

Building Success on the RLA Extended Response It's All About the Claim!

A GED® Tuesdays for Teachers Webinar



WELCOME!



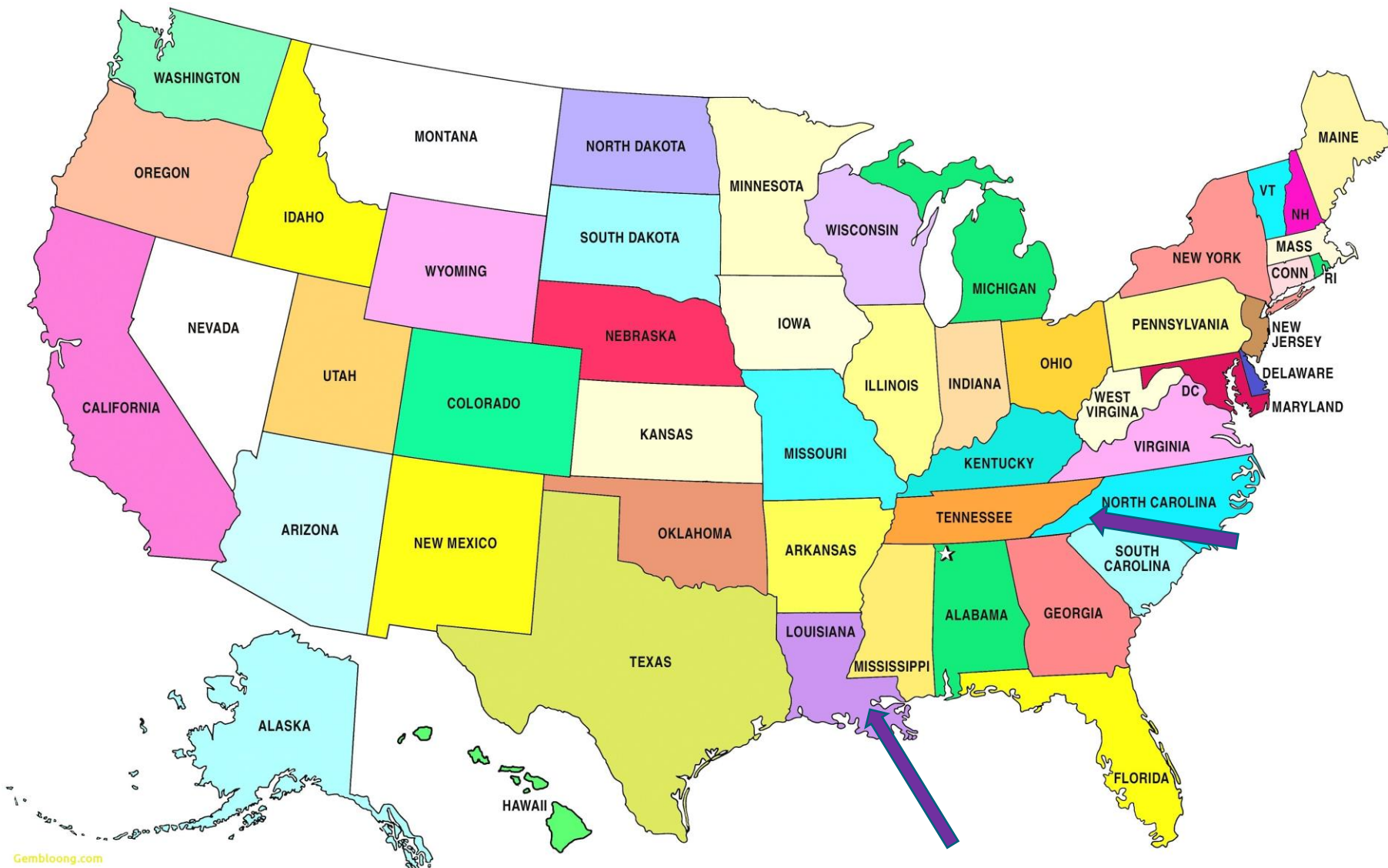
Debi Faucette
GED Testing Service



Susan Pittman
PD Consultant

Where are You?

List your city and state into the Question Box!



Session Objectives



- Discuss challenges that students have in writing the extended response
- Discuss the importance of students beginning their extended response with a strong claim (thesis statement)
- Review process for students to learn how to use evidence in writing a strong claim
- Share resources

A Few Insights to Improve Student Performance

What Earns Points



The Research Says...

Test-takers generally

- **Do** understand
 - Not to write their opinion and
 - The need to use evidence from the passages
- **Don't** understand
 - What the task wants them to do (“to analyze” means “to read”)
 - That they need to explain WHY the evidence they choose was the best to support the stronger argument

What Students See!

