Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## VOCABULARY OF ARGUMENT

AP *English III: Johnson*

* **Position:** point of view, claim
* **Confirmation:** support or evidence for a claim.
* **Concession:** acknowledging that the opposing claim is valid but not to the extent that it over-rides your Argument; agreeing with parts of an opposing argument without validating the whole of the argument.
* **Pros/support/agree/defense:** arguing in support or favor of the claim
* **Qualification:** explaining *to what extent* you can defend or challenge a claim.
* Note that this does not mean taking a “neutral stand”: do not take a neutral stand in argument or rhetoric.
* **Refutation:** presenting enough additional evidence to counter the opposing claim.
* **Summation:** serves as conclusion; does not repeat but simplifies why your thesis is the best solution or more valid than that of the opposition.

### SEVERAL METHODS OF ARGUMENT

* **Classical Argument:** the style of argument usually found in politics and within the legal system.
* Two sides oppose one-another, trying to win over a presumably neutral third party.
* For the speaker or writer, the focus is upon trying to prove his or her argument and disprove the opposition
* Hard, logically-oriented evidence is often a key to winning classical arguments
* Sometimes logic and credibility are less important than *effectiveness* of the argument: if an argument appeals to an audience, it does not necessarily have to be logical.
* **Rogerian Method of Argument**: Carl Rogers, psychotherapist
* An approach to argumentation that is non-threatening
* Not win/lose: Seeks mediation between opposing sides; tries to reach common ground
* Speaker or writer must present the audience's perspective clearly, accurately, and fairly before asking them to consider an alternative position or solution.
* Downplays emotional appeals in favor of the logical
* Particularly useful in dealing with emotionally charged, highly divisive issues and allows for people of good will on different sides of an issue to find, or agree upon, solutions together.

*Parts of a Rogerian Argument*

1. Introduce the issue and describe the position taken by the “opposition” in a way that they would believe is fair. State the common ground between the author and audience; emphasize unity with the audience by showing how you as a speaker/writer are similarly affected by the issue. Build ethos and credibility with the audience.

2. Using *neutral language,* discuss what is valid and what is invalid in their position. Are there contexts and conditions in which there position would be more useful than others? You cannot completely reject their position.

3. Make a careful transition into your own position, stressing common ground you have found between your position and that of the "opposition”.

*Example*: “After careful consideration and examination of both sides, I believe that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is essentially more significant because…”

4. Explain how the opposition would benefit if they were to accept your argument or at least aspects of your point of view. Present a compromise or alternative solution that benefits both sides more fully than either side can alone.

* **Hegelian Method of Argument**: thesis-antithesis-synthesis (in AP prompts, often worded as pro-con-best

solution/compromise)

* George Friedrich Hegel, philosopher
* *Thesis*: the original idea, claim, or position
* *Antithesis*: a negation, response or reaction to the thesis
* *Synthesis*: basically, the combining of the thesis and antithesis into a new idea, claim, or position; the reconciliation of opposing sides based upon common truths.
* **Toulmin Method of Argument**: a method of informal logic; claim-reason-warrant backing and grounds
* Stresses that real-life logic is based upon probability and not certainty.
* Claims are based upon evidence

# 3 Main Parts of a Toulmin Argument

1. Claim: the point or position
2. Data: Evidence that leads one to believe the claim. The reasons given.
3. Warrant: the underlying assumption or principle that connects the data and claim. Often implied.

A Simple example:

1. Data: almost all parents of BHS students are allowing their kids to go to the party on Friday night.
2. Claim: My parents should allow me to go, too!
3. Warrant: My parents should act in accordance with other parents!

* What are some problems with the above argument?
* How can these problems be solved?