ignorant, uneducated, unqualified people on school boards deciding what children should learn.”

Rebuttal

- **HS is ok if parents demonstrate the same level of education as in schools** “the parent can demonstrate that they are providing the same level of education as a public school.”
- **HS can be allowed for kids with special needs** “the child has special needs or learning difficulties.”

Dimension: pathos [*app-to-emot*: Depriving your child of a basic education is a form of child abuse. It can ruin your child’s whole life.]

Home schooling should be illegal unless the parent can demonstrate that they are providing the same level of education as a public school. There should be a core national curriculum and testing to ensure children are achieving at least a basic level of education.

In an increasingly complex, global technological society, all people need to have a basic understanding of science, technology and local and global culture, just to be able to function and make informed decisions.

I don’t see any need for home schooling any child unless the child has special needs or learning difficulties. If public schools are under-performing, then the public education system needs to be improved. Public education in the US seems to be a self-perpetuating disaster, with ignorant, uneducated, unqualified people on school boards deciding what children should learn.

AppealToEmotion

- “Depriving your child of a basic education is a form of child abuse. It can ruin your child’s whole life.”

Comments

- “Depriving your child of a basic edu” – the author puts this forward to support the idea that HS should be illegal. It should be labeled as pathos, as it appeals to emotions and uses figurative language (“child abuse”, “ruin whole life”).

#69 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos [*backing*:... My niece is/has home schooled six of her children. She has undergraduate degrees in physics and French - graduate with a 4.0 from University of Maryland. She was offered teaching fellowships from both departments and went on to get a her graduate in French. She is a genius and is knowledgeable in the arts and in the sciences. Her mother, my sister, has a masters in mathematics. She was in charge of all math programs, k through 12, for nationally recognized public schools in a surburban D.C. county. My sister schools all her grandchildren in higher mathematics. My niece’s first born scored very high on the SAT’s and is a second year student in engineering at a Florida school. She is on a scholarship] [*claim*: I do not support home schooling.] but [*rebuttal*: for my niece and her children, it is working very good.] [*backing*: I am a college professor.]

Claim

- “I do not support home schooling,”

Backing

- **successful story of my niece who homeschooled** “My niece is/has home schooled six of her children. She has undergraduate degrees in physics and French - graduate with a 4.0 from University of Maryland. She was offered teaching fellowships from both departments and went on to get a her graduate in French. She is a genius and is knowledgeable in the arts and in the sciences. Her mother, my sister, has a masters in mathematics. She was in charge of all math

programs, k through 12, for nationally recognized public schools in a suburban D.C. county. My sister schools all her grandchildren in higher mathematics. My niece's first born scored very high on the SAT's and is a second year student in engineering at a Florida school. She is on a scholarship"

- "I am a college professor."

Rebuttal

- **HS worked for my family** "for my niece and her children, it is working very good."

Comments

- Last sentence back-ups the argument. Punctuation on token level included. "but" not included. The story is actually Backing for Rebuttal.

#163 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos Thank you for bringing this tragedy to light. [*backing*: I am a Christian, an educator, a student and a parent and I have seen too many children like the Powells. As an admissions officer, we had applicants whose "record keeping" consisted of sending boxes full of paper for our office to review as part of the application.] [*grounds*: If their students did get an interview, which was rare, they didn't have the social skills to survive the first round.]

[*grounds*: I personally am acquainted with four families who are home schooling their large families. All four have no intention of book-schooling their daughters past age 13 as they need to learn :homemaking skills". One of the girls, who has not been taught for two years, could be Josh Powell's twin. She is intelligent and desperate to learn, but her parents won't allow it.] It is heartbreaking.

That the Commonwealth of Virginia has such a rich tradition of the education of young people and allows this travesty is shameful. All of us, no matter our religious beliefs, need to pray that the law changes before more smart children are left behind.

Claim

- **Against homeschooling**

Grounds

- **HS kids lacked social skills** "If their students did get an interview, which was rare, they didn't have the social skills to survive the first round."
- **I know families that HS but in fact do not teach their children at all** "I personally am acquainted with four families who are home schooling their large families. All four have no intention of book-schooling their daughters past age 13 as they need to learn :homemaking skills". One of the girls, who has not been taught for two years, could be Josh Powell's twin. She is intelligent and desperate to learn, but her parents won't allow it."

Backing

- **Observations as an admission officer** "I am a Christian, an educator, a student and a parent and I have seen too many children like the Powells. As an admissions officer, we had applicants whose "record keeping" consisted of sending boxes full of paper for our office to review as part of the application."