QAReview - Candidate Name

Question 6 of 15

Flag for Review

page 1 page 2

Instructions

Read

- On the **page 2 tab above**, you will **read two texts** presenting **different views** on the same topic.
- Both writers argue** that **their position** on the issue is **correct**.

Plan

- Analyze** the two texts **to determine** which writer presents the **stronger case**.
- ~~Develop your own argument in which you explain~~ how one position is **better supported** than the other.
- Include** relevant and specific **evidence** from **both sources** to support your argument.

Write

- Type** your response in the **box on the right**.
- Your response should be approximately **4 to 7 paragraphs of 3 to 7 sentences each**.
- Remember** to allow a few minutes **to review and edit your response**.

You have up to **45 minutes** for reading, planning, writing, and editing your response.

Cut Copy Paste Undo Redo

End Test Previous Navigator Next

What Earns Points

- Going beyond merely stating which side is better supported
 - A single statement of a stance is considered insufficient
 - Needs to include the “why”
- Doing more than just using quotations
 - Evidence cited must support the overall message and must be analyzed in some way



Focus on Trait 1 and the Rest will Follow

Better Readers Make Better Writers





“

*...in reality, **good argument** begins with looking at the data that are likely to become the evidence in an argument and that gives rise to a thesis statement or major claim.*

”

— G. Hillocks (2010)

Teaching Argument for Critical Thinking and Writing: An Introduction

Stimulus Material

Let's Review!

Taxation and Revenue Stimulus Material

Taxation and Revenue Stimulus Passage #1

Press Release from the Office of
U.S Representative Melody Walls
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC

*Representative Walls Announces Economic Boost for 12th District
July 17, 2013*

Washington, DC – Representative Melody Walls announced that Congress passed the highway and transit bill today.

"This bill is a positive step for the district. It will bring more jobs and economic growth to the area. The highway expansion will improve travel times and reduce congestion. This is a win for our constituents."

Last year, the district's economy was struggling. The highway expansion will bring more jobs and economic growth to the area. The highway expansion will improve travel times and reduce congestion. This is a win for our constituents."

Improving the highway means jobs for local construction workers. Once completed, the highway will bring more long-distance travelers into the area. Some officials anticipate a 30% increase in highway traffic due to the ease of traveling on the improved Highway 17. An increase in travelers will attract national motel and restaurant chains along the highway route. These national businesses will mean permanent jobs for residents.

In the future, historical features in Oak Falls and Gaston, such as brick streets built by early settlers and the old wheat mill, will likely become popular tourist attractions. More visitors will increase business for local shops and restaurants.

The improved highway will eliminate eighteen-wheeler traffic through towns, a major source of traffic congestion and noise. A 2001 study in Texas showed that bypasses reduce traffic through towns by as much as 75%. Eliminating eighteen-wheeler traffic will also reduce road maintenance costs. The improvement of Highway 17, funded by federal tax allocations, is an important investment in the area.

Taxation and Revenue Stimulus Passage #2

Oak Falls Gazette
Letter to the Editor

I am a small-business owner living in Representative Walls's congressional district. A bill has been passed to expand Highway 17 from a two-lane highway to a four-lane thoroughfare. This change includes plans to move Highway 17 two miles to the east, which means it will now bypass our town completely. I find this unacceptable.

The *Gazette* reports that because Highway 17 runs through six states, construction will be paid for with federal road funds. That means some of our federal taxes will pay for a road that I believe will harm our town. I also believe that few residents of Oak Falls will use the road. Our town and district will lose money as a result of this highway bypass paid for by our tax dollars.

The close proximity of the highway to our town is a problem. The highway expansion will bring more jobs and economic growth to the area. The highway expansion will improve travel times and reduce congestion. This is a win for our constituents."

Alice Jenkins – Letter to the Editor – Argument Against Highway Expansion and Bypass

Taxation and Revenue Prompt

Analyze the arguments presented in the press release and the letter to the editor.

In your response, develop an argument in which you explain how one position is better supported than the other. Incorporate relevant and specific evidence from both sources to support your argument.

Remember, the better-argued position is not necessarily the position with which you agree. This task should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. Your response should contain 4 – 7 paragraphs of 3 to 7 sentences each, about 300 – 500 words.



Read and Find

Both Sides Now		
Evidence that Supports		Evidence that Opposes
	Question or statement Which position is better supported?	
Decision (Claim)		
Reasons (Analysis/Evaluation)		

Analyze - to examine in detail in order to discover meaning

Evaluate – to make a judgment, one that most likely results from some degree of analysis

Analysis Complete! Time to Evaluate

Both Sides Now		
Evidence that Supports	Which position regarding the building of a new road is better supported?	Evidence that Opposes
Will ease traffic congestion		Will bypass town and harm it
Will create jobs		Road paid for with federal funds
Improving highway means jobs for construction workers		Few residents will use road
Will bring more long-distance travelers to area		Will lose money because of bypass
30% increase in traffic that won't impact city roads		Construction jobs are only temporary
Will attract national motel and restaurant chains		Minimum wage jobs will remain
Will eliminate truck traffic through city by as much as 75%		Highway will bypass four cities in one district, so fewer travelers will stop in the cities
Will reduce road maintenance costs		2001 study shows bypasses have negative impact on local businesses
Representative held town meetings		Representative did not listen to local concerns in her town meetings



**Picking a side is the point
of an argumentative essay.**

Pick a Side!

