Since all language is in some sense argumentative, the purposes of argument will certainly vary widely. For many years, however, traditional notions of argument tended to highlight one purpose — winning. Although winning is still one important purpose of argument, studies of the argument strategies of people from groups historically excluded from public debate — including women and people of color — have demonstrated that it is by no means the only purpose. Nor is winning always going to be your purpose. For instance, if you are trying to decide whether to major in business or in chemistry, you may want to consider, or “argue,” all sides of the issue. Your purpose is hardly to win out over someone else; instead, it is to understand your choices in order to make a wise decision.

To win
The most traditional purpose of academic argument, arguing to win is used in campus debating societies, in political debates, in trials, and often in business. The writer or speaker aims to control the audience, to present a position that prevails over or defeats the positions of others. Presidential debates and trials, for example, focus most often not on changing the opponent’s mind but on defeating him or her in order to appeal to someone else — the voting public, the judge, and so on.
To convince

More often than not, out-and-out defeat of another is not only unrealistic but also undesirable. Rather, the goal is to convince other persons that they should change their minds about an issue. A writer must provide reasons so compelling that the audience willingly agrees with the writer’s conclusion. Such is the goal of advocates of assisted suicide: they well know that they cannot realistically hope to defeat or conquer those who oppose such acts. Rather, they understand that they must provide reasons compelling enough to change people’s minds.

To reach a decision or explore an issue

Often, a writer must enter into conversation with others and collaborate in seeking the best possible understanding of a problem, exploring all possible approaches and choosing the best alternative. Argument to decide or explore does not seek to conquer or control others or even to convince. Your purpose in many situations — from trying to decide which laptop to buy to exploring with your family the best way to care for an elderly relative — will be to share information and perspectives in order to make informed political, professional, and personal choices.

To change yourself

Sometimes you will find yourself arguing primarily with yourself, and those arguments often take the form of intense meditations on a theme, or even of prayer. In such cases, you may be hoping to transform something in yourself or to reach peace of mind on a troubling subject. If you know a familiar mantra or prayer, for example, think of what it “argues” for and how it uses quiet meditation to help achieve that goal.

11b Determining whether a statement can be argued

An early step in an argument intended to convince or decide is to make a statement about a topic and then check to see that the statement can, in fact, be argued. An arguable statement has three characteristics:

1. It attempts to convince readers of something, change their minds about something, or urge them to do something — or it explores a topic in order to make a wise decision.
2. It addresses a problem for which no easily acceptable solution exists or asks a question to which no absolute answer exists.
3. It presents a position that readers might realistically have varying perspectives on.

This statement seeks to convince, addresses a problem — poor self-image among young women — that has no clear-cut solution, and takes a position many could disagree with.

EXERCISE 11.1

Using the three characteristics just listed, decide which of the following statements are arguable and which are not.

1. The Lord of the Rings was the best movie of the last decade.
2. The climate of the earth is gradually getting warmer.
3. The United States must further reduce social spending in order to balance the budget.
4. Shakespeare died in 1616.
5. Marlowe really wrote the plays of Shakespeare.
6. Water boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit.
7. Van Gogh’s paintings are the work of a madman.
8. The incidence of breast cancer has risen in the last ten years.
10. A fifty-five-mile-per-hour speed limit lowers accident rates.

For additional exercises on recognizing argument, go to Exercise Central and click on Argument.

**EXERCISE 11.3**

Formulate an arguable statement, and create a working thesis, for two of the following general topics.

1. the Palestinian-Israeli conflict
2. mandatory HIV testing for prison inmates
3. raising the minimum wage
4. reinstatement of a U.S. military draft
5. music downloading

**EXERCISE 11.2**

Using two arguable statements from Exercise 11.1 or two that you create, formulate two working theses, identifying the claim, reason(s), and assumption(s) for each.

**FOR COLLABORATION**

Working with two other members of your class, find two current advertisements you consider particularly eye-catching and persuasive. Then work out what central claim each ad is making, and identify reasons and assumptions in support of the claim. Finally, prepare a brief collaborative report of your findings for the class.
Finding good reasons

In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle discusses the various ways one can support a claim. Torture, he notes, makes for a very convincing argument but not one that reasonable people will resort to. In effecting real changes in minds and hearts, we need instead to rely on *good reasons* — reasons that establish our credibility, that appeal to logic, and that appeal to emotion. You can use these appeals to analyze the arguments of others (9d) as well as to construct arguments of your own.

Ethical appeals

To make your argument convincing, you must first gain the respect and trust of your readers, or establish your credibility with them. The ancient Greeks called this particular kind of character appeal *ethos*, and we refer to it as an ethical appeal (9d). You can establish credibility by demonstrating your knowledge of the topic, by showing that you and your audience share at least some common ground, and by showing yourself to be fair and evenhanded. Visuals can strengthen your ability to make such ethical appeals.

Personal knowledge about the topic

A writer can establish credibility first by demonstrating his or her knowledge about the topic at hand. You can show that you have some personal experience with the subject: for example, if you are a former preschool teacher, you could mention your teaching background as part of an argument for increased funding of the Head Start program. In addition, showing that you have thought about and researched the subject carefully can help you establish a confident tone.