Dimension: pathos Thank you for bringing this tragedy to light. I am a Christian, an educator, a student and a parent and I have seen too many children like the Powells. As an admissions officer, we had applicants whose "record keeping" consisted of sending boxes full of paper for our office to review as part of the application. If their students did get an interview, which was rare, they didn't have the social skills to survive the first round.

I personally am acquainted with four families who are home schooling their large families. All four have no intention of book-schooling their daughters past age 13 as they need to learn :homemaking skills". One of the girls, who has not been taught for two years, could be Josh Powell's

twin. She is intelligent and desperate to learn, but her parents won't allow it. [*app-to-emot*: It is heartbreaking.]

That the Commonwealth of Virginia has such a rich tradition of the education of young people and allows this travesty is shameful.] All of us, no matter our religious beliefs, need to pray that the law changes before more smart children are left behind.

AppealToEmotion

- “It is heartbreaking. That the Commonwealth of Virginia has such a rich tradition of the education of young people and allows this travesty is shameful.”

Comments

- Nice Pathos example. The main support for his (implicit) claim starts with “I personally am acquainted with four families ...”. Another reason are the social skills.

#166 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos [*grounds*: The majority of home schooled children I have met, and had contact with, are smart and get along well with adults, but have an awful time relating to other children. That, within itself, is a major problem: these children do not receive that personal contactt with other children of their own ages. They simply do not learn to interact with their peers, and thus are constrained by that pressure, the rest of their lives. Happily, some parents realize this, and have their children participate in other groups, such as church, Scouting, 4H, etc. to get that additional group support, and friendships amongst their peers. This is an important part of education, and goes along with the actual learning skills and knowledge required of todays citizen, in order to further their education, get a job and advance through life.]

The parents, described in this article, are doing their children a disservice by refusing to not only let them, but require them to have that knowledge, required in todays workplace. They have robbed them of the chance to advance in life, and that is child abuse. This state needs to immediately back off on the present rules, and fix the problem. Let us required the children to take standardized tests. Let us require the parents to insure those children learn the same subjects, as their age peers, in public or private schools. Let us stop the nonsense, and abuse.

Claim

- **Against homeschooling**

Grounds

- **Social problems of HS children** “The majority of home schooled children I have met, and had contact with, are smart and get along well with adults, but have an awful time relating to other children. That, within itself, is a major problem: these children do not receive that personal contactt with other children of their own ages. They simply do not learn to interact with their peers, and thus are constrained by that pressure, the rest of their lives. Happily, some parents realize this, and have their children participate in other groups, such as church, Scouting, 4H, etc. to get that additional group support, and friendships amongst their peers. This is an important part of education, and goes along with the actual learning skills and knowledge required of todays citizen, in order to further their education, get a job and advance through life.”

Dimension: pathos The majority of home schooled children I have met, and had contact with, are smart and get along well with adults, but have an awful time relating to other children. That, within itself, is a major problem: these children do not receive that personal contactt with other children of their own ages. They simply do not learn to interact with their peers, and thus are constrained by that pressure, the rest of their lives. Happily, some parents realize this, and have their children participate in other groups, such as church, Scouting, 4H, etc. to get that additional

group support, and friendships amongst their peers. This is an important part of education, and goes along with the actual learning skills and knowledge required of today's citizen, in order to further their education, get a job and advance through life.

The parents, described in this article, are doing their children a disservice by refusing to not only let them, but require them to have that knowledge, required in today's workplace. [*app-to-emot*: They have robbed them of the chance to advance in life, and that is child abuse.] This state needs to immediately back off on the present rules, and fix the problem. Let us require the children to take standardized tests. Let us require the parents to insure those children learn the same subjects, as their age peers, in public or private schools. [*app-to-emot*: Let us stop the nonsense, and abuse.]

AppealToEmotion

- “They have robbed them of the chance to advance in life, and that is child abuse.”
- “Let us stop the nonsense, and abuse.”

Comments

- The first part “The majority ... rest of their lives.” is about one aspect – the social interaction. Should be labeled as one Grounds.

#230 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos [*rebuttal*: There are serious problems in our public schools.] [*refutation*: They are still usually better than parents who have other things to do and who ignore the daily chore of teaching their kids schoolwork.]

If you honestly think your kids will be permanently damaged by learning about evolution, get a grip. The parents can talk to their kids about evolution and explain that they do not believe that evolution ever happened; they can try to push the creation theory and see where they end up. Parents have all the years before the kids start school in which to indoctrinate little

Claim

- **Against homeschooling**

Rebuttal

- **public schools have problems** “There are serious problems in our public schools.”