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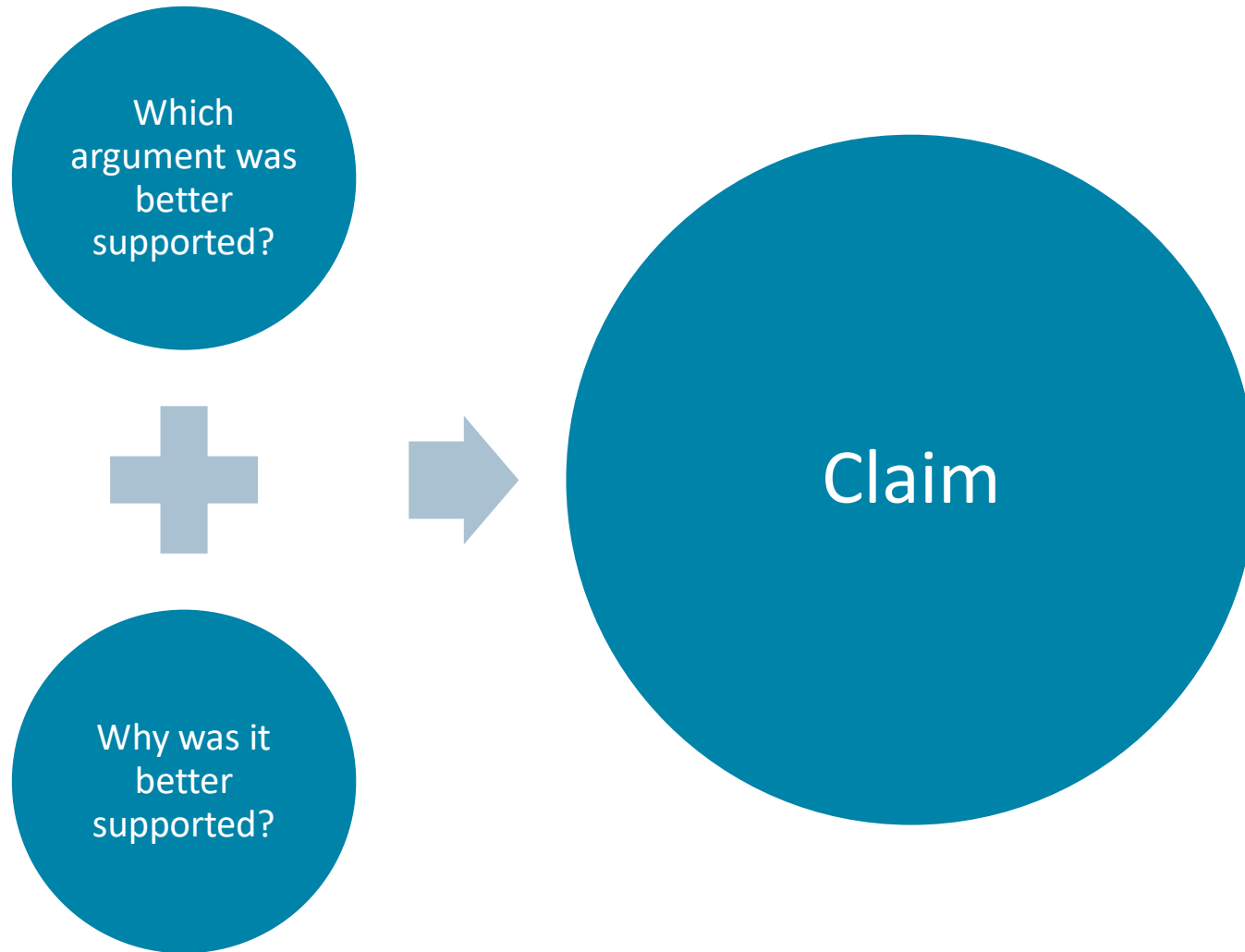
