

3 Using the Classical Model in Your Arguments

We need the capacity effectively to urge contradictory positions . . . not so that we may adopt either of the two (it is quite wrong to persuade men to evil), but that we should be aware how the case stands and be able, if our adversary deploys his arguments unjustly, to refute them.

—Aristotle

Rhetoric, or the art of using language persuasively, has a long history. The work of ancient rhetoricians such as Plato, Aristotle, Quintilian, and Cicero has influenced Western education and literature for nearly two thousand years, shaping public discourse and public life. Though rooted in the past, rhetoric plays an integral role in today's judicial, political, religious, and educational institutions.

Argument in the Ancient World

In the ancient world, rhetoric was taught as oratory (public speaking) and was basic preparation for students entering law, politics, and teaching. Students learned how to communicate a point of view clearly and convincingly. There were three categories of argumentative oratory in the ancient world, corresponding to three different functions. Two of these functions were professional or quasi-professional, such as presenting lectures and debates emulating professional situations; one function was political (*deliberative*), such as deliberating over military and civic policies; the other was legal (*forensic*), such as courtroom prosecution or defense motions. The third category of oratory—celebratory (*epideictic*)—generally falls outside the scope of argument. This kind of oratory was used in eulogies, commendations, dedications, and so on. Early rhetoricians, itinerant teachers known as *Sophists*, emphasized the pragmatic skills to be developed in winning an argument. Later, the Platonic school gained ascendancy, valuing philosophical reasoning over mere “training.” Plato’s student, Aristotle, achieved a sort of middle ground between the idealistic truth-seeking of his mentor and the mercenary pragmatism of the Sophists by viewing rhetoric as the art of finding the best available means of persuasion in a given case—that is, by applying the rigors of philosophical reasoning to actual problems.

Another important element of ancient rhetoric was its system of topic development. For ancient orators, topics were preestablished “nodes of thought” reorganized in the mind (the word *topic* comes from the Greek *topos*, meaning place) to aid the memory when speaking. The first topic, logically enough, is definition, followed by comparison, temporal/causal connection, circumstance (for example, what is capable or incapable of happening), and testimony (use of authority, laws, or concrete examples to establish authenticity).

In addition to the ancients’ everyday uses of argument in law, politics, religion, athletics, and the military, oratorical competitions were held. Individuals or teams would argue an issue, and an impartial judge would determine the winner based on each argument’s strengths (much like what happens in debate tournaments today). Debating, we might say, is the “sport” side of argument—a show of argumentative skill for its own sake and valuable for the development of such skill.

The Classical Model of Argument

The Classical model for structuring an argument is both simple and versatile. First, here is a look at it in outline form:

- I. Introduction
 - A. Lead-in
 - B. Overview of the situation
 - C. Background
- II. Position statement (thesis)
- III. Appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) and evidence
 - A. Appeals: to ethics, character, authority (ethos); to emotions (pathos); to reason (logos)
 - B. Evidence: citing of statistics, results, findings, examples, laws, relevant passages from authoritative texts
- IV. Refutation (often presented simultaneously with the evidence)
- V. Conclusion (peroration)
 - A. Highlights of key points presented (if appropriate)
 - B. Recommendations (if appropriate)
 - C. Illuminating restatement of thesis

Argument structure was given its fullest examination by the Roman rhetorician Quintilian, who not only described the five parts of a discourse—the introduction, the statement of facts relating to the issue, the evidence, the refutation of challenging views, and the conclusion—but stressed the importance of exercising judgment in using them. Rhetorical arrangement, after all, is an art, not a rote

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) wrote *Rhetoric*. It was the first systematic study of argument and reasoning for practical purposes—political, judicial, and ceremonial.



computer program. Hence, not all introductions are alike in scope or tone; in fact, sometimes the orator may dispense with an introduction altogether—as when someone wants to hear only “the bottom line.” Similarly, the orator may want to refute opposing views before presenting the evidence. The orator may also decide whether the evidence should be strictly factual—that is, appeal exclusively to reason—or should include ethical and emotional appeals as well.