Refutation

- **Parents cannot properly teach schoolwork** “They are still usually better than parents who have other things to do and who ignore the daily chore of teaching their kids schoolwork.”

Comments

- Grounds vs. Refutation – here, the reasons for supporting public schools is a reaction to the Rebuttal (therefore Refutation).

#243 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos [*grounds*: It isn't the same the influence that a student mind has from several teachers and their way of thinking than from only one parent way of teaching.] [*backing*: Also, I know that I could have home-schooling my children, because I have a very high level of education, but I would not have the patient to do that, and I believe my sons were benefited with a very good education from a very good public high school with excellent teachers in Worcester County in Maryland; my oldest son is a biologist (Salisbury University) with three masters, my second son is a mathematician (MIT), and my third son is a mechanical engineer (College Park).] [*claim*: I wrote this paragraph on a prior commentary because it is a fallacy that a great percentage of the home-schooling students attended top universities: I disagree that all the public schools

in Maryland are bad.] [backing: My three sons graduated from a very good high school in Worcester County in Maryland, and the three of them attended excellent universities. My second son, whom graduated from MIT, received a “Mathematics and Verbal Talent Search Award from The John Hopkins University in 1995; when we attended the ceremony we observed that most of the recipients of the awards were home-schooling students and had foreign last names.] So, the data about the high percentage of the home-schooling students that graduate and that attended top universities such Harvard, Stanford, Yale, etc. is based on those students I saw in that award ceremony. [backing: From the students I taught that were home-schooling, only one was exceptional brilliant, he got a very high score in the SAT, and he attended the University of Maryland, College Park to study engineering.] [grounds: No everybody can teach and learn at home, and some parents and students cheat at home as well as they do at public schools, and the big problem is that nobody could catch them because the most important thing for many parents in this country is that their children should have as many “As” as possible on their resu]

Claim

- **I advocate public schools** “I wrote this paragraph on a prior commentary because it is a fallacy that a great percentage of the home-schooling students attended top universities: I disagree that all the public schools in Maryland are bad.”

Grounds

- **homeschooled kids are influenced only by parents** “It isn’t the same the influence that a student mind has from several teachers and their way of thinking than from only one parent way of teaching.”
- **Not everyone can teach/learn at home** “No everybody can teach and learn at home, and some parents and students cheat at home as well as they do at public schools, and the big problem is that nobody could catch them because the most important thing for many parents in this country is that their children should have as many “As” as possible on their resu”

Backing

- **Story of sons who were successful after attending public school** “Also, I know that I could have home-schooling my children, because I have a very high level of education, but I would not have the patient to do that, and I believe my sons were benefited with a very good education from a very good public high school with excellent teachers in Worcester County in Maryland; my oldest son is a biologist (Salisbury University) with three masters, my second son is a mathematician (MIT), and my third son is a mechanical engineer (College Park).”
- **Success story of sons** “My three sons graduated from a very good high school in Worcester County in Maryland, and the three of them attended excellent universities. My second son, whom graduated from MIT, received a “Mathematics and Verbal Talent Search Award from The John Hopkins University in 1995; when we attended the ceremony we observed that most of the recipients of the awards were home-schooling students and had foreign last names.”
- **I taught only one good HS student** “From the students I taught that were home-schooling, only one was exceptional brilliant, he got a very high score in the SAT, and he attended the University of Maryland, College Park to study engineering.”

Comments

- Focus of the claim: I have an opinion about X vs. I have an opinion about Y (which is a sub-type of X)? – SOLUTION: also a claim.

#283 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos Well this has been fun but I have to go back to work.

[grounds: remember, keeping your kids away from knowledge that you don’t like is a moral crime.] Have a nice day.

Claim

- **Against homeschooling**

Grounds

- **HS parents teach only what they like which is a moral crime** “remember, keeping your kids away from knowledge that you don’t like is a moral crime.”

Dimension: pathos Well this has been fun but I have to go back to work.

[*app-to-emot*: remember, keeping your kids away from knowledge that you don’t like is a moral crime.]

Have a nice day.

AppealToEmotion

- “remember, keeping your kids away from knowledge that you don’t like is a moral crime.”

Comments

- The Grounds is on both dimensions: Logos (reason) and Pathos (calling it “moral crime”).

