

Stephen Toulmin argument

- Claim: A statement that something is so.
- Data: The backing for the claim.
- Warrant: The link between the claim and the grounds.
- Backing: Support for the warrant.
- Modality: The degree of certainty employed in offering the argument.
- Rebuttal: Exceptions to the initial claim.

Thinking map

Skilful analysis and evaluation of arguments

Analysis

- 1 What is/are the main **conclusion(s)**? (These may be stated or unstated and may be recommendations, explanations, and so on. Conclusion indicator words and the 'therefore' test may help.)
- 2 What are the **reasons** (data, evidence) and their **structure**?
- 3 What is **assumed** (perhaps in the **context**)?
- 4 Clarify the **meaning** of terms and claims that are unclear.

Evaluation

- 5 Are the reasons **acceptable**? (These include explicit reasons and unstated assumptions and this may involve evaluating factual claims, definitions and value judgements and judging the **credibility** of a source.)
- 6 (a) Does the reasoning **support** its conclusion(s)? (Is the support strong, for example 'beyond reasonable doubt', or weak?)
(b) Are there **other relevant considerations/arguments** which strengthen or weaken the case? (You may already know these or may have to construct them.)
- 7 What is your **overall evaluation** (in the light of 1 through 6)?

evidence) and their **structure**?', but it has taken us some two chapters to explain in detail how to identify reasons and how to identify the structure of reasoning. It will not, therefore, come as a surprise to learn that there is also a lot of detail to be explained about how to clarify ideas and how to evaluate arguments, but we shall come to these in the next few chapters.

THE ToulMIN MODEL OF ARGUMENTATION

The *Toulmin Model of Argumentation*, named after British philosopher Stephen Toulmin, provides an organizational structure for constructing critical and persuasive arguments, specifically for situations where there are no clear-cut right answers. This method involves six basic components that weigh and support the pros and cons relative to an argument. By applying the model, an argument is more reliable, credible, less susceptible to rebuttals, and in general more efficient and effective. Thus, the model is useful for ensuring arguments in written documents or presentations are structured logically; but it does not provide guidance needed to integrate your arguments into essays, broader case analyses, or slide shows. This is an art you can develop with experience.

Basic Six Components

Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assertion one wishes to prove.
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support or rationale for the claim.
Warrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The reason the evidence supports the claim; demonstrates the underlying connection between the evidence and claim.
Backing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tells audience the reasons the warrant is a rational one.
Counterargument/ Rebuttal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addresses potential objections to the claim.
Qualifier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adds limits, nuances, or specificity to the claim, helping to counter rebuttals.

Sending People into Space is a Waste of Time and Money.

Pro

Yes - Space travel is a waste of time and money

Con

No - Space travel is not a waste of time and money

There are many more worthwhile uses for money than space travel. Eg. poverty reduction, eradication of war, conservation, encouraging democracy and civil rights.

There are many worse things than space travel that we currently spend money on. Not spending money on space travel does not mean the money will be spent on some better cause.

The technological advances that come with space flight could be more economically obtained by focused research.

Space travel has been the source of many important technological discoveries and developments.

Space travel is yet another race between them and us. Much of the motivation for space travel is military.

Space travel may help us to see humanity as one group on the same planet.

The great challenges to human beings are here on earth. Space travel is a distraction from these real challenges and worthwhile goals.

Human beings need to have inspiring goals. Space is the great frontier for humanity. Space travel is heroic.

The Proposition to be Analysed

Pro		Con
Pro argument 1	←	Rebuttal of Pro argument 1
Rebuttal of Con argument 1	→	Con argument 1
Pro argument 2	←	Rebuttal of Pro argument 2
Rebuttal of Con argument 2	→	Con argument 2