To determine whether you can effectively present yourself as knowledgeable enough to argue an issue, consider the following questions:

- Can you provide information about your topic from sources other than your own knowledge?
- How reliable are your sources?
- Do any sources contradict one another? If so, can you account for or resolve the contradictions?
- If you have personal experience relating to the issue, would telling about this experience help support your claim?

These questions may help you see what other work you need to do to establish credibility: perhaps you should do more research, resolve contradictions, refocus your working thesis, or even change your topic.

Common ground

Many arguments between people or groups are doomed to end without resolution because the two sides occupy no common ground, no starting point of agreement. They are, to use an informal phrase, coming from completely different places. Such has often been the case, for example, in India-Pakistan talks, in which the beginning positions of each party have directly conflicted with those of the other side, leaving no room for a settlement that appeases both nations.

Lack of common ground also dooms many arguments that take place in our everyday lives. If you and your roommate cannot agree on how often to clean your apartment, for instance, the difficulty may well be that your definition of a clean apartment conflicts radically with your roommate’s. You may find, in fact, that you will not be able to resolve such issues until you can establish common definitions, ones that can turn futile quarrels into constructive arguments. (For more on establishing common ground, see Chapter 27.)

Common ground is just as important in written arguments as it is in diplomatic negotiations or personal disputes. The following questions can help you find common ground in presenting an argument:

- What are the differing perspectives on this issue?
- What common ground can you find — aspects of the issue on which all sides agree?
- How can you express such agreement clearly to all sides?
- How can you discover — and consider — opinions on this issue that differ from your own?
- How can you use language — occupational, regional, or ethnic varieties of English or languages other than English (28c–e) — to establish common ground with those you address?

If you turn to Teal Pfeifer’s essay in 11k, you will see that she attempts to establish common ground by assuming that all her readers are concerned about the health and well-being of young women — and by explaining that she, like most women, cannot conform to a magazine’s ideal of beauty.
3 Fairness toward counterarguments

In arguing a position, writers must demonstrate fairness toward opposing arguments, sometimes called counterarguments (1112). Audiences are more inclined to give credibility to writers who seem to be fairly considering and representing their opponents' views than to those who seem to be ignoring or distorting such views. Part of your job as an effective writer, then, might involve anticipating possible counterarguments to your writing and establishing yourself as open-minded and even-handed. The following questions can help you discover ways of doing so:

- How can you show that you are taking into account all significant points of view?
- How can you demonstrate that you understand and sympathize with points of view other than your own?
- What can you do to show that you have considered evidence carefully, even when it does not support your position?

Some writers, instead of demonstrating fairness, may make unjustified attacks on an opponent's credibility. Such attacks, which are known as ethical fallacies (9f1), should be avoided in your writing.

4 Visuals that make ethical appeals

In arguments and in other kinds of writing, visuals that reflect authority can help build credibility. That's why so many universities, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies are following the lead of business and creating "brand-name" images for themselves. The Environmental Protection Agency, for example, includes its seal — and usually its motto, Protecting human health, safeguarding the natural environment — on its reports and documents. As shown here, the seal and motto work to establish the ethos or credibility of the agency and its documents.

A VISUAL THAT MAKES AN ETHICAL APPEAL

Visuals that make ethical appeals add to your credibility and fairness as a writer. For college work, you may want to use such visual images. If you build a Web site, consider including a good picture of yourself as well as a brief statement about your background and credentials. If you intend to keep the site going for some time, consider developing a logo for it and using that image to unify the site and help build recognition for it — and for you. Doing so can build your credibility.

EXERCISE 11.4

List the ways in which the following advertisement for the energy company BP demonstrates knowledge, establishes common ground, and shows fairness. Do you think it succeeds in establishing credibility?

We need more than energy for the future. We need energies.

One form of energy won't secure our needs for the future. It's going to take many—solar, wind, hydrogen, natural gas, and yes, oil. So we're investing $15 billion in the Gulf of Mexico to find and produce new oil and gas supplies. Recently, we announced plans to invest up to $10 billion over 10 years in a new business called BP Alternative Energy that will use a wide range of energy sources to provide low carbon electricity. It's a start.

bp.com
EXERCISE 11.5

Using a working thesis you drafted for Exercise 11.2 or 11.3, write a paragraph or two describing how you would go about establishing your credibility in arguing that thesis.

Logical appeals

While the character a writer presents in writing always exerts a strong appeal (or lack of appeal) in an argument, credibility alone cannot and should not carry the full burden of convincing readers. Indeed, many are inclined to think that the logic of the argument — the reasoning behind it — is as important as its ethos. Logical appeals (9d), known to the ancient Greeks as logos, can thus be very effective; particularly useful types of logical appeals include examples, precedents, and narratives; authority and testimony; causes and effects; and inductive and deductive reasoning. In addition, visuals can help you enhance your logical appeals.

Examples, precedents, and narratives

Just as a picture can sometimes be worth a thousand words, so can a well-conceived example be extremely valuable in arguing a point. Examples are used most often to support generalizations or to bring abstractions to life. In an argument about American mass media and body image, for instance, you might make the general statement that popular media send the message that a woman must be thin to be attractive; you might then illustrate your generalization with these examples:

At the supermarket checkout, a tabloid publishes unflattering photographs of a young singer and comments on her apparent weight gain in shocked captions that ask “What happened?!?” Another praises a starlet for quickly shedding “ugly pounds” after the recent birth of a child. The cover of Cosmopolitan features a glamorous made-up and airbrushed actress in an outfit that reveals her remarkably tiny waist and flat stomach. In every advertisement in the magazine that depicts a woman, the woman is thin — and the context makes it clear that we’re supposed to think that she is beautiful.