#291 (artcomment, homeschooling)

Dimension: logos Adults have every right to make decisions for themselves for which they later suffer. . [*grounds*: Consciously depriving a child of an adequate education solely because “father knows best,” or thinks he does, is tantamount to child abuse.]

[*grounds*: When it comes to medical care, the courts often overrule parents who are irrationally threatening a child’s life due to mistaken religious beliefs. If a teenager told doctors, “I want this treatment” and the parents refused to give consent, what would a court do?] [*grounds*: An adequate education is vitally important in a child’s life.] [*claim*: Parents should not be allowed to withhold it.]

How many young people have the intelligence, drive and courage to do for themselves what this young man did? He is remarkable.because “father knows best,” or thinks he does, is tantamount to child abuse.

.When it comes to medical care, the courts often overrule parents who are irrationally threatening a child’s life due to mistaken religious beliefs. If a teenager told doctors, “I want this treatment” and the parents refused to give consent, what would a court do? An adequate education is vitally important in a child’s life. Parents should not be allowed to withhold it.

IHow many young people have the intelligence, drive and courage to do for themselves what this young man did? He is remarkable.

Claim

- **Against homeschooling** “Parents should not be allowed to withhold it.”

Grounds

- **HS deprive adequate education** “Consciously depriving a child of an adequate education solely because “father knows best,” or thinks he does, is tantamount to child abuse.”
- **Parallel to medical care** “When it comes to medical care, the courts often overrule parents who are irrationally threatening a child’s life due to mistaken religious beliefs. If a teenager told doctors, “I want this treatment” and the parents refused to give consent, what would a court do?”
- “An adequate education is vitally important in a child’s life.”

Dimension: pathos Adults have every right to make decisions for themselves for which they later suffer. . [*app-to-emot*: Consciously depriving a child of an adequate education solely because “father knows best,” or thinks he does, is tantamount to child abuse.]

When it comes to medical care, the courts often overrule parents who are irrationally threatening a child’s life due to mistaken religious beliefs. If a teenager told doctors, “I want this treatment”

and the parents refused to give consent, what would a court do? An adequate education is vitally important in a child's life. Parents should not be allowed to withhold it.

How many young people have the intelligence, drive and courage to do for themselves what this young man did? He is remarkable, because "father knows best," or thinks he does, is tantamount to child abuse.

.When it comes to medical care, the courts often overrule parents who are irrationally threatening a child's life due to mistaken religious beliefs. If a teenager told doctors, "I want this treatment" and the parents refused to give consent, what would a court do? An adequate education is vitally important in a child's life. Parents should not be allowed to withhold it.

IHow many young people have the intelligence, drive and courage to do for themselves what this young man did? He is remarkable.

AppealToEmotion

- "Consciously depriving a child of an adequate education solely because "father knows best," or thinks he does, is tantamount to child abuse."

Comments

- The claim reflects the overall stance towards the issue; "P should not be allowed to withhold it" means "P should not be allowed to withhold an adequate education", which means "P should not be allowed to homeschool". Analogy to medical care as Grounds.

#2252 (artcomment, single-sex-education)

Dimension: logos [*grounds:* In a rough analogy to monocultural farming, I think than any highly homogeneous group of people, while it offers certain efficiencies, is inherently pathology prone. Diversity damps extremes of outlook, need and behavior.] [*claim:* Ideally, I don't think school children should spend as much time as they usually do isolated by age, let alone sex.] [*backing:* The unhealthiest social situations I was ever in were an all-boys school and military training.]

Claim

- **Against single-sex** "Ideally, I don't think school children should spend as much time as they usually do isolated by age, let alone sex."

Grounds

- **Analogy to monocultural farming, which is pathology prone** "In a rough analogy to monocultural farming, I think than any highly homogeneous group of people, while it offers certain efficiencies, is inherently pathology prone. Diversity damps extremes of outlook, need and behavior."

Backing

- **Bad personal experience with single-sex institutions** "The unhealthiest social situations I was ever in were an all-boys school and military training."

Comments

- The author is taking stance by "Ideally, I don't think ...let alone sex." (separation by age or sex = single-sex classrooms). These are not reasons against single-sex schools, this is what is put forward. Analogy as Grounds.