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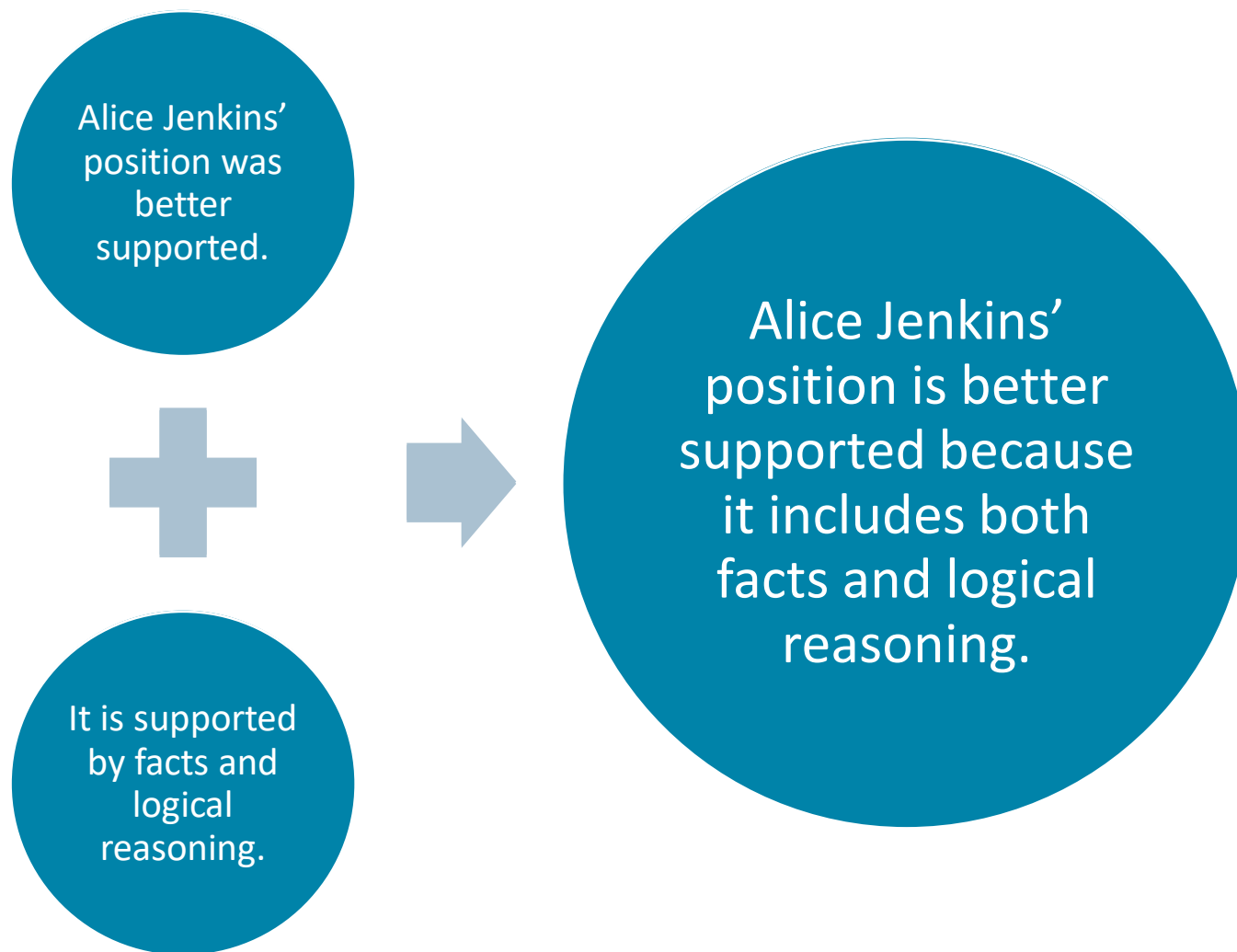
Let's Write!