The generalization would mean far less without the examples.

Examples can also help us understand abstractions. Famine, for instance, may be difficult for us to think about in the abstract, but a graphic description of a drought-stricken community, its riverbed cracked and dry, its people listless, emaciated, and with stomachs bloated by hunger, speaks directly to our understanding.

Precedents are particular kinds of examples taken from the past. The most common use of precedent occurs in law, where an attorney may ask for a certain ruling based on a similar earlier case. Precedent appears in everyday arguments as well. If, as part of a proposal for increasing lighting in the library garage, you point out that the university has increased lighting in four other garages in the past year, you are arguing on the basis of precedent.

In research writing (see Chapters 12–21), you must identify your sources for any examples or precedents not based on your own knowledge.

The following questions can help you check any use of example or precedent:

- How representative are the examples?
- Are they sufficient in strength or number to lead to a generalization?
- In what ways do they support your point?
- How closely does the precedent relate to the point you’re trying to make? Are the situations really similar?
- How timely is the precedent? (What would have been applicable in 1920 is not necessarily applicable today.)

Because storytelling is universal, narratives can be very persuasive in helping readers understand and accept the logic of an argument. In arguing for increased funding for the homeless, for instance, you might include a brief narrative about a day in the life of a homeless person to dramatize the issue and help readers see the need for more funding.

Stories drawn from your own experience can appeal particularly to readers, for they not only help make your point in true-to-life, human terms but also help readers know you better and therefore identify with you more closely. In arguing for a stronger government campaign against smoking, for example, former President Clinton often drew on personal stories of his own family’s experience with lung cancer.

When you include stories in an argument, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the narrative support your thesis?
- Will the story’s significance to the argument be clear to your readers?
• Is the story one of several good reasons or pieces of evidence — or does it have to carry the main burden of the argument?

In general, do not rely solely on the power of stories to carry your argument, since readers usually expect writers to state and argue their reasons more directly and abstractly as well. An additional danger if you use only your own experiences is that you can seem focused too much on yourself (and perhaps not enough on your readers).

As you develop your own arguments, keep in mind that while narratives can provide effective logical support, they may be used equally effectively for ethical or emotional appeals as well.

FOR MULTILINGUAL WRITERS: Counting your own experience

You may have learned that stories based on your own personal experience don’t count in academic arguments. If so, reconsider this advice, for showing an audience that you have personal experience with a topic can carry strong persuasive appeal with many English-speaking audiences. As with all evidence used in an argument, however, narratives based on your own experience must be pertinent to the topic, understandable to the audience, and clearly related to your purpose.

2 Authority and testimony

Another way to support an argument logically is to cite an authority. In recent decades, the use of authority has figured prominently in the controversy over smoking. Since the U.S. surgeon general’s 1964 announcement that smoking is hazardous to health, many Americans have quit smoking, largely persuaded by the authority of the scientists offering the evidence.

But as with other strategies for building support for an argumentative claim, citing authorities demands careful consideration. Ask yourself the following questions to be sure you are using authorities effectively:

• Is the authority timely? (The argument that the United States should pursue a policy just because it was supported by Thomas Jefferson will probably fail because Jefferson’s time was so radically different from ours.)

• Is the authority qualified to judge the topic at hand? (To cite a movie star in an essay on linguistics, an appeal to false authority, would not strengthen your argument [9ff].)

• Is the authority likely to be known and respected by readers? (To cite an unfamiliar authority without some identification will lessen the impact of the evidence.)

• Are the authority’s credentials clearly stated and verifiable? (Especially with Web-based sources, it is crucial to know whose authority guarantees the reliability of the information.)

Authorities are commonly cited in research writing (see Chapters 12–21), which often relies on the findings of other people. In addition, you may cite authorities in an assignment that asks you to review the literature of any field.

Testimony — the evidence an authority presents in support of a claim — is a feature of much contemporary argument. If testimony is timely, accurate, representative, and provided by a respected authority, then it, like authority itself, can add powerful support to an argument. In an essay for a literature class, for example, you might argue that a new edition of a literary work will open up many new areas of interpretation. You could strengthen this argument by adding a quotation from the author’s biographer, noting that the new edition carries out the author’s intentions much more closely than the previous edition did.

In research writing (see Chapters 12–21), you should cite your sources for authority and testimony not based on your own knowledge.

FOR MULTILINGUAL WRITERS: Bringing in other voices

Sometimes quoting authorities will prompt you to use language other than standard academic English. For instance, if you’re writing about political relations between Mexico and the United States, you might quote a leader of a Mexican American organization; using that person’s own words — which may be partly or entirely in Spanish or a regional variety of English — can carry extra power, calling up a voice from a pertinent community. See Chapter 28 for advice about using varieties of English and other languages.
3 Causes and effects

Showing that one event is the cause — or the effect — of another can sometimes help support an argument. Suppose you are trying to explain, in a petition to change your grade in a course, why you were unable to take the final examination. In such a case, you would probably try to trace the causes of your failure to appear (the death of your grandmother followed by the theft of your car, perhaps) so that the committee reading the petition would reconsider the effect (your not taking the examination).

