

Claim-Evidence-Warrant

Obj. 9.10: Use the Claim-Evidence-Warrant framework to make a conclusion.



Evaluate the Claim

Read the following statement:

“Teens who get at least 9 hours of sleep per night, on average, tend to be happier than those who get less sleep.”

1. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
2. What would you change or add to this statement to make it more convincing?



Claim-Evidence-Warrant

Stephen Toulmin, a British philosopher, author, and educator, organized a model for making and analyzing arguments, called the Toulmin Method. A simplified version of this model that is useful when we make or analyze scientific claims follows:

Claim: The statement being argued, the thesis, or the basic conclusion.

- A good claim is not obvious. Why bother proving a point nobody could disagree with?
- A good claim is engaging. Consider your audience’s attention span and make claims which point out new ideas: teach the reader something new.
- A good claim is not overly vague. Attacking enormous issues leads only to generalizations and vague assertions; keep it manageable.
- A good claim is logical; it emerges from a reasonable consideration of the evidence. However, this does not mean that evidence has only one logical interpretation.

Evidence: The data you cite to support your claim.

Data can include:

- Facts or statistics: objectively determined data about your topic. (Note: “objective” may be open to debate.)
- Expert opinion: Learned opinion, theory, and analysis that you should cite frequently, both to support your argument and to disagree with. Sources must be quoted, paraphrased, and cited appropriately.
- Primary research: an explanation and discussion of your own research findings and how they relate to your topic.

Warrant: Interprets the data and shows how your evidence supports your claim; acts as a bridge of reasoning between the two.

- A good warrant will be a reasonable interpretation and analysis of the facts.
- A good warrant will not make illogical interpretive leaps.
- A good warrant will not assume more than the evidence supports.
- A good warrant may consider and respond to possible counter-arguments (refute).

Source: Adapted from <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/english/mwollaeger/cdw.htm>



Find a Claim on the Web!

Follow the steps below to analyze a claim:

- A. Find a news article about any kind of health topic. Be sure it is a NEWS article. These types of article often cover the results of a study that was recently released. Most major news outlets have a Health focused webpage, or you can try using a search engine to locate an article on a specific topic (try Google News).
- B. Read the article. Jot down brief notes or mark up the text. Keep an eye out for any claims, evidence, and warrants.
- C. Fill in the table below with the primary claim, any evidence your find (or lack thereof), and any warrants used (or lack thereof). Then answer the questions that follow.

CLAIM	
EVIDENCE	
WARRANT	

1. Did you find the arguments and conclusions laid out in the article convincing or not? Why?
2. Do you think experts in the field (or the scientists whose work was reported on) would agree with the article? Why or why not?
3. What could be added, changed, or removed from the article in order to strengthen the claim-evidence-warrant framework for the overall conclusion?



Identify C-E-W

Read the following paragraphs and identify the claim, evidence, and warrant in the table below. If you believe any portion of the C-E-W is missing, write "Missing."

1) **COFFEE CAN HELP MAKE YOU FEEL HAPPIER:** A study done by the NIH found that those who drink four or more cups of coffee were about 10 percent less likely to be depressed than those who had never touched the java. And apparently it's not because of the "caffeine high" -- Coke can also give you a caffeine high, but it's linked to depression. Study author, Honglei Chen, MD, PhD, told Prevention.com that the proposed reason coffee makes you feel good is because of those trusty antioxidants.

CLAIM	
EVIDENCE	
WARRANT	

2) **COFFEE CAN MAKE YOU A BETTER ATHLETE:** The New York Times reports, "Scientists and many athletes have known for years, of course, that a cup of coffee before a workout jolts athletic performance, especially in endurance sports like distance running and cycling." Caffeine increases the number of fatty acids in the bloodstream, which allows athletes' muscles to absorb and burn those fats for fuel, therefore saving the body's small reserves of carbohydrates for later on in the exercise.

CLAIM	
EVIDENCE	
WARRANT	

Source: 11 Reasons Why You Should Drink Coffee Everyday
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/17/coffee-health-benefits_n_4102133.html



Write Your Own C-E-W

Write a Claim-Evidence-Warrant paragraph relating to sleep and health. *Note: You will need to conduct some basic research to gather data to support your claim!*