

ORGANIZING YOUR PERSUASIVE SPEECH

Choose pattern that will convey your message and maximize persuasive impact

FACT CLAIMS: SEEKING TO PROVE SOMETHING IS TRUE OR FALSE

1. Casual pattern: one thing causes another

Thesis: fast-food restaurants cause significant health problems in the US.

- I. Low prices encourage frequent consumption.
- II. Fast-food is high in trans-fats and calories.
- III. High-fat, high-calorie food contributes to obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

2. Categorical pattern: Each main point reflects a different reason your claim is true

Thesis: The Earth is experiencing climate change.

- I. Changes in ocean temperature are consistent with computer models of climate change.
- II. Extreme weather is on the rise.
- III. Glaciers are melting.
- IV. Coral reefs are disintegrating

VALUE CLAIMS: SEEKING TO PROVE THAT A CERTAIN ISSUE/POSITION IS GOOD OR BAD

1. Criteria-application pattern: Two main points: one establishes standards for value judgment; the other applies it to the topic of your thesis

Thesis: Community service is valuable part of college experience

- I. College education should provide students with several benefits
 - A. New knowledge and skills
 - B. Preparation for workforce
 - C. Participation in new experiences
 - D. Clarifying students' values and place in the world
- II. Community service provides students will the opportunity to gain all these benefits
 - A. It leads to higher GPA and better communication skills
 - B. It provides valuable work experience and chance to discover career interests
 - C. It offers an opportunity to experience new situations and work with people from diverse backgrounds.
 - D. It encourages students to consider their values and see how they can help society.

2. Categorical pattern: when audience already understands each point's relevance

Thesis: Advanced driver-training courses are beneficial.

- I. They reduce risk of accidents
- II. They lower drivers' insurance premiums.
- III. They lower drivers' maintenance and gas costs.
- IV. The savings gained from the course exceed the cost of the course.

POLICY CLAIMS: SEEKING TO ARGUE THAT A CERTAIN POLICY SHOULD BE ADOPTED

1. Problem-Cause-Solution Pattern: builds to the action you are advocating. First point establishes a problem that needs to be addressed. The second shows how current policies are not sufficient to eliminate the cause of the problem. And the third presents a solution that can minimize the problem.

Thesis: The local government should install secure bike racks near heavily used bus and train stations.

I. Problem: Parking is scarce and traffic is congested near commuter bus and train stations in our city.

II. Cause: Many suburban commuters who would take mass transit live more than a mile from the closest bus stop or train station.

III. Solution: Providing secure bike racks will encourage alternative means of transportation to and from stops and stations, opening up parking spaces and alleviating traffic.

2. Comparative Advantage Format: explaining why the policy you're advocating is more beneficial than existing policies, especially if there's no glaring problem or issue at stake but there is a reason to adopt your proposal. The first point explains your solution, and each subsequent point identifies an advantage compared to the status quo. The subpoints should include proof.

Thesis: You should graduate with a minor.

I. Solution: Research available minors on campus and select one that interests you.

II. Advantage: You can focus your studies on a subject you enjoy.

III. Advantage: You can strengthen your qualifications in your chosen career.

IV. Advantage: You can open the door to new career possibilities.