Tracing causes often lays the groundwork for an argument, particularly if the effect of the causes is one we would like to change. In an environmental science class, for example, a student may argue that a national law regulating smokestack emissions from utility plants is needed because (1) acid rain on the East Coast originates from emissions at utility plants in the Midwest, (2) acid rain kills trees and other vegetation, (3) utility lobbyists have prevented midwestern states from passing strict laws controlling emissions from such plants, and (4) in the absence of such laws, acid rain will destroy most eastern forests by 2020. In this case, the first point is that the emissions cause acid rain; the second, that acid rain causes destruction in eastern forests; and the third, that states have not acted to break the cause-effect relationship established by the first two points. The fourth point ties all of the previous points together to provide an overall argument from effect: unless a national law is passed, most eastern forests are doomed.

In fact, a cause-effect relationship is often extremely difficult to establish. Scientists and politicians continue to disagree, for example, over the extent to which acid rain is responsible for the so-called dieback of many eastern forests. If you can show strong evidence that a cause produces an effect, though, you will have a powerful argument at your disposal.

4 Inductive and deductive reasoning

Traditionally, logical arguments are classified as using either inductive or deductive reasoning, but in practice, the two types of reasoning usually appear together. Inductive reasoning is the process of making a generalization based on a number of specific instances. If you find you are ill on ten occasions after eating seafood, for example, you will likely draw the inductive generalization that seafood makes you ill. It may not be an absolute certainty that seafood was the culprit, but the probability lies in that direction.

Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, reaches a conclusion by assuming a general principle (known as a major premise) and then applying that principle to a specific case (the minor premise). In practice, this general principle is usually derived from induction. The inductive generalization Seafood makes me ill, for instance, could serve as the major premise for the deductive argument Since all seafood makes me ill, the shrimp on this buffet is certain to make me ill.

Deductive arguments have traditionally been analyzed as syllogisms — three-part statements containing a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJOR PREMISE</th>
<th>MINOR PREMISE</th>
<th>CONCLUSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All people die.</td>
<td>I am a person.</td>
<td>I will die.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Syllogisms, however, are too rigid and absolute to serve in arguments about questions that have no absolute answers, and they often lack any appeal to an audience. Aristotle’s simpler alternative, the enthymeme (9e), calls on the audience to supply the implied major premise. Consider the following example:

Since violent video games can be addictive and cause psychological harm, players and their parents must carefully evaluate such games and monitor their use.

You can analyze this enthymeme by restating it in the form of two premises and a conclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJOR PREMISE</th>
<th>MINOR PREMISE</th>
<th>CONCLUSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Games that cause harm to players should be evaluated and monitored.</td>
<td>Violent video games cause addiction and psychological harm to players.</td>
<td>These games should be evaluated and monitored.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the major premise is one the writer can count on an audience agreeing with or supplying: safety and common sense demand that potentially harmful games should be used with great care. As such, this premise is assumed rather than stated in the enthymeme. By implicitly asking the audience to supply this premise to the argument, the writer engages the audience’s participation.

Note that a deductive conclusion is only as strong as the premises on which it is based. The citizen who argues that Ed is a crook and...
shouldn't be elected to public office is arguing deductively, based on an implied major premise: No crook should be elected to public office. Most people would agree with this major premise. So the issue in this argument rests on the minor premise that Ed is a crook. Satisfactory proof of that premise will make us likely to accept the deductive conclusion that Ed shouldn't be elected.

At other times, the unstated premise may be more problematic. The person who says Don't bother to ask for Ramon's help with physics — he's a jock is arguing deductively on the basis of an implied major premise: Jocks don't know anything about physics. In this case, careful listeners would demand proof of the unstated premise. Because bigoted or prejudiced statements often rest on this kind of reasoning — a type of logical fallacy (9f3) — writers should be particularly alert to it.

A helpful variation on the syllogism and the enthymeme is the Toulmin system (9e, 11c, and 11i2), which looks for claims, reasons, and assumptions rather than major and minor premises.

**CLAIM**

Violent video games should be carefully evaluated and their use monitored.

**REASON(S)**

Violent video games cause addiction and psychological harm to players.

**ASSUMPTION**

Games that cause harm to players should be evaluated and monitored.

Note that in this system the assumption — which may be unstated — serves the same function as the assumed major premise in an enthymeme.

5 **Visuals that make logical appeals**

Visuals that make logical appeals can be especially useful in arguments, since they present factual information that can be taken in at a glance. Charts, graphs, tables, maps, photographs, and so on can help get your points across. For a report on minority-owned business enterprises, the U.S. Census Bureau used many charts and graphs, including the accompanying pie chart. In the same way, Business Week used a simple bar graph to carry a big message about equality of pay for men and women. A quick glance will tell you how long it would take to explain all the information in these charts with words alone. In these instances, pictures can be worth a thousand words.
EXERCISE 11.6
The following sentences contain deductive arguments based on implied major premises. Identify each of the implied premises.

1. Active euthanasia is morally acceptable when it promotes the best interests of everyone concerned and violates no one’s rights.
2. Women soldiers should not serve in combat positions because doing so would expose them to a much higher risk of death.
3. Animals can’t talk; therefore they can’t feel pain as humans do.