#2322 (artcomment, single-sex-education)

Dimension: logos [grounds: Co-ed schools these days are becoming morally corrupt. Most Kids are distracted, do a lot of sexting, indulge/experiment in sexual acts, go on emotional outbursts (act like adults!) and so on... Schooling is not a time for all such acts and learning falls by the wayside.] No wonder why our educational standards are sliding.. [grounds: Co-ed schools are also the cause for some boys dropping out of school when in fact the society benefits by keeping these boys engaged in education and make them complete school. some posters here have admitted girls could better benefit by attending single sex-schools than co-ed schools.] [grounds: Co-ed schools don't cultivate the cooperation or better understanding between the opposite sexes,] That's a myth... otherwise why would you have high rates of divorce and acrimony just a few years after they graduate out of co-ed schools and colleges?

Claim

- **For single-sex**

Grounds

- **So many distractions in Co-ed** “Co-ed schools these days are becoming morally corrupt. Most Kids are distracted, do a lot of sexting, indulge/experiment in sexual acts, go on emotional outbursts (act like adults!) and so on... Schooling is not a time for all such acts and learning falls by the wayside.”
- **Boys drop out more** “Co-ed schools are also the cause for some boys dropping out of school when in fact the society benefits by keeping these boys engaged in education and make them complete school. some posters here have admitted girls could better benefit by attending single sex-schools than co-ed schools.”
- **Co-ed schools do not cultivate cooperation between sexes** “Co-ed schools don't cultivate the cooperation or better understanding between the opposite sexes,”

Dimension: pathos Co-ed schools these days are becoming morally corrupt. Most Kids are distracted, do a lot of sexting, indulge/experiment in sexual acts, go on emotional outbursts (act like adults!) and so on... Schooling is not a time for all such acts and learning falls by the wayside. No wonder why our educational standards are sliding.. Co-ed schools are also the cause for some boys dropping out of school when in fact the society benefits by keeping these boys engaged in education and make them complete school. some posters here have admitted girls could better benefit by attending single sex-schools than co-ed schools. Co-ed schools don't cultivate the cooperation or better understanding between the opposite sexes, That's a myth... [app-to-emot: otherwise why would you have high rates of divorce and acrimony just a few years after they graduate out of co-ed schools and colleges?]

Appeal To Emotion

- “otherwise why would you have high rates of divorce and acrimony just a few years after they graduate out of co-ed schools and colleges?”

Comments

- Claim: “Co-ed schools these days are becoming morally corrupt” are in fact reasons, why the author is against public schools. The claim should always directly reflect the main controversy. The last sentence – rhetorical questions (appeal to emotion)

#2782 (artcomment, public-private-schools)

Dimension: logos The author completely misses the reason why I send my children to private school as well as how to help the education system as a whole. [grounds: I am a loving, knowledgeable, intelligent and successful individual that wants to do all that I can to prepare my children and give them a great life.] [backing: My decision was based solely on those points as found by our exhaustive research of what was available to us in our area.] Unfortunately that has

me paying for my children to attend private school, and me paying for BOTH types of education. I pay taxes that go to the local school system that my children don't attend on both my residential property and business properties and I pay the private school tuition. I think the best way to get Public schools to be better and for the system to be fairer is for parents to be given vouchers for the amount public schools would receive for your child's education and for the parents to have a choice of where to send their children. [grounds: Public schools will never get better until they have competition. It is time we stop rewarding a bad system, and reform it with the good old reward system that promotes doing better called competition.]

Claim

- **Against public schools**

Grounds

- **Private schools will prepare my children for a great life** "I am a loving, knowledgeable, intelligent and successful individual that wants to do all that I can to prepare my children and give them a great life."
- **Public schools are a bad system and needs competition** "Public schools will never get better until they have competition. It is time we stop rewarding a bad system, and reform it with the good old reward system that promotes doing better called competition."

Backing

- **Did a research to find out private best option** "My decision was based solely on those points as found by our exhaustive research of what was available to us in our area."

Comments

- "Public schools will never get better until they have competition." also states fact that public schools are bad, but rather implicitly; in this argument it is the reason for decision, therefore Grounds.

#2798 (artcomment, public-private-schools)

Dimension: logos [backing: My Parents could barley afford to send my sister and I to private school. Every year we would by used uniforms and used books whenever possible. We took sack lunches and cut cost where ever possible. When we moved to an areas with better schools, we would go to public schools or magnet schools. We scrapped by then and now my sister and I have been pretty successful in life.] [claim: Both my sister and I plan to send our children to private school as well.] Why? [grounds: Because we got a better education than was available in most public schools.] [backing: When we both got to college we were ahead of the game with AP credits and CLEP tests.] My parents would have always send us to Public schools if they were good schools. [grounds: Schools are not always bad because of funding etc. Sometimes they are un areas that are mismanaged or just have bad teachers.] [backing: I can not tell you how many times I have come across teachers with over inflated egos. They think they are a parent and saving the world of their students, when really they are incapable of passing on any amount of knowledge.] Good schools draw good students regardless of a private or public classification.