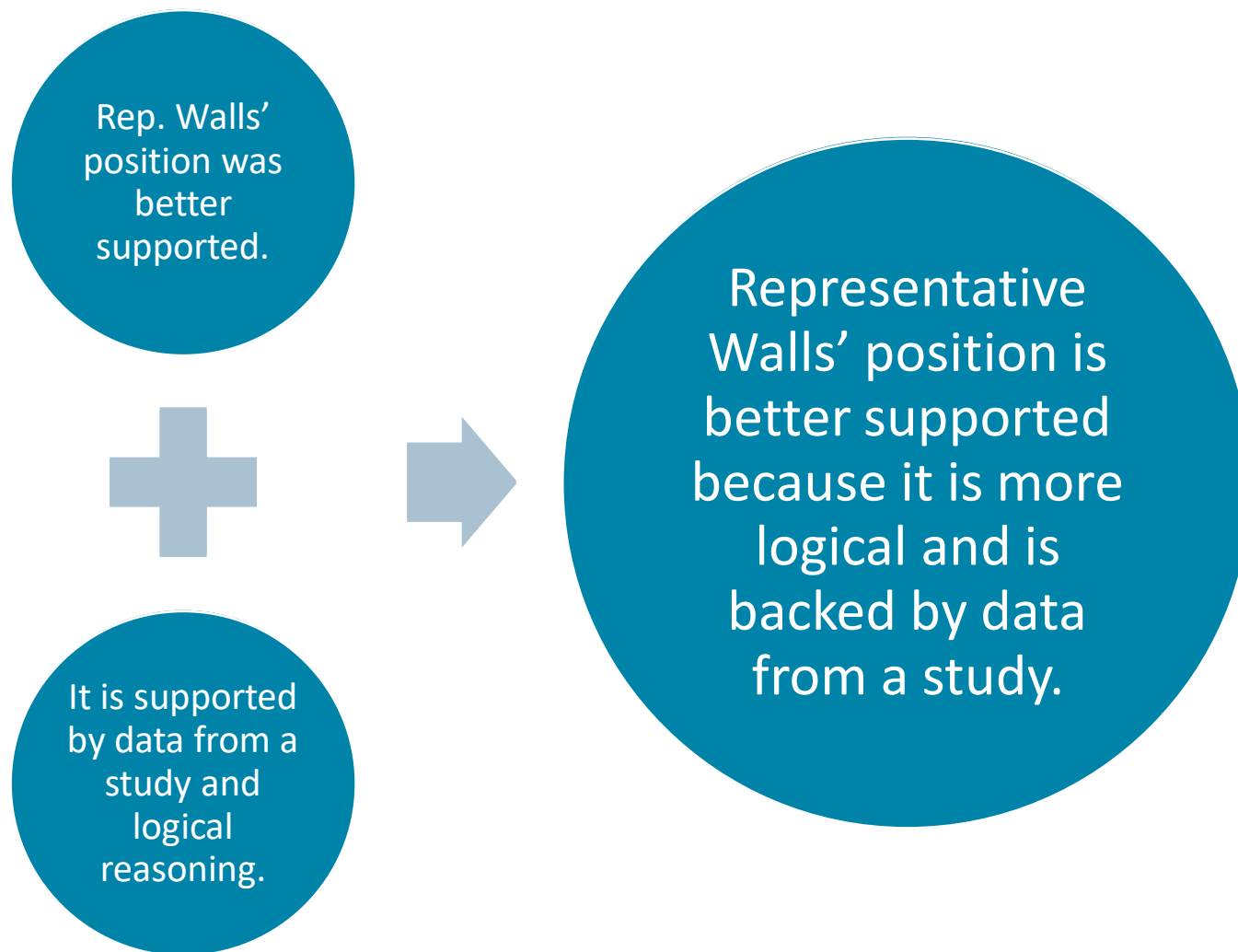
Build the New Claim



Build the New Claim



Build the New Claim



The Value of a Claim

- A claim is the main argument of an essay.
- It is probably the single most important part of the response.
- The complexity, effectiveness, and quality of the entire response hinges on the claim.

What's the Starting Point?

The claim

- Is the roadmap with signs and markings
- Guides the writer and reader through the argument
- Provides the position taken
- Provides the reason “why”
- Passes the “so what” test



The Value of the Word Because

- People do things **because** they provide a benefit or have value.
- People choose to live somewhere **because** of its proximity to schools or work.
- People drive a certain car **because** of its fuel economy, reliability, etc.

"because"

If **because** is a power word, shouldn't students be using it to make their claims stronger?

What else can students use besides *because*?

Synonym	Meaning
Due to	Preposition – because
Whereas	Conjunction – because of a particular fact that has been considered
Given	Preposition – because of a particular fact
In view of something	Preposition – because of something
On account of	Phrase – because of someone or something
There	Adverb – because of, or by means of, what has just been mentioned
Through	Adjective – happening because of someone or something
With	Preposition – because of the situation that exists

Great Resource – Power Thesaurus at:
<https://www.powerthesaurus.org/because/synonyms>

Where is the Claim?

The first argument from Melody Walls states that they want to expaned Highway 17 from twolane highway to a four-lane highway. It will move two miles east of the town of Oak Falls. The bill is suppose to ease the traffic congestion and create jobs for during and after construction. Melody Walls feel once the highway is completed it will bring in more long distance travelers into the area. With that being said it will attract national motels and restaurant chains along the highway route. This will mean permanent jobs for the residents. Melody Walls feel like as far as Oak Falls and Gaston, since they have that old "feel" to it because it was built by early settlers it would be a nice tourist attraction which will bring in more business for local shops and restaurants. The improved highway will eliminate the traffic of the eighteen wheelers through towns which is a major source of noise and traffic congestion. A study in Texas showed that the highway reduced traffic through towns by as much as 75% stopping them from having traffic and will reduce road maintenance. Melody Walls feel it will be a good investment to the area.

Alice Jenkins feels different because she, first off, is a native of Oak Falls. Alcie Jenkins is a small town buisness owner living in the district. Seeing how Melody Walls plans on moving it two miles east that means it will now bypass there town completely and she does not agree with that at all. Alice Jenkins feels since the new highway runs through six states the construction will be paid with federal road funds that means that the city will have to pay for some of that which she thinks will hurt the town especially if there is no business coming in. Alice Jenkins feels that after the construction is finished that there will be minimum wage jobs remaining, towns will lose business because fewer travelers will pass by rather than come through. Alice Jenkins feels that travelers will not want to come back an extra two miles just to see what they town has to offer meaning no one but the town will shop in the town. No one will get hotel rooms are not even gas mainly because everything is going to be on the exit route. Alice Jenkins agrees that it will be less noise but deffently bad for business.