EXERCISE 11.7
Analyze the advertisement in Exercise 11.4 for the use of examples, precedents, and narratives; authority and testimony; causes and effects; and induction and deduction.

EXERCISE 11.8
Using a working thesis you drafted for Exercise 11.2 or 11.3, write a paragraph describing the logical appeals you would use to support the thesis.

11g Emotional appeals
Most successful arguments appeal to our hearts as well as to our minds. Thus, good writers supplement appeals to logic and reason with emotional appeals to their readers. This principle is vividly demonstrated by the AIDS epidemic in Africa. Facts and figures — logical appeals — convince us that the problem is real and serious. What elicits an outpouring of support, however, is the arresting emotional power of stories and images of people with the disease and their families. An effective emotional appeal (pathos, to the ancient Greeks) can be made with description and concrete language, with figurative language, and with visuals, as well as by shaping an appeal to a particular audience.

1 Description and concrete language
Like photographs, vivid, detailed description can bring a moving immediacy to any argument. A student may amass facts and figures, including diagrams and maps, to illustrate the problem of wheelchair access to the library. Her first draft may be packed with information. But only when the student asks a friend who uses a wheelchair to accompany her to the library does the student writer discover the concrete details necessary to move readers.

The heart of effective description is concrete or specific language (29c). Although the student could have written that her friend “had trouble entering the library,” such a general statement would not appeal to readers’ emotions. Instead, she uses concrete details: “Maria inched her heavy wheelchair up the narrow, steep entrance ramp, her arms straining to pull up the last twenty feet, her face pinched with the sheer effort.”

2 Figurative language
Figurative language, or figures of speech (29d), paint detailed pictures that build understanding. They do so by relating something new or unfamiliar to something the audience knows well and by making striking comparisons between something you are writing about and something else that helps a reader visualize, identify with, or understand it.

Figures of speech include metaphors, similes, and analogies. Metaphors compare two things directly: Richard the Lion-Hearted; old age is the evening of life; the defensive players are pit bulls on pork chops. Similes make comparisons using like or as: Richard was as brave as a lion; old age is like the evening of life; the defensive players are like pit bulls on pork chops. Analogies are extended metaphors or similes that compare an unfamiliar concept or process to a more familiar one to help the reader understand the unfamiliar concept.

I see the Internet as a city struggling to be built, its laws only now being formulated, its notions of social order arising out of the needs of its citizens and the demands of their environment. Like any city, the Net has its charlatans and its thieves as well as its poets, engineers, and philosophers. . . . Our experience of the Internet will be determined by how we master its core competencies. They are the design principles that are shaping the electronic city.

— PAUL GILSTER, Digital Literacy

A student arguing for a more streamlined course-registration process may find good use for an analogy, saying that the current process makes students feel like laboratory rats in a maze. This analogy, which suggests manipulation, frustration, and a clinical coldness, creates a vivid description and adds emotional appeal to the argument. For the analogy to work effectively, however, the student would have to show that the current registration process has a number of similarities to a laboratory maze, such as confused students wandering through complex bureaucratic channels and into dead ends.

As you use analogies or other figurative language to bring emotion into an argument, be careful not to overdo it. Emotional appeals that
appeals

You need to ensure that the visuals you choose to enhance the emotional appeal of your argument will have the intended effect on readers. Test any photos or other visuals you are thinking of using with several potential readers. While images of human suffering can create a vivid emotional appeal, photographs that are profoundly disturbing can backfire, making some readers feel manipulated and thus angry at the person making the argument.

Shaping your appeal to your audience

As with appeals to credibility and logic, appealing to emotions is effective only insofar as it moves your particular audience. A student arguing for increased lighting in campus parking garages, for instance, might consider the emotions such a discussion might raise (fear of attack, for example, or anger at being subjected to danger), decide which emotions the intended audience would be most responsive to, and then look for descriptive and figurative language to carry out such an appeal.

In a leaflet to be distributed on campus or in an online notice to a student listserv, for example, the writer might describe the scene in a dimly lit garage as a student parks her car and then has to walk to an exit alone down shadowy corridors. Parking in the garage might be compared to venturing into a dangerous jungle.

In a proposal to the university administration, on the other hand, the writer might describe past attacks on students in campus garages and the negative publicity and criticism these provoked. For the administration, the writer might compare the lighting in the garages to high-risk gambling, arguing that increased lighting would lower the odds of future attacks.

Notice that shaping your appeal to a specific audience calls on you to consider very carefully the language you use. The student arguing for better lighting in campus parking garages would probably stick to standard academic English in a proposal to the university administration but might well want to use more informal language in a leaflet written for students.

Visually that make emotional appeals

Visuals that make emotional appeals can add substance to an argument. Consider, for example, the accompanying photograph of coffins returning from Iraq. This image is undeniably powerful — but exactly what argument does it make? Bush administration officials worked to prevent the publication of photographs like this one, which suggests that they feared the photographs could make an antiwarm argument. But some viewers may well see this image as arguing for ideas other than (or in addition to) opposition to the war in Iraq, such as patriotism or respect for the sacrifices made by military troops.
EXERCISE 11.9
Make a list of common human emotions that might be attached to each of the following topics, and suggest appropriate ways to appeal to those emotions in a specific audience you choose to address.
1. banning drinking on campus
2. airport security
3. disarming land mines
4. attacks on places of worship
5. steroid use among athletes

EXERCISE 11.10
Using a working thesis you formulated for Exercise 11.2 or 11.3, make a list of the emotional appeals most appropriate to your topic and audience. Then spend ten to fifteen minutes brainstorming, looking for descriptive and figurative language to carry out the appeals.

