

# Argumentation

Academic English Week 2



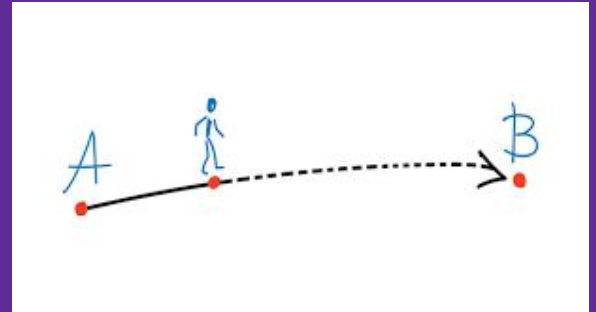
## Practice 2.1: Which of these are arguable statements?

- A. Poor education in media literacy has led to a significant increase in the number of people who believe internet conspiracy theories.
- B. In the current age, far too many people believe absurd conspiracy theories.
- C. Some websites have created policies to help stop the spread of misinformation.
- D. A recent TikTok promoting the idea that the Roman Empire never existed reached over 20 million impressions.
- E. TikTok would actually grow its user base if it instituted guidelines against misinformation.
- F. The worst conspiracy being fueled by social media accounts is the idea that giants once inhabited the Earth.

# Which of these are arguable statements?

- A. Poor education in media literacy has led to a significant increase in the number of people who believe internet conspiracy theories. - Arguable
- B. In the current age, far too many people believe absurd conspiracy theories. - opinion
- C. Some websites have created policies to help stop the spread of misinformation. - fact
- D. A recent TikTok promoting the idea that the Roman Empire never existed reached over 20 million impressions. - fact
- E. TikTok would actually grow its user base if it instituted guidelines against misinformation. - Arguable
- F. The worst conspiracy being fueled by social media accounts is the idea that giants once inhabited the Earth. - opinion

Argumentation is  
focused on  
uncertainty.