I feel that Representative Walls position was better supported because she had a lot of good points. Its always good to expand a freeway because of the reasons of a faster comute and less traffic. Anytime that they expand are build something that is going to cause a comotion. There is always a little town somewhere In the world and you cant make everyone happy. It will bring in more jobs and decrease the noise and on top of that it might be a little safer without the eighteen wheelers going through the back roads keeping children a little safer. I feel maybe they can agree to disagree and maybe take time out to make some type of brochure showing what Oak Falls has to offer. Meaning everyone wins, buisness flows, quieter, no more trucks and noise and people get to work quicker or where ever they have to go. Representative Walls has my support.

Does the Claim Provide a Roadmap?

Response 3:

I feel that Representative Walls position was better supported because she had a lot of good points.
---- Representative Walls has my support.

Why?

- What points are good?
- What evidence is related to the “good points”?
- Why does Representative Walls have your support?
- What is your starting point?
- Where will you go with this claim?
- What about the letter to the editor? Any good points?

Where's the Evidence?

Response 3:

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Let's Make It Better and Stronger!

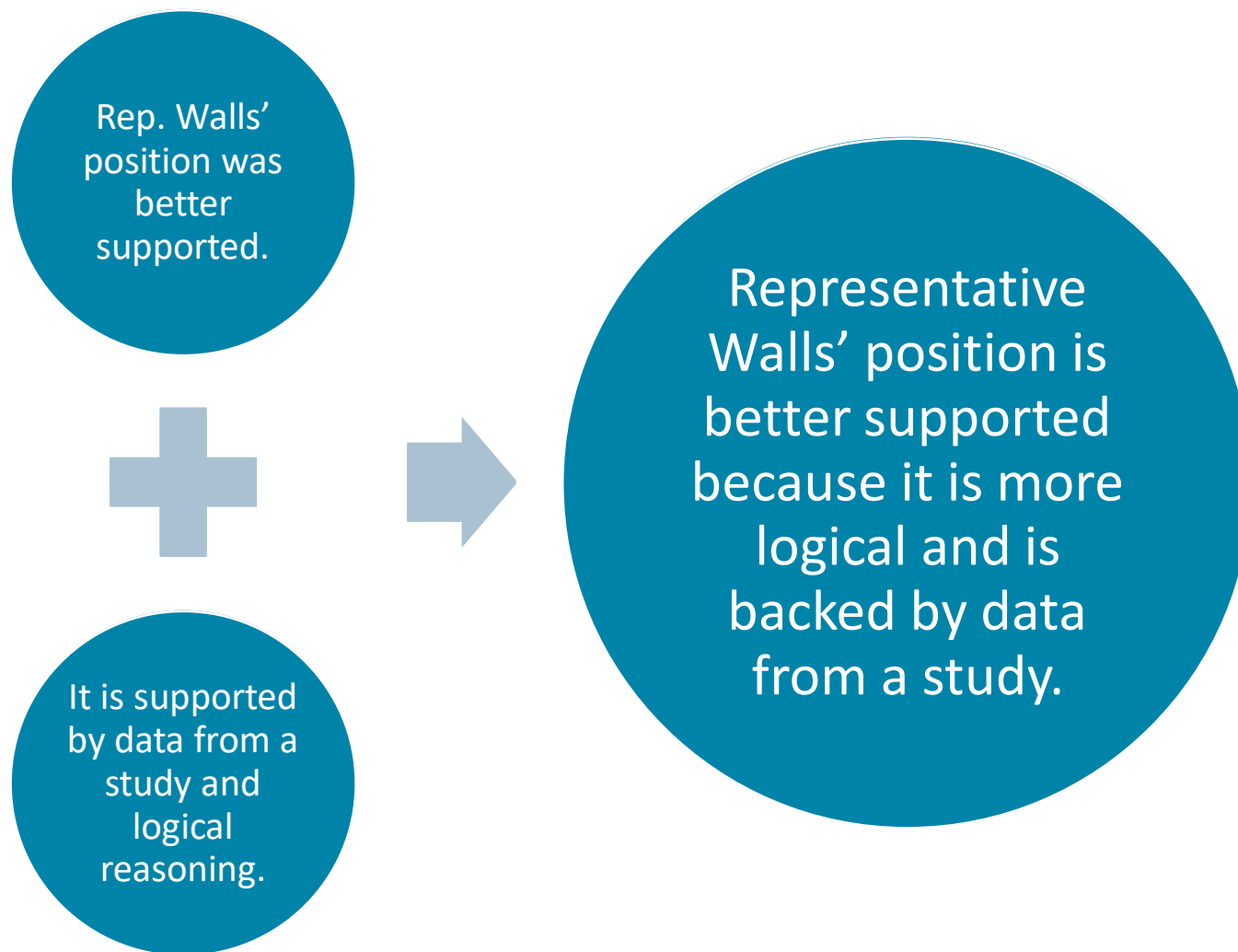
1. Start with the existing claim.
2. Identify what needs to change to make this a better claim.
3. Read through the student's response and identify evidence used.
4. Identify what these pieces of evidence have in common.

