

THE PW MODEL

PART 3 EVALUATION PROCEDURES

In **developing** your paper, you begin with your evidence and you conclude with your arguments, i.e., the statements that you are able to prove given the evidence you have available.

In **writing** your paper, on the other hand, you begin by presenting the reader with your arguments and you conclude with your examples.

In other words, a good argumentative paper consists of arguments that match the examples or evidence you have available.

It is possible to have a sound logical structure that fails because you lack the appropriate evidence to support it. Your examples don't match.

It is also possible to have good pieces of evidence but a logical structure that does not allow you to draw the correct conclusions from that evidence.

EVALUATION

All "real" arguments are addressed to a specific audience. They are designed to answer a question that the audience has asked or wants to have answered.

An argumentative paper is designed to present arguments and reasons for that audience to accept your thesis, your answer to that question.

You can use the same PW model that you used to write a paper of your own to evaluate a paper that someone else has written. However, to do this effectively, you need to reformat the essay in terms of our model.

STEP ONE

In evaluating an argumentative paper using the PW model, you always begin with **organization**, since it is the organizational structure that connects the argument and evidence to the thesis statement and the thesis to the question or topic.

If the organization fails for one or both of the two reasons pointed out above,

the argument fails, regardless of how potentially “good” the evidence might be.

If the organizational logic of a paper is sound, then you can go on to evaluate the development of the paper.

STEP TWO

This step consists of two parts. First you evaluate the background of the arguments. Has the reader given you as the reader the facts and information you need to understand or make sense of his/her arguments?

Second and most importantly, you must evaluate the relationship between each individual argument and the evidence being offered to support it. Other things being equal, the strength of an argument rests on the strength of its evidence.

The strength of an example is based upon how well it matches the argument (e.g., it should not be too specific or too general) and its “objectivity,” the degree to which you, as the reader, are willing to accept it as true or as a fact.

NOTE: Our CT model will provide you with the specific tools you need to check the logic of both the organizational and the developmental structure of a paper.

REFORMATTING

Any paper written for our section of English 20 should not have to be reformatted before it can be evaluated. In fact, a paper that does not follow formatting guidelines will be considered unacceptable.

However, argumentative papers that were written by writers following other models should always be reformatted before you try to evaluate them. An essay that cannot be accurately reformatted using the following outline probably has problems with organizational and developmental logic.

However, before you can reformat an essay, you must determine its general type. Only **argumentative** essays can be reformatted following our PW model.

- A. In an **argumentative** essay, the writer argues for a thesis statement that he or she wants the reader to accept. In other words, the writer tries to persuade the reader to share his or her point of view or at least accept it as a reasonable

position to hold. Argumentative essays attempt to provide logical reasons and explanations defending the writer's position or opinions. They are not simply statements of opinion.

- B. In an **analytical** essay, the writer tries to *objectively* analyze or describe one or more arguments often focusing on a specific question or topic. However, none of the arguments are those of the writer, and the writer should not make or imply any judgments of the arguments in question. Feature stories in newspapers and newsmagazines often take this form. Analytical essays are easily confused with argumentative essays, so be careful.
- C. **Narrative** or descriptive essays are objective, factual discussions of a topic or objective descriptions of events. Their purpose is to inform as opposed to persuade the reader so they do not follow the argument format.

SAMPLE OUTLINE OF AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

A. THESIS STATEMENT

[BACKGROUND]

B. Supporting Argument 1

Example 1

Example 2

C. Supporting Argument 2

Example 1

Example 2

C. Supporting Argument 3

Example 1

Example 2

The thesis statement and supporting arguments must be stated as complete sentences. Our model dictates that there should be a minimum of two supporting arguments.

The thesis statement should be placed at the top of the outline regardless of where it is found in the original essay. However, the background sections, if there are any, and the