Prove Your Point in a Paragraph

Teacher		**Class**	Grade 7
Subject	ELA	**Topic**	Argument writing
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United States

Students learn to support a claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence. They plan and write one argument paragraph about a school topic.

Learning objectives

- Students will write a clear claim with reasons and relevant evidence.
- Students will tell reasons apart from evidence and link them clearly.

Success criteria

- I can write a clear claim with a clear reason.
- I can add relevant evidence and explain how it proves my reason.
- I can tell a reason apart from evidence.

What students already know

Ask: What is an argument in writing? Listen for a main point backed by proof, not yelling. Quick thumbs up if you have tried to prove a point before.

Key words

claim	the main point you are trying to prove, often called a thesis statement [4]
reason	why you think your main point is right and matters [6]
evidence	a checkable fact or example that shows a point is true [4]
explanation	one or two sentences that show how your fact proves your why

Materials

- Slides 1-5, 7, 9, 11
- Worksheet Task D
- graphic organizer handout
- pencils

Before the lesson

- Print one graphic organizer handout per student plus a few half-filled supports
- Print Worksheet Task D, one per pair
- Load Slides 1-5, 7, 9, 11 and check they project
- Set pencils and extra paper at desks

Lesson outline

0–8 min **Starter** 8 min · Whole class

Activate ideas about argument and hook students on building a clear claim.

YOU DO

1. Welcome class and show Slide 1 Prove Your Point.
2. Show Slide 2 and read its fact that an argument is a claim backed by evidence.
3. Deliver the hook and ask pairs to turn and talk about a time they had to prove a point.
4. Take 2 quick shares and link answers to claim plus proof.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen and read Slide 2 with the teacher.
2. Turn to a partner and share one idea of what makes a point convincing.
3. Share one idea back to the whole class.

Say: We are building a sandwich you can actually argue with. Claim on top, proof in the middle. An argument is not yelling. It is proving your point with logic.

Ask: What is an argument in writing? (A main idea, often called a claim or thesis statement, backed up with evidence that supports the idea [4].) · How is proving different from yelling? (Proving uses logic, clear reasons, and checkable facts, not angry language.)

Check understanding: Thumbs up, sideways, or down on: I can explain what an argument is. Reteach Slide 2 fact if many are unsure.

Support: Give a word bank: point, why, fact that can be checked. **Stretch:** Ask students to give a one-sentence example of a school claim.

Use: Slides 1–2

8–20 min **Mini-Lesson: Reason vs Evidence** 12 min · Whole class

Teach the difference between a reason and evidence and how they support a claim.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 3 Build an Argument in 4 Moves and read the four steps together.
2. Show Slide 4 and contrast reason as why you believe and evidence as facts that prove it.
3. Model a short paragraph where you state a clear main point, then expand on it with facts and evidence [9].
4. Think aloud one sentence that explains how the facts support the main point [9].

STUDENTS DO

1. Follow along on Slides 3-4 and repeat definitions in own words.
2. Copy the model claim, reason, evidence, and explanation labels into notebooks.
3. Tell a partner which sentence is the reason and which is the evidence.

Say: A claim is what you think. A reason tells why it matters. Evidence tells how we know. You need all three, plus one sentence that links the fact back to your point.

Worked example: Claim: Our school should add 10 extra minutes of recess. Reason: Students focus better after movement. Evidence: Our class survey showed 18 of 24 students finished work faster on days with longer recess. Explanation: This shows more movement is linked to better focus, so the reason is proven.

Ask: What is the difference between a reason and evidence? (Reason answers why it matters; evidence answers how we know with facts that prove the reason is true.) · Why do we add an explanation after evidence? (To link the fact to the reason so the reader sees how it proves the claim.)

Check understanding: Mini whiteboards: Write R for reason or E for evidence for: Our class survey showed 18 of 24 students finished faster. Correct is E. Reteach Slide 4 if split.

Support: Point to Slide 4 prompts while asking: Does it say why, or does it give a checkable fact? **Stretch:** Ask students to suggest a second type of evidence that could make the model stronger.

Use: Slides 3–4

20–30 min **We Do Together** 10 min · Pairs

Practice sorting reasons from evidence before independent writing.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 5 question about Homework should be shorter and ask if it is strong or fuzzy.
2. Hand out Worksheet Task D and model coloring one box as reason or evidence.
3. Circulate as pairs color each box for a later start and improve the fuzzy claim.
4. Stop class and confirm answers for two tricky boxes.

STUDENTS DO

1. Discuss Slide 5 with a partner and rewrite the claim to be clearer.
2. Complete Worksheet Task D by coloring boxes as reason or evidence.
3. Compare answers with another pair and fix any mix-ups.

Say: Look at each box and ask: Is this a why, or is this a checkable fact? Color it, then fix the fuzzy claim so it is clear and debatable. A claim by itself needs reasons too, using the formula claim plus reasons [6].

Worked example: Fuzzy: Homework should be shorter. Stronger: Weekend homework should be limited to 30 minutes because students need time to rest and read. Reason: rest helps focus on Monday. Evidence: reading log showed more pages read on weekends with less homework.