Organizing Your Argument Using the Classical Model

The Classical argument introduces the problem and states the thesis; it next presents background information in the form of a narrative. It then presents the evidence in support of the thesis, including refutation of opposing views. Finally it reaches a conclusion.

Consider the case of student Justine Hearn, who is writing a paper on the folly of developing a tourist resort in Trinidad and Tobago, an environmentally sensitive twin-island nation in the West Indies. Justine has a good idea of what points she wants to make in her argument but is not sure what sequence to use in laying it out. She understands the Classical structure but is not quite sure how specifically she can make her essay adhere to it. Using the Classical model serves as a heuristic device—a set of hints that may be recast as questions:

1. What is my reason for writing the paper?
2. What is the best way to introduce the problem, given my evidence and audience?
3. What definitions of concepts or explanations do my readers require?
4. What exactly is my position on the matter?
5. How will my readers most likely react? Indifferently? Skeptically? Enthusiastically? How can I deal with it in advance? (For example, if the audience is likely to be skeptical, can I say things that would remove some of their skepticism?)

■ Exercise 3.1

Read Justine’s first draft of her argument on how land development damages the ecology of Trinidad and Tobago. Then answer the questions that follow.

Justine Hearn

ECOLOGY VS. LAND DEVELOPMENT IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Leading

Overview

The island republic of Trinidad and Tobago in the West Indies is facing unprecedented land development. It does have some land preserved, but even this protected land is in danger of being lost to farming and illegal practices. Thousands of acres of pristine rain forest are without governmental protection and are thus left to be destroyed without oversight or penalty.

Background

Although the smaller island of Tobago is home to the world’s oldest legally protected forest, the Crown Point Reserve (1776), this legacy is not being continued. Instead, it appears that the government has made its decisions in favor of

unchecked development benefiting the tourism and petrochemical industries. There exists a number of narrowly-based laws, some of which overlap, that offer environmental protection. However, these laws are not broad enough or modern enough to carry much weight. Activists have been petitioning the government to establish a more comprehensive set of laws, but this has yet to be taken seriously by politicians.

High employment rates—24% of the general public and twice that for young adults—have created a rift in interests that is cleaved along social status lines (Julian Kenny and Christine Toppin-Allahan, Videotaped lecture, Aug. 4, 1995). Environmental concerns are expressed mostly by those in the upper classes, while the lower classes are often perceived to be the cause for certain environmental problems. To best illustrate how the government of Trinidad and Tobago attempts to manage environmental issues and the societal conflicts that arise from them, an example of a specific environmental crisis in the Nariva Swamp will be used.

Squatters—farmers who illegally occupy government land—account for one-fifth of Trinidad and Tobago's population (Kenny and Toppin-Allahan). The Nariva Swamp and its inhabitants demonstrate the historical struggle between the people's attempt to establish an adequate livelihood and the government's effort to uphold established legislation. This state-owned swamp, the only existing freshwater marsh of its kind in the Caribbean, has become a squatting site of rice farmers. In the 1960s, people began to move into the area to burn and clear Nariva's forest and marshland in order to plant rice. Although this was and still is an illegal practice, farmers continued to move

Statistics

Squatters

-people (squatters)

+historical facts

Refutation
(addressing the implicit challenge, "forestry officers can take care of this problem.")

in to take advantage of the open land, encouraged especially by the government's subsidies on locally grown rice. With no budget and little training, Forestry and Wildlife officers had little success in removing the squatters from the land. In fact, the government considered allowing the squatters to purchase the lands they were using, a practice that often takes place on other state-owned lands throughout the islands. In the late 1980s, commercial farmers moved in with heavy equipment to begin large-scale farming, digging canals to regulate water levels, using chemicals, and bulldozing the swamp's forests.

The human health and general pollution laws are the weakest of the environmental legislation. The Public Health Acts, which were established in the 1920s, discuss mosquito control and human waste disposal and regulate pollution in the form of "noxious substances" and "black smoke"—qualities of waste materials that were relevant at the time of the bill's creation but have since lost their bearing. Chemical spills and toxic fumes are not a part of this legislation and are thus not under state jurisdiction.

