

Aspects of Argument Take-Home Quiz: Sample Question and Answers

1. Where, specifically, does her argument exemplify or utilize “contextuality”?
Explain your answer. (0-4 pts)

Sample Answer One:

“Contextuality” refers to the situated or situational nature of arguments: for instance, when an arguer tailors her argument to a particular audience, using proofs, data, or examples that particular audience would relate to or would find especially compelling. Rippy does this when she describes the scene in the restaurant near St. Jude’s. Many members of her audience, adults who work at a university, most likely have children themselves, so they most likely can picture themselves in Rippy’s position, appreciating her emotions and her desire to help.

Sample Answer Two:

Rippy writes, “. . . as I was telling Paul recently, David and I stumbled into a personal experience . . .” I don’t know who Paul and David are (David is probably her husband, right?), but Rippy’s audience, her coworkers in the English Department, almost certainly know Paul and David. Thus, this section displays “contextuality,” because Rippy is making assumptions about her audience’s understanding of the topic, knowing she needs to explain some things but not explain others because the audience already knows those things.

Notice that the above sample answers have three parts:

1. The term that’s being identified is mentioned and defined. (Claim)
2. The particular relevant section from Rippy’s argument is briefly mentioned, summed up, or quoted. (Data)
3. The connection between the term/definition and the example is explained. (Reason)