

Argument Builder

ARGUMENT is a CLAIM plus EVIDENCE.

CLAIM – Jackie Boy Ferris Glistener is an Arabian.

EVIDENCE – His sire and dam are Arabians.

ASSUMPTION – Lineage determines breed.

SOURCE – The Arabian Horse Association

REBUTTAL – His owner didn't pay to register him.



This model shows you the components of arguments so you can see if something is missing. Often, the problems in arguments are not in the evidence, but in the proof of the evidence. This is where writers use unstated assumptions, prejudices, and deception to distort meanings and trick unwary readers. What aren't they saying?



CLAIM – John Deere® is the best tractor ever.

EVIDENCE – Price, durability, effect, power.

ASSUMPTION – All four attributes = quality

SOURCE – The John Deere owner's manual

REBUTTAL – Marketing = conflict of interest

Now, I love a John Deere. I've got one in my own garage and it works like a champ. Still, you need to avoid getting information from people who are taking your money.

CLAIM – You should buy this new RBS® barn.

EVIDENCE – Square, level, pre-formed walls

ASSUMPTION – Craftsmanship yields value.

SOURCE – Your neighbor Bob just bought one.

REBUTTAL – Who's gonna actually build it?



We'll just agree that you could build that barn, but don't call me when you get stuck.