Claim

- **For private schools** "Both my sister and I plan to send our children to private school as well."

Grounds

- **Private schools gave us better education** "Because we got a better education than was available in most public schools."
- **Teachers in public schools are bad** "Schools are not always bad because of funding etc. Sometimes they are un areas that are mismanaged or just have bad teachers."

Backing

- **My successful story** “My Parents could barley afford to send my sister and I to private school. Every year we would by used uniforms and used books whenever possible. We took sack lunches and cut cost where ever possible. When we moved to an areas with better schools, we would go to public schools or magnet schools. We scrapped by then and now my sister and I have been pretty successful in life.”
- **private school prepared us better for college** “When we both got to college we were ahead of the game with AP credits and CLEP tests.”
- **Bad experience with egoistic teachers in public schools** “I can not tell you how many times I have come across teachers with over inflated egos. They think they are a parent and saving the world of their students, when really they are incapable of passing on any amount of knowledge.”

#2905 (artcomment, public-private-schools)

Dimension: logos All I can say is WOW!!! What a load of BS. I never post on these things but today I had to. [*grounds:* That’s right, I do not give a s**t about the public schools system, I care about giving my child the best education and best opportunities possible and she will NOT get that at a public school.] What she will get is brainwashed to be a liberal zombie and grow up to write and believe stupid articles like this one.

Claim

- **Against public schools**

Grounds

- **Public schools cannot give best education** “That’s right, I do not give a s**t about the public schools system, I care about giving my child the best education and best opportunities possible and she will NOT get that at a public school.”

Dimension: pathos [*app-to-emot:* All I can say is WOW!!! What a load of BS.] I never post on these things but today I had to. [*app-to-emot:* That’s right, I do not give a s**t about the public schools system, I care about giving my child the best education and best opportunities possible and she will NOT get that at a public school.] [*app-to-emot:* What she will get is brainwashed to be a liberal zombie and grow up to write and believe stupid articles like this one.]

AppealToEmotion

- “All I can say is WOW!!! What a load of BS.”
- “That’s right, I do not give a s**t about the public schools system, I care about giving my child the best education and best opportunities possible and she will NOT get that at a public school.”
- “What she will get is brainwashed to be a liberal zombie and grow up to write and believe stupid articles like this one.”

Comments

- Mostly appealing to emotions (heavy language)

#1465 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools)

Dimension: logos [*claim:* Pray at home.] [*grounds:* School is a place of learning.]

Claim

- “Pray at home.”

Grounds

- “School is a place of learning.”

Comments

- As argumentation is the vehicle for persuasion, the Claim should reflect the main idea of what is the author persuading the readers. Imperatives (“Do X!”) play the role of persuasion very explicitly and should be considered as a Claim.

#1487 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools)

Dimension: logos [*claim:* I think that religion should be either implemented for ALL religions; or otherwise, for none.] [*grounds:* But to just bring in services for one group flies in the face of equality.]

Claim

- **No religion in schools** “I think that religion should be either implemented for ALL religions; or otherwise, for none.”

Grounds

- **It is unequal** “But to just bring in services for one group flies in the face of equality.”

Comments

- The first sentence is the claim – the central idea of the argument (no religion in schools)

#1546 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools)

Dimension: logos [*claim:* NO PRAYER IN SCHOOLS!...period.] [*grounds:* Our education system (as with our government) must remain secular and free from these silly distractions.] If you want to chat with your invisible, supernatural friend do so off school property and on your own time.

Claim

- **Against prayer in schools** “NO PRAYER IN SCHOOLS!...period.”

Grounds

- **System should remain secular** “Our education system (as with our government) must remain secular and free from these silly distractions.”

Dimension: pathos NO PRAYER IN SCHOOLS!...period.

Our education system (as with our government) must remain secular and free from these silly distractions. [*app-to-emot:* If you want to chat with your invisible, supernatural friend do so off school property and on your own time.]

AppealToEmotion

- “If you want to chat with your invisible, supernatural friend do so off school property and on your own time.”

Comments

- Last sentence – sarcasm (“chat with your invisible, supernatural friend”) – pathos. First sentence does not appeal to emotion – no figurative language is used. Second sentence is Grounds (“our system is secular and must remain so”).

