

The Toulmin Model

Terms:

Claim- an assertion

Support- data that is used as evidence, reasons for, or grounds for the claim

Warrant- the assumption shared by speaker and audience (links the claim to the support)

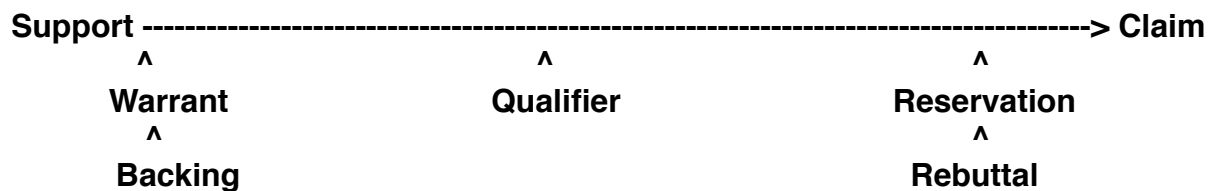
Backing- additional data used to support the warrant

Qualifier- restricts the claim and limits its range, sets boundaries for the strength of the warrant (usually, probably, in most cases, most likely, frequently, under these circumstances, never, in certain situations, etc.)

Reservation- explains the terms and conditions set forth by the qualifier

Rebuttal- voices objections that could refute/rebut the claim

Little formula: “Because (*support*), therefore, (*claim*), since (*warrant*), on account of, or because of (*backing*), unless (*reservation*).”



Examples:

Because teenage pregnancy rates are rising (support), therefore, strict dress codes need to be enforced in all schools (claim), since children should not be having children (warrant) because they are unable to care for their youngsters (backing) unless they, themselves, come from wealthy families (reservation).

Due to the public's lack of empathy for other living creatures (support), animal abuse should require mandatory jail time (claim) since animal abusers frequently (qualifier) escalate their levels of violence until humans become their prey (warrant) on account of their predisposition for violence (backing) unless their violent tendencies are harshly punished (reservation).

Because American standardized test scores have universally declined (support), the traditional system of education needs to be drastically reconfigured (claim) since the future of our country depends on the wisdom of our children (warrant) and their desire to maintain a consistent level of excellence (backing) unless we want our future to seem as dismal as our current situation (reservation). While some would argue that reconfiguring our educational system would be too time consuming (rebuttal), most experts agree that immediate steps must be taken to insure that America does not fall behind its global partners in the area of education.

Note: Pay attention to the FORMAT rather than the language in these examples. The formula for arranging the argument is the important principle. The sentences above would serve as roadmaps for essays. You would be able to develop an essay from these maps in such a way that your reader was able to easily follow your argument. Once the map for the development of your essay was established, you could easily improve the sentence structure.

Now, create your own essay using the Toulmin model.

Support _____

Warrant _____

Backing _____

Qualifier _____

Reservation _____

Rebuttal _____

Claim _____