How might Trinidad and Tobago best solve these serious threats to their environment? It seems that international influences might be one of the best vectors of change, just as the World Bank and Greenpeace influenced the government of Trinidad and Tobago during the early years of the Environmental Management Authority (EMA). However, it is important to the success of the new legislation and ongoing preservation efforts that a sense of imperialism does not develop as a result of the intervention of outside forces. Furthermore, public support is necessary for government legitimacy, but a society will

invest in an issue only if its people have at least an elementary sense of security. For many citizens, this would require an improvement in their quality of life, which necessitates the creation of jobs. Yet this leads to the question of sustainability, because a rise in industry usually results in some form of environmental degradation. If Trinidad and Tobago's economy were based in the country's biodiversity, a sustainable framework for jobs could be created that would also encourage conservation interests. Ecotourism, bio-prospecting, and controlled sustainable agriculture would be possible answers in this scenario.

1. How convincingly does Justine support her thesis?
2. How relevant to her argument are the statistics that she cites? Are they sufficiently recent? Are they reliable? Are her sources credible? Why or why not?
3. How effectively does Justine refute challenging views? How might she develop her refutation?
4. Does the solution Justine proposes appear to solve the problem? What alternative solutions does she discuss?
5. Suggest ways in which Justine could further develop or otherwise strengthen her essay.

Elements of a Classical Argument in Action

Now let us examine each element in detail and see how they operate in a particular argument. Keep in mind that outlines serve to remind writers of the basic strategy for developing a sound argument; they should not be followed slavishly as if they were some unalterable blueprint for constructing a house.

Introduction A good introduction accomplishes three things:

1. It presents the topic of inquiry or the problem requiring attention and perhaps briefly states the thesis.
2. It establishes a clear context for the problem.

3. It engages the reader's attention and desire to get "the whole picture."

Consider the following introduction to an argument against the use of school vouchers, a system whereby the state promises to pay parents a percentage of tuition for attending a quality school of the parents' choice:

Most Americans believe that improving our system of education should be a top priority for government at the local, state, and Federal levels. Legislators, school boards, education professionals, parent groups and community organizations are attempting to implement innovative ideas to rescue children from failing school systems, particularly in inner-city neighborhoods. Many such groups champion voucher programs. The standard program proposed in dozens of states across the country would distribute monetary vouchers (typically valued between \$2,500-\$5000) to parents of school-age children, usually in troubled inner-city school districts. Parents could then use the vouchers towards the cost of tuition at private schools—including those dedicated to religious indoctrination.

Superficially, school vouchers might seem a relatively benign way to increase the options poor parents have for educating their children. In fact, vouchers pose a serious threat to values that are vital to the health of American democracy. These programs subvert the constitutional principle of separation of church and state and threaten to undermine our system of public education.

How well do these two paragraphs meet the criteria for a strong introduction to an argument? First, the author (an anonymous writer for the Anti-Defamation League) introduces the problem: the need to improve our educational system and the fact that vouchers are considered to be a promising solution of that problem. The second paragraph presents the thesis: Vouchers are a bad idea. Finally, the author engages the reader's attention by using strong, dramatic language to convey a sense of urgency to the matter: Vouchers "pose a serious threat to values that are vital to the health of American democracy" and "subvert the constitutional principle of separation of church and state." Such language not only piques interest but heightens anticipation: How is this writer going to convince me that such an assertion makes sense?

Appeals and Evidence At the heart of any Classical argument is the evidence, reinforced by the persuasive appeals (see pages 4-6) that will ideally demonstrate, beyond doubt, the validity and reasonableness of the thesis. To be persuasive—that is, to change the minds of readers who otherwise would reject your thesis—facts and appeals must be conveyed in a way that allows readers to see the path by which they lead directly to the thesis.

Let us consider the way in which the three appeals are applied to the argument on school vouchers.

Ethos (the appeal to ethics, character, valid authority). When the school vouchers author argues that a voucher program would undermine the ideals on which this country was founded, he or she is evoking the appeal of ethos. It would be unethical, or a sign of bad character, to undermine what are considered the fundamental ideals of American democracy and liberty. It should be taken for granted, the author implies, that the authority of the U.S. Constitution must always be upheld.