#1576 (artcomment, prayer-in-schools)

Dimension: logos [*claim:* There is no place for religion in schools nor should taxpayers subsidize any religion's prayer services.] I do not care if the person is Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Jainist, Wiccan, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, or Pagan their beliefs belong in premises financed by their believers not the government.
 [*grounds:* Constitutionally, Canada has no religion, although some mistakenly believe we are a Christian nation even though legally that argument has no ground.] Lets keep it that way.
 [*grounds:* Allowing prayer in schools leads to proselytization and that is unacceptable.]

Claim

- **No religion at schools** “There is no place for religion in schools nor should taxpayers subsidize any religion's prayer services.”

Grounds

- **Canada is secular** “Constitutionally, Canada has no religion, although some mistakenly believe we are a Christian nation even though legally that argument has no ground.”
- **Prayer in schools attempts to convert people to another opinion and, particularly, another religion** “Allowing prayer in schools leads to proselytization and that is unacceptable.”

Dimension: pathos There is no place for religion in schools nor should taxpayers subsidize any religion's prayer services. [*app-to-emot:* I do not care if the person is Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Jainist, Wiccan, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, or Pagan their beliefs belong in premises financed by their believers not the government.]

Constitutionally, Canada has no religion, although some mistakenly believe we are a Christian nation even though legally that argument has no ground. Lets keep it that way. Allowing prayer in schools leads to proselytization and that is unacceptable.

AppealToEmotion

- “I do not care if the person is Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Jainist, Wiccan, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, or Pagan their beliefs belong in premises financed by their believers not the government.”

Comments

- Second sentence is appeal to emotion: the author clearly exaggerates here to “spice up” his argument

#1625 (forumpost, prayer-in-schools)

Dimension: logos [*grounds:* The bible says to pray in private. It also says to not use God's name in vain.] It's ironic that it is viewed as anti-christian to not want prayer at school and in public venues, to not want “In God We Trust” on our money, and to not want “One nation under God” in the pledge of allegiance because we really haven't earned that claim. Funny I really could care less if people are offended by these things, but I am quite concerned that God might be.
 [*claim:* As far as prayer in school, I think a moment of silence to allow a private prayer of any type for anyone who wishes to give such is most appropriate.]

Claim

- **In favour of silent prayers in school** “As far as prayer in school, I think a moment of silence to allow a private prayer of any type for anyone who wishes to give such is most appropriate.”

Grounds

- “The bible says to pray in private. It also says to not use God's name in vain.”

Comments

- The claim is more specific than the general controversy (in favor of silent prayer in schools)

#2171 (forumpost, single-sex-education)

Dimension: logos [*grounds*: Social education is important, alongside academics. The real world is not segregated, nor are universities.] Unless [*rebuttal*: there are individual circumstances] [*claim*: I wouldn't be sending my children to a single sex school.] I'll be putting this view into practise when my daughter is old enough.

Claim

- **Against single-sex** "I wouldn't be sending my children to a single sex school."

Grounds

- **Real world is not segregated, social edu is important** "Social education is important, alongside academics. The real world is not segregated, nor are universities."

Rebuttal

- **individual circumstances may change my opinion** "there are individual circumstances"

Comments

- Grounds granularity: both sentences, as they deal with a single aspect. Conjunction "unless" not included.

#2173 (forumpost, single-sex-education)

Dimension: logos It'd be good to read up on the literature. My first thoughts are that it would be more likely to produce an objectified view even with regular cross school events. [*backing*: I went to both single sex and co-ed high schools.] and [*grounds*: I feel the later made it easier to build cross gender friendships that weren't just hormone driven.]

Claim

- **Against single-sex schools**

Grounds

- **Better experience with co-ed** "I feel the later made it easier to build cross gender friendships that weren't just hormone driven."

Backing

- "I went to both single sex and co-ed high schools,"

Comments

- Distinction of Grounds and Backing.

#2204 (forumpost, single-sex-education)

Dimension: logos I would look at the subjects on offer. [*grounds*: Sometimes single sex schools don't have the numbers (or enough interest) to run certain subjects for example – girls schools may not run shop classes, boys schools may not run home-ec classes.] [*grounds*: Also, if girls schools don't have the interest/enough numbers to run advanced maths classes they may not offer it at all or only offer it as a correspondence subject.] [*rebuttal*: On the other hand, it can work in the girls' favour if they do run the class with a teacher and its a very small group.]