Data and Logical Reasoning

I feel Representative Walls position was better supported because she had a lot of good points. Rep. Walls has my support.

- Ease traffic congestion
- Create job
- Bring in more travelers
- Attract national motels and restaurants
- Create nice tourist attraction
- Study from Texas – 75% reduction in traffic and road maintenance
- Good investment

Build the New Claim



Rework the Introduction

Current Intro

Need an opening

~~I feel Representative Walls position was better supported because she had a lot of good points.... Rep. Walls has my support.~~

Representative Walls and Alice Jenkins have different views on expanding a nearby highway from two to four lanes. Both present good arguments about the impact on the town of expanding the nearby highway. Representative Walls' position is better supported because it is more logical and is backed by data from the study.

Why Focus on Trait 1?

Trait 1

- Is pivotal from a skills perspective
- Builds a solid foundation for cross-cutting skills
- Provides the basis for demonstrating Trait 2 (organization and development of ideas) and Trait 3 (standard English conventions)



Now I Have My Roadmap. . .

Claim	Representative Walls and Alice Jenkins have different views on expanding a nearby highway from two to four lanes. Both present good arguments about the impact on the town of expanding the nearby highway. Representative Walls' position is better supported because it is more logical and is backed by data from the study.
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease traffic congestion; use data from study – 75% reduction in traffic and road maintenance • Create jobs • Create nice tourist attraction; bring in more travelers; attract national motels and restaurants • Create nice tourist attraction
Bridge	Explain how the pieces of evidence are connected to the claim.
Counterclaim	Use evidence from letter - “fewer travelers will pass by”
Rebuttal	Use press release evidence - Create nice tourist attraction; bring in more travelers; attract national motels and restaurants
Conclusion	Convince the reader that the claim is the best position on the issue.

Did I Have Everything Needed to Respond to the Prompt



Prompt:

Analyze the arguments presented in the press release and the letter to the editor.

In your response, **develop** an argument in which you **explain** how one position is better supported than the other. **Incorporate** relevant and specific evidence from both sources to **support** your argument.

Remember, the better-argued position is not necessarily the position with which you agree. This task should take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

- Find the verbs
- Understand the action required
- Work the process

Yes, Yes, Yes

Is there a Roadmap?

I feel Jenkins has the better argument supported by common sense and enough data to win the argument.

**Why or
Why Not?**

Overall, expanding the Highway will create new jobs in communities, therefore helping economically, and also will help decrease traffic congestion.

**Why or
Why Not?**

Is there a Roadmap?

Both the press release and the letter to the editor offer position that are supported by both fact and opinion.... While both sides make an acceptable case, the latter provides a stronger argument.

**Why or
Why Not?**

They should do what's best for the group...to pay for the highway to be built.

**Why or
Why Not?**

Have a Process and Use It!



Expectations for Constructed Response

When you write . . .

- **determine which position presented in the passage(s) is better supported by evidence from the passage(s)**
- **explain why the position you chose is the better-supported one**
- **remember, the better-supported position is not necessarily the position you agree with**
- **defend your assertions with multiple pieces of evidence from the passage(s)**
- **build your main points thoroughly**