Pathos (the appeal to emotion, compassion, sympathy). By alluding to "a serious threat" that vouchers pose to American values, the author is evoking the appeal of pathos—specifically, the fear of what might happen if states violated the U.S. Constitution.

Logos (the appeal to logic, to sound, reason-based decision making). Note how the author sets up a logical connection between separation of church and state and the American system of public education: If the former is violated, the integrity of the latter is threatened. This is an example of the appeal to logic and reason. There is a logical connection to be made between A and B.

Appeals go a long way toward persuading readers, but strong evidence is also needed. Two kinds of evidence are appropriate to Classical argumentative writing—direct and indirect. *Direct evidence* consists of data from surveys, scientific experiments, and cases-in-point—phenomena that clearly point to a causal agency ("where there's smoke, there's fire"). Facts represent evidence that anyone can check firsthand at any time. *Indirect evidence* consists of formal analytical and mathematical reasoning. Here, the author takes the reader through a step-by-step analysis of why causes that lead to inevitable effects.

No matter what type of evidence is used, it must be tested for its relevance, accuracy, thoroughness, and timeliness.

Relevance. The evidence must relate directly to the claims being made. If an argument claims that high school teachers tend subtly to discourage young women from pursuing careers in science or engineering, but then cites instances of that problem only from colleges or private schools, critics would argue that the evidence is not relevant to the claim.

Accuracy. Inaccurate evidence is worse than useless: It can deceive—and even harm. Facts and figures must always be double-checked. Experts or passages from texts must be quoted or paraphrased accurately. Accuracy also requires a degree of precision relevant to what is being argued. It may be acceptable to say "water was brought to a boil" in reference to a recipe, but when describing a chemical experiment involving a water temperature, a precise fraction of a degree, such a statement would be problematic.

Thoroughness. The evidence must cover every facet or implication of the claim. If a writer claims that teenagers in the United States have fewer traffic accidents today than they did ten years ago but then cites accident sta-

tistics from only three states, readers rightly would argue that the evidence could be made more thorough by including statistics from all fifty states.

Timeliness. The evidence must be appropriately recent. If a writer argues that teenagers are safer drivers "today" but presents statistics from 1995, then one rightly could argue that the evidence needs to be updated.

Refutation. Closely associated with evidence is refutation, the reference to opposing views and rebutting them. Refuting viewpoints that challenge our own is seldom easy; quite often it is the most difficult stage in writing an effective argument. To refute effectively, we must assume that the challengers are equally convinced of their views. We may be tempted to trivialize or misrepresent an adversarial point by leaving out certain information or giving a faulty interpretation. Disagreements tend to be rooted in deeply personal values and beliefs, so we instinctively try to protect these beliefs. They have worked for us; have stabilized our sense of the world, have helped us cope. Any challenges are avoided. Yet, unless we have the courage to permit these beliefs to be challenged, perhaps modified, maybe even abandoned, learning and personal growth cannot take place.

Knowledge consists not of disembodied facts but of negotiated ideas. What we know we have assimilated from innumerable points of view. The health of our own ideas depends on a steady influx of fresh viewpoints, just as a body of water must be continuously replenished to avoid becoming stagnant. Such receptivity to new ideas requires courage, of course. It is never easy to say of those who argue against us, "Maybe there is some validity to these challenging views; maybe I should adopt some of them."

If after a careful and critical analysis of opponents' arguments we still hold to our overall stance and, in fact, have found flaws in theirs, we are ready to refute them. The aim of refutation is to demonstrate the limitations or errors of challenging views. It is not necessary to establish a distinct boundary between evidence and refutation since evidence may be brought in as part of the refutation process. Notice that in the body of the article on school vouchers (reprinted on pages 79–82), the author refutes the pro-voucher argument by first stating the opposition's rationale and then showing why that rationale is in error:

Proponents of vouchers argue that these programs would allow poor students to attend good schools previously only available to the middle class. The facts tell a different story. A \$2,500 voucher supplement may make the difference for some families. . . . But voucher programs offer nothing of value to families who cannot come up with the rest of the money to cover tuition costs.