Ask: Is Homework should be shorter a strong claim? (No, it is fuzzy. It needs who, when, and why, like weekend homework limited to 30 minutes because students need rest.) · How do you know a box is evidence? (It has a fact you could check, it is on-topic, and it fits the reason. You must support a claim with applicable and appropriate evidence [6].)

Check understanding: Hold up Task D sheets. Scan for correct grouping. Pull one small group for reteach if more than a third are mixed.

Support: Pre-mark one clearly off-topic box so the choice set is smaller and use the checklist: checkable, on-topic. **Stretch:** Ask pairs to rank two kept evidence boxes from strongest to weakest and say why.

Use: Slide 5, Worksheet Task D

30–50 min **Reason Sandwich Build** 20 min · On their own

Write one argument paragraph with claim, reason, evidence, and explanation.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 7 chain and remind students of the order: claim, reason, evidence, explanation.
2. Show Slide 9 task and let students choose longer recess, later start, or more art.
3. Hand out the sandwich organizer and give 6 minutes to plan, then 12 minutes to write 5-6 sentences.
4. Remind students to underline the claim once and the evidence twice.

STUDENTS DO

1. Choose one claim from Slide 9 and plan it on the sandwich organizer.
2. Write a 5-6 sentence paragraph from the organizer on paper.
3. Underline the claim once and the evidence twice, then self-check for explanation.

Say: Pick one school claim. Plan your sandwich: top bun is your claim, filling is your reason plus relevant facts as evidence, bottom bun explains the link. Then write it as a 5 to 6 sentence paragraph in your own words.

Worked example: Our school should start 30 minutes later. One reason is students concentrate better when rested. For example, our homeroom tardy slips fell from 12 to 5 in the week we started late for testing. This shows extra sleep is linked to being on time and ready, which proves the later start helps learning.

Ask: What must your first sentence do? (State a clear, debatable claim that gives your position.) · What makes your evidence strong? (It is relevant, on-topic, checkable, and the source sounds credible, and I explain how it proves my reason.)

Check understanding: Quick gallery walk of organizers: teacher checks each has claim plus reason plus at least one fact. Give an extra 2 minutes to add missing explanation if needed.

Support: Provide a half-filled organizer with the claim and first reason done so students only add evidence and explanation. **Stretch:** Have students add a second piece of evidence from a different type of source and explain which is more credible, since the credibility of the source is essential to the argument [6].

Use: Slides 7, 9

50–60 min **Plenary and Exit** 10 min · Whole class

Review learning and check who can separate reason from evidence.

YOU DO

1. Invite two students to read paragraphs aloud and class names the claim, reason, and evidence.
2. Restate success criteria and fix any confusion between reason and evidence.
3. Show Slide 11 exit ticket and give 5 minutes to write silently.
4. Collect exits and preview next step on counterclaims.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen to two models and identify claim, reason, and evidence.
2. Complete the Slide 11 exit ticket on paper.
3. Hand in paragraph plus exit ticket.

Say: Strong writers prove, not just persuade with feelings. Argumentation focuses on logic supported by verifiable examples and facts [17]. Show me today what you can prove and explain.

Ask: What is one thing strong argument writing does? (It states a claim and proves it with clear reasons and relevant, checkable evidence.) · Why does persuasion alone fall short here? (It may use feelings and promises; argument lets the reader make an informed decision with logic [6].)

Check understanding: Read exit tickets for correct reason versus evidence split. Plan a 5-minute reteach next lesson if many confuse them.

Support: Allow sentence frame: A reason is __. Evidence is __. **Stretch:** Ask students to add which evidence was strongest and what would make it even stronger.

Use: Slide 11

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Mixing up reason and evidence	Paragraph lists two whys but no checkable fact, or lists facts with no why	Use Slide 4 test: If it answers why it matters, it is a reason. If it answers how we know with a fact, it is evidence [6].
Thinking a thesis is a title	Opening line is just Later Start with no point or reasons	Remind that a thesis is not a title [5]. Use frame: School should ___ because ___ and ___.
Using feelings instead of logic	Writing relies on promises or emotional words with no fact you could check	Highlight verifiable facts in one color and emotional appeals in another. Rewrite feelings into checkable proof, since argument focuses on logic with verifiable facts [17].

Support

- Provide a half-filled organizer with the claim and first reason done so students only add evidence and explanation.

Stretch

- Have students add a second piece of evidence from a different type of source and explain which is more credible, since the credibility of the source is essential to the argument [6].

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay near the organizer stage. Help two target students pick one claim and complete the half-filled organizer, then prompt the explanation sentence: This shows __ so __.

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Check for understanding

Question	Answer
What is a claim?	A clear main point you are trying to prove.
What is the difference between a reason and evidence?	A reason tells why the claim matters; evidence is a checkable fact that proves the reason.
Which evidence best supports: Students focus better with more recess?	A relevant, checkable fact like class work completion rose after longer recess, plus one sentence explaining the link.

Homework

Finish your paragraph if needed and underline the claim once and the evidence twice.

Sources

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