

# PLAN YOUR RESEARCH AROUND THE QUESTIONS OF ARGUMENT

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Every argument must answer the three questions that define the core of an argument (claim, reasons, evidence), but cooperative arguments must answer a fourth (acknowledgment and response).

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| c<br>o<br>r<br>e |  | 1. What's the answer to your research question? <b>Claim</b>  |
|                  |  | 2. Why should I believe that? <b>Reasons</b>  |
|                  |  | 3. How do you know that reason is true? <b>Evidence</b>   |
|                  |  | 4. But have you considered this view (or this evidence, complication, objection, etc)? <b>Acknowledgment &amp; Response</b> |

Create a plan to search for and read sources so that you have good answers to each of these questions.

- Claim:** If you begin without a claim that answers your research question, start by reading general articles about your topic in order to get ideas for possible answers.
- Reasons:** Once you have a claim, make a list of the reasons why you think that claim is true. If you think of too few reasons, do some more reading. If you still can't find any, look for another claim.
- Evidence:** Once you have a list of reasons, search for statistics, quotations, observations, and other facts that might serve as evidence to support each one. If you cannot find evidence for a reason, then you have to replace that reason. If you find evidence that goes against a reason, keep the evidence. You may need to acknowledge it in your paper.
- Acknowledgment & Response:** As you read for claims, reasons, and evidence, keep a record of anything that might complicate or contradict your argument. You will need to acknowledge it if you think it might also occur to your readers.