The refutation is clearly articulated, but is it convincing? Skeptics probably would understand that the anti-vouchers author supply more in the way of evidence to

substantiate the claim that vouchers undermine the integrity of American public schools.

How thorough is the evidence in support of the Anti-Defamation League's thesis that vouchers are harmful? The author brings in important facts that appear to demonstrate the unconstitutionality of vouchers, such as the Supreme Court's quoting of the Establishment Clause or its striking down "education programs that allow parents of parochial school students to recover a portion of their educational expenses from the state." However, much of the argument relies on speculation: There is no way of knowing for sure that the Supreme Court would judge vouchers to be unconstitutional, nor is there any way of knowing for sure that voucher programs "would force citizens—Christians, Jews, Muslims and atheists—to pay for the religious indoctrination of schoolchildren."

Effective argument depends on not only the kinds of evidence used but the degree to which that evidence resolves the stated problem.

Conclusion: The minimal task of a conclusion is to provide a final wisdom about the thesis just argued. Some conclusions summarize the key points of the argument; a strategy that can be much appreciated in a long and complicated argument but may be unnecessary otherwise. Quite often, such summary statements are followed by recommendations for what actions to take. Other conclusions are more speculative: Instead of recommending what should be done, they focus on what *might* be done. And still other conclusions are more open-ended, offering just summative statements but questions for the readers to consider.

The Anti-Defamation League writer on school vouchers does not present as full-fledged a conclusion as he or she does an introduction. Is the conclusion sufficient?

School voucher programs undermine two great American traditions: universal public education and the separation of church and state. Instead of embracing vouchers, communities across the country should dedicate themselves to finding solutions that will be available to every American schoolchild and that take into account the important legacy of the First Amendment.

The author succinctly restates the problem and leaves the reader with the provocative suggestion found in the concluding sentence. But what sort of solution will solve that complex problem? The author brings the readers no closer to a real solution.

■ Exercise 3.2

Read the complete text of "School Vouchers: The Wrong Choice for Public Education." Then answer the questions that follow.

School Vouchers

The Wrong Choice for Public Education | Anti-Defamation League

Most Americans believe that improving our system of education should be a top priority for government at the local, state and federal levels. Legislators, school boards, education professionals, parent groups and community organizations are attempting to implement innovative ideas to rescue children from failing school systems, particularly in inner-city neighborhoods. Many such groups champion voucher programs. The standard program proposed in dozens of states across the country would distribute monetary vouchers (typically valued between \$2,500–\$5,000) to parents of school-age children, usually in troubled inner-city school districts. Parents could then use the vouchers towards the cost of tuition at private schools—including those dedicated to religious indoctrination.

Superficially, school vouchers might seem a relatively benign way to increase the options poor parents have for educating their children. In fact, vouchers pose a serious threat to values that are vital to the health of American democracy. These programs subvert the constitutional principle of separation of church and state and threaten to undermine our system of public education.

Vouchers Are Constitutionally Suspect

Proponents of vouchers are asking Americans to do something contrary to the very ideals upon which this country was founded. Thomas Jefferson, one of the architects of religious freedom in America, said, "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves . . . is sinful and tyrannical." Yet voucher programs would do just that: they would force citizens—Christians, Jews, Muslims and atheists—to pay for the religious indoctrination of schoolchildren at schools with narrow parochial agendas. In many areas, 80 percent of vouchers would be used in schools whose central mission is religious training. In most such schools, religion permeates the classroom, the lunchroom, even the football practice field. Channeling public money to these institutions flies in the face of the constitutional mandate of separation of church and state.

While the Supreme Court has upheld school vouchers in the *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* case, vouchers have not been given a green light by the Court beyond the narrow facts of this case. Indeed, Cleveland's voucher program was upheld in a close (5–4) ruling that required a voucher program to (among other things):

Source: Anti-Defamation League, "School Vouchers: The Wrong Choice for Public Education," editorial, 2001. <http://adl.org/vouchers/vouchers_main.asp>. Reprinted by permission of the Anti-Defamation League.

In most cities in this nation, however, if your child is zoned into a school that is not performing well academically, and where teachers and administrators don't see themselves as being responsible for academic performance, parents have no recourse. Parents can only send their child to that school and hope for the best.