FOR COLLABORATION
Working with two or three classmates, read the following paragraph, and then write a paragraph evaluating its use of description and figurative language as well as its appeal to various audiences.

In 1973, all women in the United States became legally entitled to have abortions performed in hospitals by licensed physicians. Earlier, abortions were frequently performed by persons who bore more resemblance to butchers than to doctors. The all-too-common result was serious complications or death for the woman. If the 1973 Supreme Court decision is completely reversed, abortion will not end. Instead, women will again resort to illegal abortions, and there will be a return to the slaughterhouse. Since abortions are going to take place no matter what the law says, why not have them done safely and legally in hospitals instead of in basements and back alleys? The decision to have an abortion is not an easy one to make, and I believe that a woman who makes it deserves to have her wish carried out in the very safest way possible. Critics of abortion stress the importance of the unborn child's life. At the very least, they should also take the woman's life and safety into consideration.

Using sources in an argument
In constructing a written argument, it is often essential to use sources. The key to persuading people to accept your argument is good reasons; and even if your assignment doesn't specify that you must consult out-

CONSIDERING DISABILITIES: Description
Remember that some members of your class or peer group may have difficulty seeing visual arguments or recognizing nuances of color or spacing. Be sure to provide verbal descriptions of visual images. In a video presentation, embed voice descriptions of the visual images for members of the class with visual impairments.

side sources, they are often the most effective way of finding and establishing these reasons. Sources can help you to do the following:

- provide background information on your topic
- demonstrate your knowledge of the topic to readers
- cite authority and testimony in support of your thesis
- find opinions that differ from your own, which can help you sharpen your thinking, qualify your thesis if necessary, and demonstrate fairness to opposing arguments

For a thorough discussion of finding, gathering, and evaluating sources, see Chapters 12–17.

Organizing an argument
Once you have assembled good reasons and evidence in support of an argumentative thesis, you must organize your material to present the argument convincingly. Although there is no universally favored, one-size-fits-all organizational framework, you may find it useful to try one of the following patterns.

The classical system
In the classical system of argument — followed by ancient Greek and Roman orators and still in widespread use today, some twenty-five hundred years later — the speaker begins with an introduction, which states the thesis and then gives background information. Next come the different lines of argument and then the consideration of alternative arguments. A conclusion both sums up the argument and makes a final
appeal to the audience. You can adapt this format to written arguments, visual arguments, or arguments that combine words and images.

1. Introduction
   - Gain readers' attention and interest.
   - Establish your qualifications to write about your topic.
   - Establish common ground with readers.
   - Demonstrate fairness.
   - State or imply your thesis.

2. Background
   - Present any necessary background information, including pertinent personal narrative.

3. Lines of argument
   - Present good reasons and evidence (including logical and emotional appeals) in support of your thesis.
   - Generally present reasons in order of importance.
   - Demonstrate ways your argument may be in readers' best interest.

4. Consideration of alternative arguments
   - Examine alternative points of view.
   - Note advantages and disadvantages of alternative views.
   - Explain why one view is better than others.

5. Conclusion
   - Summarize the argument if you choose.
   - Elaborate on the implication of your thesis.
   - Make clear what you want readers to think or do.
   - Make a strong ethical or emotional appeal.

**Toulmin's elements of argument**

This simplified and systematic form of argument developed by Stephen Toulmin (9e and 11c) can help you organize an argumentative essay:

1. Make your claim or (arguable statement).
   - The federal government should ban smoking.

2. Qualify your claim, if necessary.
   - The ban would be limited to public places.

3. Present good reasons to support your claim.
   - Smoking causes serious diseases in smokers.
   - Nonsmokers are endangered by secondhand smoke.

4. Explain the underlying assumptions that connect your claim and your reasons. Also provide additional explanations of any controversial assumptions.
   - The Constitution was established to "promote the general welfare."
   - Citizens are entitled to protection from harmful actions by others.
   - The federal government is supposed to serve the basic needs of the American people, including safeguarding their health.

5. Provide additional evidence to support your claim (facts, statistics, testimony, and other ethical, logical, or emotional appeals).
   - Cite the incidence of deaths attributed to secondhand smoke.
   - Cite lawsuits won against large tobacco companies.
   - Cite bans on smoking already imposed in many municipalities and states.
   - Cite the surgeon general.
6. Acknowledge and respond to possible counterarguments.  

**COUNTER-ARGUMENTS**  
Smoking is legal. Smokers have rights, too.  

**RESPONSE**  
The suggested ban applies only to public places; smokers would be free to smoke in private. A nonsmoker’s right not to have to inhale smoke in public places counts for more than a smoker’s right to smoke.

