

Center 2

Practice Writing Arguable Claims

First, read the passage below, adapted from The University of Washington, about arguable claims. You should summarize this in your English notes because arguable claims are central to our writing here at Stevenson.

Once you have read and understood the passage, follow the steps to practice creating arguable claims in your notebook. You should create a minimum of 5. If you have time, share within your group.

PART I:

Arguable claims attempt to convince readers of something, change their minds about something, or persuade them to think about something in a new way. Such claims address a question or problem to which no easy answer exists and deal with complex issues by arguing something and considering counter arguments. In order to convince doubtful readers, arguable claims must be supported with carefully worked out analysis and substantial textual evidence. To determine if your claim is arguable, ask yourself these three questions:

- 1) Could a reasonable person disagree with you? [yes = good]
- 2) Is my claim just an argument of fact? [yes = okay as long as it is not too simple and requires complex/in-depth reasoning. Example: Courtroom murder case.]
- 3) Is your claim only supportable with personal opinion? [yes = no good because you need specific evidence to be persuasive]

PART II:

1. Make a list of facts about yourself below.

Example: I love my family; I love pizza; I am a teacher; etc.

2. Turn the factual statements above into argumentative statements.

Example: I love pizza -----> Without a doubt, pizza is the best food in the world.

3. Add a qualifying factor or context.

Example: Without a doubt, pizza is the best food in the world due to its taste and convenience.