Under a school choice plan, a parent would have options. There would be consequences for a school's poor performance. Parents could pull their children out of poorly performing schools and enroll them somewhere else. If exercising this option leads to a mass exodus from certain underachieving schools, schools will learn this painful lesson: schools will either improve, or close due to declining enrollments.

Any corporation that tolerated mediocre performance among its employees, unresponsiveness to the complaints of its customers, and the promotion of a large number of failed products, would not survive in the marketplace very long. What is true of corporations should also be true of poorly performing and poorly run schools.

These are some of the ideas that I expressed when I first came out in support of school choice in a speech at Johns Hopkins University in March of 1996, not as a panacea, but as another way to improve public education. Though I thought my remarks were relatively benign, the speech sparked a great deal of controversy.

One of my own aides even joked that he wanted to see my voter registration card to see if I was still a Democrat. Well, I am still a Democrat and I have no plans to change my political affiliation. I, nonetheless, believe that the Democratic Party should reevaluate its position on school choice issues.

In actuality, choice should not be included in partisan rhetoric. School choice should be about giving our nation's children the best possible educational foundation.

The same week as my speech at Johns Hopkins, I appointed a task force to explore the idea of school choice. I asked the task force to consider the pros and cons of school choice programs in all their variations, including programs such as the system implemented in Los Angeles where parents and students have the freedom to choose any school in the public system. I also asked that they investigate private school voucher plans such as the program in Milwaukee, as well as charter and magnet schools.

The task force released a report in that year which recommended that the Baltimore school system expand magnet schools and initiate a system-wide open enrollment program as a way to provide more educational options for parents and their children.

In my view, the task force unfortunately stopped short of endorsing publicly funded vouchers as a way to achieve the goal of school choice. The group, however, did leave open the door for reconsideration of the voucher issue later on. Meanwhile, the Baltimore city public school system has now implemented a variation of the school choice idea through what is called the New Schools Initiative.

These "New Schools" are very similar to charter schools. They are publicly funded schools that are planned and operated by parents or institutions or other non-traditional sponsors.

I recently spoke at Coppin State University for commencement. Coppin State is an historically black college in Baltimore that started out as a teacher training school. Today, under one of the New School Initiatives, Coppin is managing an elementary school in its home neighborhood drawing on its teaching and research to improve that school.

Now, three years after that Hopkins speech, I continue to believe that choice holds the greatest hope for instilling excellence and accountability in the nation's public schools.

At that time, as a Democrat and an African-American mayor, I was considered a maverick, or worse, for expressing that idea. No longer. A groundswell of support for choice is rising all over the nation, including from some unlikely quarters. Certainly, there's no greater proof of this than the tremendous response to the Children's Scholarship Fund funded by Wal-Mart heir John Walton and financier Ted Forstmann.

Under this program, the parents of some 1.25 million low-income children across the country applied for partial scholarships to help their children attend private and parochial schools. Civil rights pioneer and former mayor of Atlanta Andrew Young wrote these words in a nationally syndicated newspaper column shortly after the results of the scholarship drive were announced: "1.25 million cries for help, voiced by poor, largely minority families, seeking something most Americans take for granted. A decent education for their children."

In that column, Young described the collective cry for help as "a moment of moral awakening" that promises to be just as pivotal in America's civil rights struggle as Rosa Park's refusal to give up her bus seat in Montgomery, Alabama more than 40 years ago.

Such moments of moral awakening, Young observed, force us to reevaluate our beliefs and finally to take action. In Baltimore, that particular scholarship program attracted twenty thousand applicants. This represents an astonishing 44 percent of city children who were eligible.

The conclusions that can be drawn from these figures are unmistakable. The *Baltimore Sun* education editor wrote, "We know now that there's a pent-up demand for school choice in the city. And we know that poor parents do care about the education of their children."