7. State your conclusion in the strongest way possible.

**Designing an argument**

As you are well aware, most arguments today no longer appear in black and white or only in print form. Instead, most writers today think of arguments they are writing as documents that must be carefully designed to make the best use of space, font style and type size, color, visuals, and contemporary technology. Chapters 4, 10, 23, and 25 provide extensive information on design issues, and it would be wise to consult those chapters as you design an argument. The following tips will get you thinking about how to produce and design a document that will add to the ethical, logical, and emotional appeals you are making:

- Spend some time deciding on a distinct visual style for your argument, one that will appeal to your intended readers, set a clear voice or tone for your argument, and guide readers through your document (4c and 10b).
- Check out any conventions that may be expected in the kind of argument you are writing. Look for examples of similar arguments, or ask your instructor for information about such conventions (4a).
- Consider the use of white space, titles, and headings and how each page will look. Choose titles, headings, and subheadings that will guide readers from point to point (23c). You may want to set off an especially important part of your argument (such as a list of essential evidence) in a box, carefully labeled.
- Make sure that your visual design is consistent. If you choose a particular color, font, or type style (such as **boldface** or *italic* type) for a particular purpose, such as a second-level heading, make sure that you use the same color, font, or type style for that purpose throughout your paper.

- Be sure to choose readable fonts and font sizes (23b and c).
- Choose colors carefully, keeping in mind that colors call up many responses. In general, you will probably want to stick to black and white for most of your text for readability, reserving color for headings, illustrations, and so on. If you are posting your argument to the Web, remember that you need to have a strong contrast between the background color and print and illustrations (23a and Chapter 24).
- After you have a rough draft of your design, test it out on friends and classmates, asking them to describe how readable it is, how easy it is to follow, and what you need to change to make it more effective. Decide what adjustments you need to make — in format, spacing, alignment, use of color and fonts, and so on.
- Plan where your visuals will go, keeping each one as close to the text it illustrates as possible. Also give each visual a title, label it as a figure or table, and identify the source (see Chapters 18 – 21 and 23d).

**Checklist for constructing an argument**

- What is the purpose of your argument — to convince others? to make a good decision? to change yourself? (11a)
- Is the point you want to make arguable? (11b)
- Have you formulated a clear claim and given good reasons for it? (11c and d)
- Have you formulated a strong working thesis, and have you qualified it sufficiently? (11c)
- How have you established your own credibility in the argument? (11e)
- Have you considered, and addressed, counterarguments? (11e3)
- How have you incorporated logical appeals into your argument? (11f)
- How have you used emotional appeals in your argument? (11g)
- How have you used sources in your argument, and how effectively are they integrated into your argument? (11h)
- Is your argument clearly organized? (11i)
- What design elements have you considered in composing your argument? How effective is your design? (11j)
EXERCISE 11.11
Using the guidelines in this chapter, draft an argument in support of one of the working theses you formulated in Exercise 11.2 or 11.3.

THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT CONSTRUCTING ARGUMENTS
Using the checklist on p. 203, analyze an argument you've recently written or the draft you wrote for Exercise 11.11. Decide what you need to do to revise your argument, and write out a brief plan for revision.

A student argument essay

As an argument essay

Asked to write an essay addressed to her classmates—one that makes an argumentative claim and supports it with good reasons and evidence—Teal Pfeifer argues that images in the media affect how women see themselves, and she offers a solution to the problem she has identified. Her essay has been annotated to point out the various parts of her argument as well as her use of good reasons, evidence, and appeals to logic and emotion.

Teal Pfeifer
Professor Rashad
English 102
April 13, 2006

Devastating Beauty

Collarbones, hipbones, cheekbones—so many bones. She looks at the camera with sunken eyes, smiling, acting beautiful. Her dress is Versace, or Gucci, or Dior, and it is revealing, revealing every bone and joint in her thin, thin body. She looks fragile and beautiful, as if I could snap her in two. I look at her and feel the soft cushion of flesh that surrounds my own joints, my own shoulders and hips that are broad, my own ribs surrounded by skin and muscle and fat. I am not nearly as fragile or graceful or thin. I look away and wonder what kind of self-discipline it takes to become beautiful like the model in my magazine.

By age seventeen a young woman has seen an average of 250,000 ads featuring a severely underweight woman whose body type is, for the most part, unattainable by any means, including extreme ones such as anorexia, bulimia, and drug use, according to Allison LaVoie (par. 4). The media promote clothing, cigarettes, fragrances, and even food with images like these. In a culture that has become increasingly visual, the images put out for public consumption feature women that are a smaller size than ever before. In 1950, the White Rock Mineral Water girl was 5'4" tall and weighed 140 pounds; now she is 5'10" tall and weighs only 110 pounds, signifying the growing deviation between the weight of models and that of the normal female population (Pipher 184).

This media phenomenon has had a major effect on the female population as a whole, both young and old. Five to ten million...
women in America today suffer from an eating disorder related to poor self-image, and yet advertisements continue to prey on insecurities fueled by a woman’s desire to be thin. Current estimates reveal that 80 percent of women are dissatisfied with their appearance and 45 percent of those are on a diet on any given day (“Statistics”). Yet even the most stringent dieting will generally fail to create the paper-thin body so valued in the media, and continuing efforts to do so can lead to serious psychological problems such as depression.

