

How To Analyze an Argument

Logic

1. What is the topic?
2. What is the main claim – main message?
3. What are the assertions that support and further the main message?
4. Is there evidence to support the assertions?

Ethos -- Credibility – Why should we listen to this author?

5. Is the author well informed? How do you know?
6. Does the piece offer different sides of the argument? (counter-arguments?)
Does the author tell how s/he is connected to the issue?

Passion – Why should we care? What is the significance?

7. What is the tone like? Engaging? Defensive? In other words, do you feel like you are talking to someone or do you feel like someone is talking at you?
8. Does the author say how the issues affect him/her?
9. Does the author help you feel connected to the issue?