# Features of an Argument



Claim

Evidence

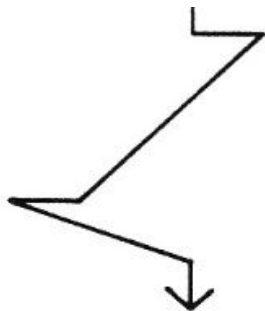
Reasoning

Conclusion / Transition

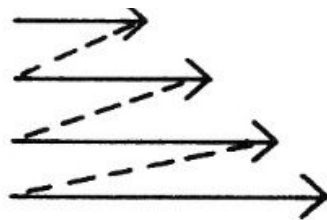
English



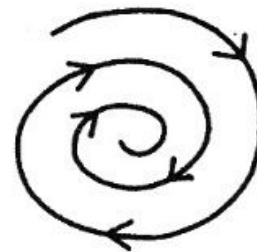
Romance



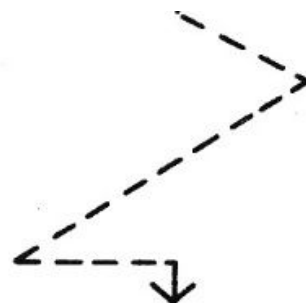
Semitic



Asian



Slavic

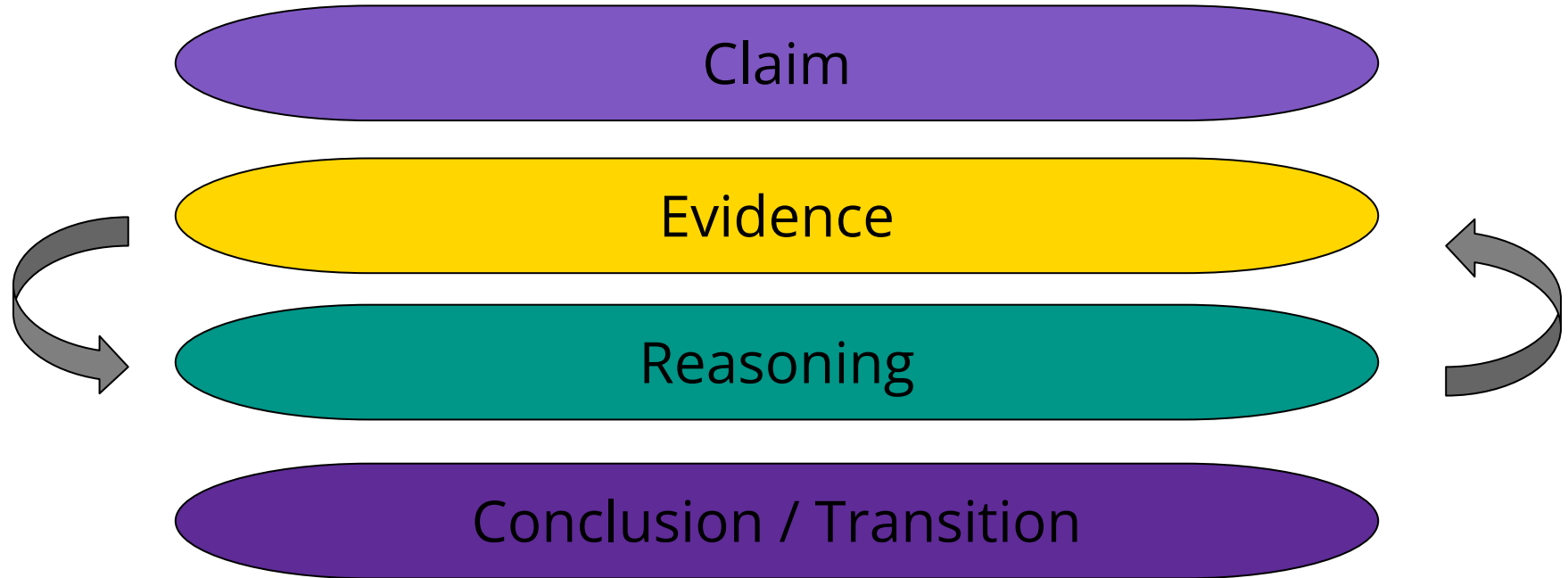


# Features of English Argumentation

- Linear
  - Single-minded
  - Focused
- Progressive
  - Goes forward
  - Doesn't loop back
- Deductive reasoning
  - Start with facts
  - End with conclusions
- Informs reader at each step
  - Nothing is left to interpretation
  - No need for inference
- Very clear transitions
  - Language markers
  - Even if “obvious”



# Structure of an Argument in Academic English





## Practice 2.2: Claim, Evidence, or Reasoning?

- A. The main ingredient in tomato sauce, tomatoes, contains antioxidants which have been shown to lower overall cholesterol. EVIDENCE
- B. As other fast food options do not feature tomatoes as prominently, they are less likely to be beneficial. REASONING
- C. Pizza could be a healthy alternative to other fast foods. CLAIM
- D. Pizza is usually made with tomato sauce. EVIDENCE
- E. Recent studies have linked a low cholesterol level to heart health. EVIDENCE
- F. Since tomato sauce is made from fresh tomatoes , eating pizza could have a positive effect on heart health. REASONING

Pizza could be a healthy alternative to other fast foods. Pizza is usually made with tomato sauce. The main ingredient in tomato sauce, tomatoes, contains antioxidants which have been shown to lower overall cholesterol. Recent studies have linked a low cholesterol level to heart health. Since tomato sauce is made from fresh tomatoes, eating pizza could have a positive effect on heart health. As other fast food options do not feature tomatoes as prominently, they are less likely to be beneficial.

# Building an Argument

## Start with a claim

- Something arguable
- Something focused
- May rely on previously established arguments, but nothing else
- Topic Sentence

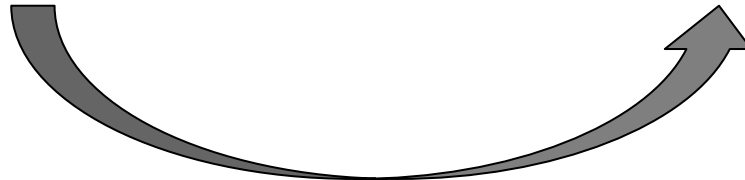
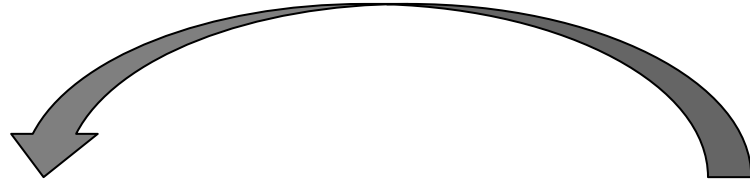
## Add evidence

C.R.A.A.P.O

- Currency
- Relevance
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Purpose
- Objectivity

## Reasoning to connect

- All evidence must be connected to claim
- Be explicit
- Cannot rely on evidence not stated



# Choosing Your Evidence (C.R.A.A.P.O)



## C - Currency

- Newer sources are generally preferred to older ones
- If your claim relies on evidence from older sources that newer ones dispute, you must account for that (counter-argument)
- Research should be an unbroken chain, with your paper the most recent link

## R - Relevance

- Being loosely connected is *not* sufficient
- Must directly address your claim (or help your reasoning to support the claim)
- Needs to be functional

## Practice 2.3: Claim “FEL should transition to a 4 day work week to increase energy efficiency.”

Neither students nor teachers like Friday classes.

The vast majority of FEL’s energy expenditure is due to heating costs.

Mondays feature the highest energy usage.

Similar universities have done so and achieved positive results.

During weeks when there is a holiday on either Monday or Friday, FEL’s energy costs are roughly 17% lower.

The transition could be implemented immediately by the Dean.

Installing timers on all lights could increase energy efficiency to 13%.

There is currently energy being wasted on average days that could be used.

## **A - Authority**

“Consider the source”

“Arguments from authority  
are the weakest kind,  
according to Boethius.”



## **A - Accuracy**

- When you cite evidence, you endorse it
- Factual, verified, well-reviewed
- When in doubt, remove it

## **P & O - Purpose & Objectivity**

- Accurate information can still be misleading
- Biases (implicit and explicit)
- Conflict of interest

## Practice 2.4: Build an Argument

- Use only the evidence given
- Use reasoning when necessary to connect evidence and the claim
- No need to write a finalized paragraph

CLAIM: “If students slept more, they would do better on exams.”