While many women express dissatisfaction with their bodies, they are not the only victims of the emaciated images so frequently presented to them. Young girls are equally affected by these images, if not more so. Eighty percent of girls under age ten have already been on a diet and expressed the desire to be thinner and more beautiful (Slim Hopes). Thus, from a young age, beauty is equated with a specific size. The message girls get is an insidious one: in order to be your best self, you should wear size 0 or 1. The pressure only grows more intense as girls grow up. According to results from the Kaiser Family Foundation Survey “Reflections of Girls in the Media,” 16 percent of ten- to seventeen-year-old girls reported that they had dieted or exercised to look like a TV character. Yet two-thirds of teenage girls acknowledged that these thin characters were not an accurate reflection of “real life” (qtd. in Dittrich, “Children” pars. 2 – 3).

It is tragic to see so much of the American population obsessed with weight and reaching an ideal that is, for the most part, ultimately unattainable. Equally troubling is the role magazines play in feeding this obsession. When a researcher asked female students from Stanford University to flip through several magazines containing images of glamorized, super-thin models (see Fig. 1), 68 percent of the women felt significantly worse about themselves after viewing the magazine models (qtd. in Dittrich, “Media” par. 16). Another study showed that looking at models on a long-term basis leads to stress, depression, guilt, and lowered self-worth (qtd. in Dittrich, “Media” par. 19). As Naomi Wolfe points out in The Beauty Myth, thinking obsessively about fat and dieting has actually been shown to change thought patterns and brain chemistry.

How do we reject images that are so harmful to the women and young girls who view them? Legislation regarding what can be printed and distributed is not an option because of First
Amendment rights. Equally untenable is the idea of appealing to
the industries that hire emaciated models. As long as the beauty
and clothing industries are making a profit from the physically
insecure girls and women who view their ads, nothing will change.

What, however, might happen if those females stopped buying
the magazines that print such destructive images? A boycott is the
most effective way to rid the print medium of emaciated models
and eliminate the harmful effects they cause. If women stopped
buying magazines that target them with such harmful advertising,
magazines would be forced to change the kinds of ads they print.
Such a boycott would send a clear message: women and girls reject
the victimization that takes place every time they look at a
skeletalily thin model and then feel worse about themselves.
Consumers can ultimately control what is put on the market: if we
don't buy, funding for such ads will dry up fast.

In the past, boycotts have been effective tools for social
change. Rosa Parks, often identified as the mother of the modern­
day civil rights movement, played a pivotal role in the Montgomery
bus boycott in December 1955. When Parks refused to give up her
seat to a white bus rider, she was arrested, and this incident
inspired the boycott. For more than a year, the vast majority of
African Americans in Montgomery chose to walk instead of ride the
buses. Many of them were terrorized or harassed, but the boycott
was eventually successful: segregation on buses was declared illegal
by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Between 1965 and 1973, Cesar Chavez also used boycotts
successfully to change wage policies and working conditions for
millions of Mexicans and Mexican Americans who were being
exploited by growers of grapes and lettuce. In his boycott efforts,

Chavez moved on two fronts simultaneously: he asked the workers
to withhold their labor, and he asked consumers to refrain from
purchasing table grapes (and later, lettuce) in order to show their
support for the workers. In this situation, not only did the boycott
force an industry to improve existing conditions, but it also made
the public aware of pressing labor issues. Thus a bond was formed
between the workers and the community their labor was benefiting.

As a society, we have much to learn from boycotts of the past,
and their lessons can help us confront contemporary social ills. As I
have shown, body-image dissatisfaction and eating disorders are
rising at an alarming rate among young girls and women in
American society. This growing desire for an unrealistically thin
body affects our minds and our spirits, especially when we are
pummeled dozens of times a day with glamorized images of
emaciated and unhealthy women. The resulting anorexia and
bulimia that women suffer from are not only diseases that can be
cured; they are also ones that can be prevented -- if women will
take a solid stand against such advertisements and the magazines
that publish them. While we are not the publishers or advertisers
who choose the pictures of starving women represented in
magazines, we are the ones who decide whether or not these
images will be purchased. This is where power lies -- in the hands of
those who hand over the dollars that support the glorification of
unhealthy and unrealistic bodies. It is our choice to exert this
power and to reject magazines that promote such images.
We hope that this handbook will contribute to the mission of Texas Tech University as it prepares students to make valuable and responsible contributions to our ever-changing world.

The top twenty errors made by college students

1. Wrong word (see page 2)
2. Missing comma after an introductory element (see page 3)
3. Incomplete or missing documentation (see page 4)
4. Vague pronoun reference (see page 4)
5. Spelling (including homonyms) (see page 5)
6. Mechanical error with a quotation (see page 5)
7. Unnecessary comma (see page 6)
8. Unnecessary or missing capitalization (see page 6)
9. Missing word (see page 7)
10. Faulty sentence structure (see page 7)
11. Missing comma with a nonrestrictive element (see page 8)
12. Unnecessary shift in verb tense (see page 8)
13. Missing comma in a compound sentence (see page 8)
14. Unnecessary or missing apostrophe (including it's/i't's) (see page 9)
15. Fused (run-on) sentence (see page 9)
16. Comma splice (see page 10)
17. Lack of pronoun-antecedent agreement (see page 10)
18. Poorly integrated quotation (see page 11)
19. Unnecessary or missing hyphen (see page 11)
20. Sentence fragment (see page 12)