Claim

- **Against single-sex**

Grounds

- **Subjects not be offered due to numbers of students** “Sometimes single sex schools don’t have the numbers (or enough interest) to run certain subjects for example – girls schools may not run shop classes, boys schools may not run home-ec classes.”
- **Girls may not have advanced maths** “Also, if girls schools don’t have the interest/enough numbers to run advanced maths classes they may not offer it at all or only offer it as a correspondence subject.”

Rebuttal

- **Single-sex ed. might be in students favor if they work on small groups** “On the other hand, it can work in the girls’ favour if they do run the class with a teacher and its a very small group.”

Comments

- Connectives (“Also,” , “On the other hand,”) are kept when annotating on the sentence level.

#5086 (forumpost, redshirting)

Dimension: logos [*grounds:* If a young five is already reading and doing basic math, they can continue to develop those skills at home for another year.] [*backing:* That’s what we are doing.] [*grounds:* She may be advanced academically, but kindy is full day and she is just not ready for that, maturity-wise.] The school is having her wait, and I am 100% fine with that. She can keep doing her thing at home another year, and do half day preschool. They will find ways to challenge her, the curriculum is designed to accomodate all skill levels.

Claim

- **In favor of redshirting**

Grounds

- **Kids can develop more for another year at home** “If a young five is already reading and doing basic math, they can continue to develop those skills at home for another year.”
- **not ready for school maturity wise** “She may be advanced academically, but kindy is full day and she is just not ready for that, maturity-wise.”

Backing

- “That’s what we are doing.”

#5125 (forumpost, redshirting)

Dimension: logos [*grounds:* My kids would be bored to tears in Kindergarten if we waited a year.] As it is they already enter Kindy grade level comfortable in 1st grade math/ 1-2nd grade reading level. [*grounds:* I can’t imagine tossing them into PreK again for another year. They would be so bored. So bored!]

Claim

- **Against Redshirting**

Grounds

- “My kids would be bored to tears in Kindergarten if we waited a year.”
- “I can’t imagine tossing them into PreK again for another year. They would be so bored. So bored!”

#5291 (artcomment, redshirting)

Dimension: logos [*backing:* My son turned 5 one week before the cut-off. He is in a full day Kindergarten and seems to be doing well, considering he is the youngest in the class. Last year, his pre-school teacher recommended that I hold him back and keep him in Pre-K one more year. Pre-K was only 3 hours long, while Kindergarten was a full day. My husband and I agreed, that if our son has to be held back, it will be when we're sure he's not keeping up with the kids and Pre-K is not that time.] [*grounds:* He would have been bored going over the same things and not getting challenged.] [*backing:* He has had no problems so far in Kindergarten.] [*claim:* I'm happy with my choice and it was comforting to read this article of support for my decision.]

Claim

- **Against redshirting** "I'm happy with my choice and it was comforting to read this article of support for my decision."

Grounds

- "He would have been bored going over the same things and not getting challenged."

Backing

- **Story of my son** "My son turned 5 one week before the cut-off. He is in a full day Kindergarten and seems to be doing well, considering he is the youngest in the class. Last year, his pre-school teacher recommended that I hold him back and keep him in Pre-K one more year. Pre-K was only 3 hours long, while Kindergarten was a full day. My husband and I agreed, that if our son has to be held back, it will be when we're sure he's not keeping up with the kids and Pre-K is not that time."
- "He has had no problems so far in Kindergarten."

Comments

- The last sentence is a Claim - "I am happy of doing X".

#5351 (artcomment, redshirting)

Dimension: logos [*backing:* I can attest to the idea that things even out by 3rd grade. My daughter was 4 when she started kindergarten, turned 5 in late Sept. She thrived socially, but was definitely "middle of the pack" academically till the end of 2nd grade, when something kicked in, and she started caring more about doing well in school. Now she's in 7th grade, and still at the top of her class.] [*grounds:* I worry some about her going off to college at age 17, but the idea of a gap year at 17 to engage in a rewarding volunteer experience sounds better to me than an extra year spent in preschool would have been.]

Claim

- **Against Redshirting**

Grounds

- **Volunteer experience is better than spending an extra year** "I worry some about her going off to college at age 17, but the idea of a gap year at 17 to engage in a rewarding volunteer experience sounds better to me than an extra year spent in preschool would have been."

Backing

- **Daughter initially had problem, then things evened out** "I can attest to the idea that things even out by 3rd grade. My daughter was 4 when she started kindergarten, turned 5 in late Sept. She thrived socially, but was definitely "middle of the pack" academically till the end of 2nd grade, when something kicked in, and she started caring more about doing well in school. Now she's in 7th grade, and still at the top of her class."

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