In fact, some low-income African-American parents in our city have shown they care so much that they will even go so far as to look *hulduway around the world* in order to find a good school for their children. The school which I refer to is called Baraka, which means blessings in Swahili. It's located in rural Kenya, 10,000 miles and eight time zones from inner-city Baltimore. And it's funded by a Baltimore-based foundation, The Abell Foundation. The Foundation recruits and selects at-risk seventh- and eighth-grade boys from the Baltimore city public schools to participate in this bold education experiment.

The kids chosen for this program are generally headed for serious trouble. It is safe to assume that many of the boys in the Baraka program would have ended up incarcerated, or worse, had they not been selected.

Baraka School is going to begin its fourth year of operation in the fall. With 30 graduates to date, the school is having remarkable success in boosting the academic achievement of these at-risk youngsters and truly turning around their lives.

Because of the persistent resistance to school choice by some Maryland politicians, however, the State Education Department has refused to fund the Baraka School project. I do not speak of any extra funding here. I am only talking about taking the state's cost of educating each Baraka student, which would normally have gone to the school that they had been assigned to had they remained in the public system, and allowing it to be used to educate the students in this alternative environment.

The state has absolutely refused. Were it not for the support of the Foundation, the Baraka School, which has done such an excellent job for these young men, would have closed.

So, despite greater acceptance of school choice it's certainly premature to declare victory in the public opinion contest. Indeed, criticisms of school choice are as strident as ever and I am sure you have heard the more familiar ones.

Some say that school choice, especially vouchers, will weaken public education. My response is that choice can only strengthen public education by introducing competition and accountability into the mix. Others claim that school choice is undemocratic. My response to them is that choice is in keeping with the aspirations for freedom that formed the core of American democracy. As former Delaware Governor Pete Du Pont once wrote, "It's about the liberty to choose what's best for your children." All of us should have that choice.

Some say that school choice is elitist, or even racist. The truth is that black low-income children are among the prime victims of the nation's failing public schools. African-American parents know this all too well. This is why they have been so open to the idea of school choice.

A recent national poll released by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies found a trend toward growing support of tuition vouchers among African-American parents.

Another common criticism of school choice, and especially vouchers, is that it violates the principle of separation of church and state.

A properly structured voucher program is no more a violation of the principle of separation of church and state than is the GI Bill. This program allowed military veterans to use government dollars to attend any university of their choice, public or private, religious or secular.

I am convinced that with time, and through open dialogue, critics of school choice will come to see this movement for what it is: part of an emerging new civil rights battle for the millennium, the battle for education equity. We need to give poor children the same right that children from more affluent

households have long enjoyed. The right to an education that will prepare them to make a meaningful contribution to society. It is that simple.

In speaking of battles, and in closing, I remind you of those few words of wisdom from Victor Hugo: "Greater than the tread of Mighty Armies, is an Idea whose Time has Come . . ." As we look to the future, evidence is increasingly compelling, that school choice is such an idea. ■

1. Compare Schmoke's method of arguing his thesis with the Anti-Defamation League's method. Is one method more effective than the other? Why or why not?
2. Critique the essay in terms of (a) the effectiveness of its introduction; (b) the strength of its evidence and appeals; (c) the strength of its refutations; (d) its conclusion.
3. Prepare an outline of your own essay on school vouchers. What will be your thesis? What kind of evidence will you present? How will you refute challenging views?

Chapter Summary

The Classical model of argument dates back to ancient Greece and Rome, and it is still used. In effect, the Classical model presents a template, a preestablished structure for framing an argument. It includes these elements:

- An introduction, which presents the claim to be argued and gives necessary background information
- A body of collected data or evidence and appeals, which together attempt to persuade the audience that the claim is convincing, and acknowledgment and refutation of challenging views
- A conclusion, which may summarize key points, reflect on implications and consequences, or make recommendations (if appropriate)
- In addition, the content of an argument was generated by modes of thought or topics, which included definition, comparison, temporal/causal connection, circumstance, and testimony.
- Argument in the ancient world was conducted mainly through oratory, the art of speechmaking. Training for a profession in which argument was part of the job included being trained in the rhetorical strategies needed for giving speeches in that profession. Hence, aspiring politicians were trained in deliberative oratory, aspiring lawyers in forensic oratory. Everyone involved in public life was probably trained in celebratory oratory, which was used for honoring individuals and events.