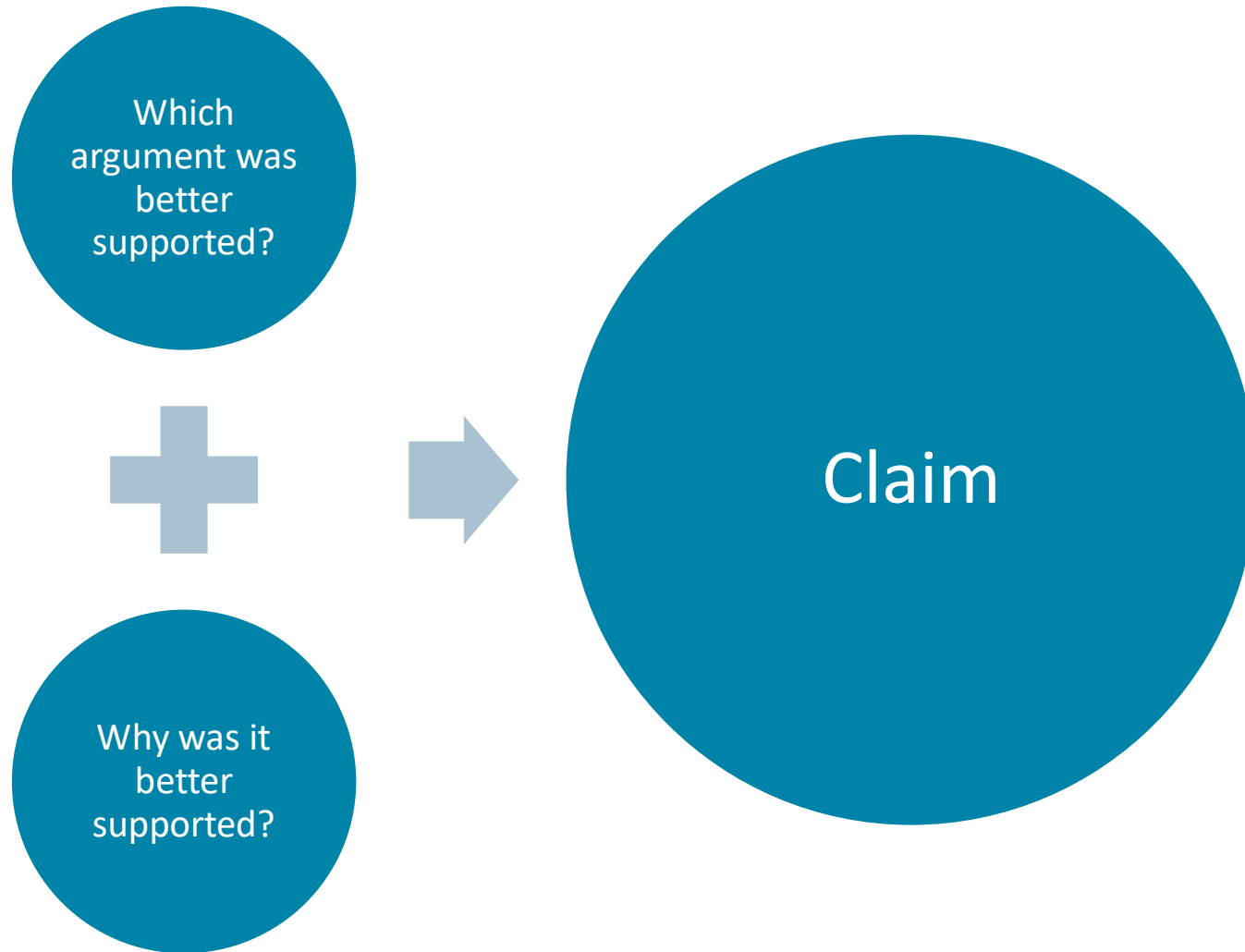
Both Sides Now

Students should

- List the evidence that supports
- List the evidence that opposes
- Evaluate the evidence
- Select the position that is better supported
- Provide reasons why (analysis/evaluation)

Both Sides Now		
Evidence that Supports		Evidence that Opposes
	Question or statement Which position is better supported?	
Decision (Claim)		
Reasons (Analysis/Evaluation)		

Build the New Claim



Simple Techniques to Improve Scores

Expose students to a structured approach to the writing task and help them understand that they need to:

- Write a complete response (300-500 words), not just a short paragraph
- Provide commentary on the evidence cited (explain the “why”)
- Develop two or three ideas fully, rather than mention a lot of things without detail
- Leave five minutes at the end for proofreading

What to Avoid

Responses should not

- Be composed of a summary of the passage or authors' positions
- Include personal information (e.g. opinion)
- Be written in first person (let's discuss why)



Resources

What Drives Argumentative Writing?

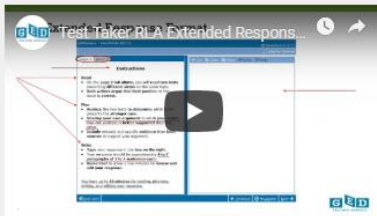
Access Extended Response Video Series

https://ged.com/about_test/test_subjects/language_arts/extended_response/

Language Arts Extended Response

Use these free videos, guidelines and examples to prepare and practice for the essay section of the Language Arts test.

Videos: How to write a great GED extended response



Video 1 of 8: Overview of the GED Extended Response (1:28)



Video 2 of 8: How to Determine Which Position is Best Supported (2:49)



Video 3 of 8: How to Write a Well-Supported Argument (4:21)



Video 4 of 8: How to Make a Plan and Write an Introduction (3:25)



Video 5 of 8: How to Write the Body and Conclusion (4:47)



Video 6 of 8: How to Write a Fully Supported Response (3:34)



Video 7 of 8: How to Check and Revise Your Response (2:58)



Video 8 of 8: Understand How Your Response is Scored (3:14)

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Thank you!

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