

What is an Argument?

Argument: Communication in which the speaker is trying to persuade their audience to believe, feel, or do something by giving reasons. In our class arguments are used to answer the following questions:

- What were they thinking? (Interpret)
- Why then & there? (Explain)
- What do we think about that? (Judge)

Narrative: Communication where the speaker is explaining what happened or telling a story. In our class it is used to answer the question:

- What happened? (Narrate)

How We Argue: The virtues of critical thinkers:

- Humility ('I could be wrong...')
- Openness ('You could be right...')
- Value reasons
- The Charity Principle: Treat other people's arguments how you want them to treat yours. "I love you and I think you're wrong."

Argument Components:

- **Claim:** A statement that the speaker wants you to believe/think/feel.
 - **Main Claim:** The main point that the speaker wants the audience to believe/think/feel.
 - **Premise:** A claim that gives a reason to believe another claim.
 - **Evidence:** Concrete, specific factual information presented to support a claim. In our class it is something that has survived from the past that a historian is using. Can be primary or secondary.
 - **Reasoning:** Explains how/why the evidence helps to prove the claim.
 - **Objection:** A claim that gives a reason to not believe another claim.
 - **Rebuttal:** A response to the objection.

The Reason Rule:

- In an argument map, a **premise** always answers the question '**why should I believe this?**' about the claim above it.
- Argument maps only include statements that provide a **reason to believe** something else (or not believe with an objection).

Argument Structure Types

