

What makes a good argument?



What Makes a Good Argument? What makes a good argument? Is it one where we repeatedly push our ideas and beliefs without background information to support it? One ran by one-track minds that aren't willing to look at the issue with new eyes? No it most certainly is not. A good argument is one derived from emotional connection and reason, Pathos and Logos make an argument engaging and factual. Pathos is a writer's tool for appealing to a reader via an emotional connection. Empathizing with a person can often get them to see things your way. Especially if they know that you have been in the same position that they are now. Logos appeals to a reader through traditional forms of facts and "reason". You can't argue against hard facts very easily, now can you? A trending and controversial topic currently is about names. Names can sometimes become a source of a dispute. Often people argue about what name something should have. How do we decide what our kids' surnames will be? How do we name a period of time in history? What should we call our school's mascot or our car in the driveway? In our text book, "America Now", we have a few essays written regarding the different issues with how names should be bestowed. One essay that I found particularly persuasive was the agreeing side of a debate from the writing "Brain, Child". This side of the debate was written by Liz Breslin. I strongly agree with this article and thus, find it very persuasive. In her writing, Breslin talks about the issues with choosing a surname for children. Being a feminist, she makes very clear that just because it is a social norm to name your children after the father, it does not necessarily mean that she will do the same with her children. She explains that, "It's good to question tradition, and good to question guys in your life who uphold tradition without giving it some thought. But it's not good to change just for

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change's sake. We decided, after thinking it through, that tradition works for us". What I found very persuasive in this idea is the author's use of Logos. She appeals to her audience with reason. She makes the audience really think about the idea of change, but not simply for the sake of change. Why would you fix something if it doesn't need fixed? When we think of a family, we think of a close group of people bound by traditions and culture, with everyone holding something to identify them to that family — a surname. Breslin states, " Why is having a public, shared surname so important? Ask the clans in Scotland or the small-townners with streets named after them. Living, working, warring together promotes a sense of unity. And this is what it's really about: a collective family identity. Christmas cards come to our house addressed to us, to the family. " In this idea, Breslin appeals to the audience with a strong emotional connection. She reminds people of the importance in family unity and togetherness. I think this is designed to remind expecting parents of how they were raised. Where close knit families were more prevalent than they are in this generation. This is another idea that I personally agree with. Overall, I found Breslin's writing to be very insightful and informative. In my opinion, she successfully used a wealth of rhetorical appeals to persuade her audience. Another essay in our text is the opposing side of the same debate. It's written by Laura Williamson. She does not agree with the idea that a family needs to share a surname. I myself did not find her essay persuasive. Her use of Pathos and Logos did not sway me personally and my position on the sharing of a surname. I do however see how her points could be persuasive to other people. Some of her points did make sense to me when I read the article again from a different perspective. For example, here Williamson talks about her experience with the decision

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on her child's surname. " That my child's father was willing to let go of his name made me feel closer to him then, and continues to make me proud. What could be better for our family? " says Williamson. I saw her use of Pathos in this idea persuasive when I analyzed it from a new perspective. I agree that if one of the partners in a family deeply wants a separation of surnames within the family, it can't hurt to do so if it means keeping the family together. Williamson also uses some Logos in her article. She states that it isn't absolutely necessary to name a child after its father. " We believe that automatically naming a child for his or her father because the majority says so isn't necessary. " This idea made more sense to me after thinking about it for a while. She reasons with the audience by making it clear that it isn't absolutely necessary to name your child after the father. This is however a question of whether or not you follow tradition. Although the idea makes sense to me, I fail to see how this is very persuasive. Williamson doesn't elaborate her claim as to why a child doesn't need to be named after the father. She simply states her own belief. So what? How is this essay helpful? What could I possibly use this information for in my everyday life? Should you ever find yourself in the predicament of deciding between a unified family surname or a divided family surname, this essay may provide some helpful insight from people of both sides of the debate. My essay also shows examples of good argument techniques. Pathos and Logos are very effective in any situation where an author needs to persuade an audience to believe as he or she does. Appealing to one through emotional connection and reason can really help make an argument go the way you want it to go. Works Cited Liz Breslin. " Does a Family Need to Share a Surname? (Yes). " America Now: Short Readings from Recent Periodicals. <https://assignbuster.com/what-makes-a-good-argument/>

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Laura Williamson " Does a Family Need to Share a Surname? (No). " America

Now: Short Readings from Recent Periodicals. Ed. Christina Gerogiannis.

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