

ARTIFICIAL SUPPORT

USING LOGICAL APPEALS (*Logos*)

Logical appeals are appeals to reason, to clear thinking; and they are important in any persuasive essay. Though advertisements may disregard logic entirely (many do!), an essay can't. Readers expect you to have good **reasons** for your opinion; they expect you to explain why you believe as you do.

Position Statement: The people of this state should vote to have fluoride added to the water.

Reasons: Fluoride in water will reduce the number of cavities, thus creating healthier teeth.
Controlled amounts on fluoride added to the water will prevent accidental overdoses for children who may take more pills than are prescribed.

Since most people want more than reasons, a writer should provide **evidence**, or proof, to back up the reasons. Evidence can be supported in the following ways:

- **Facts**: statements that can be proved by testing, personal experience, or verification from reliable sources. **Statistics, examples, and anecdotes** (brief stories, often based on personal experiences) may all be used as factual evidence.

Dentists are able to determine if a person has grown up with or without fluoride based on the condition of the teeth.

A former dental hygienist reported that she would always have her children take fluoride based on her experiences in a dental office.

Children have been accidentally poisoned by getting into the bottle of fluoride pills kept in their homes.

•**Expert Testimony**: statements by people who are recognized authorities on the issue. Even as early as the 1966 *Better Homes and Gardens Family Medical Guide*, Robert G. Kesel, D.D.S. wrote, "There are several ways by which the destructive processes of tooth decay can be significantly lessened. Preventive measures are directed toward (1) reducing the exposure of the teeth to fermentable carbohydrates (dietary control), (2) controlling the bacteria associated with the disease (oral hygiene, immunization), (3) increasing the resistance of the teeth (fluoridation). Many investigations have demonstrated the ability of these methods to obtain desirable results but in order to be effective they must be conscientiously and consistently applied."

When using outside sources to supply evidence for your argument, make sure the source is reliable and not unfairly biased. The person you cite must be reputable in the area you are defending. And, because your topic is potentially controversial, you examine facts and expert opinions from more than one source. If your sources aren't reliable, you will short circuit your argument. In addition, statistics that have been distorted will convey false information.

USING EMOTIONAL APPEALS (*Pathos*)

Since emotions tend to be a powerful drive for people, it is critical that you tap the emotions of your readers as well as their logic. In fact, people are rarely swayed by logic alone. Appropriate emotional appeal becomes rather critical if you truly want to influence your reader's position. You can build emotional appeal by knowing what your audience cares about. For this reason advertisers so often use children or animals in their commercials. Companies can effectively advertise safety devices for children by showing an adorable baby cooing in a safe car seat in contrast to a child's toy at the scene of a terrible accident.

It is not difficult to find ideas with **emotional appeals**. In fact, because many facts that appeal to our logic contain emotional, often you will find some emotional appeals when you are looking for logical appeals. The following details about an automobile accident are factual, but they also arouse strong emotions.

In the car carrying the crushed remains of the dead child was an infant car seat, properly installed and undamaged. Had the infant been in that car seat, he would have survived the crash.

This example also illustrates how language can become an emotional tool in persuasion. Certain words, especially those with **connotative meanings** that suggest certain feelings or attitudes, can create an emotional picture for the reader. If you are arguing for stiffer laws requiring people to strap children into protective car seats, using as a logical appeal a specific event with words such as "the crushed remains of the dead child" will be much more likely to reach the emotions of a reader than simply referring to the "dead child." Because people care about children, they will react emotionally.

USING ETHICAL APPEALS (*Ethos*)

A frequently misunderstood form of appeal is the use of **ethical appeals**. This technique requires you to establish your own credibility and personal character. You must make the readers believe in you and trust you. They must know that you are fairly examining all the facts objectively and that you are sensitive, responsible, and sincere. Never trust the readers to assume that you are trustworthy; you must show them by the way you handle all your facts.

For example, you must exhibit your fairness by presenting all sides of an argument. As you acknowledge your familiarity with the positions of the opposing views, tell the readers that you understand the issues and are fair in your presentation. In addition, as you conceded to some arguments by agreeing with them, you further increase your credibility as an objective examiner. Then, when you refute other points by showing how they are incorrect, you are believable.

Another way you can use ethical appeals is to show the readers that you trust their judgment and you respect them. Referring back to the argument about laws governing child restraint seat, you could indicate that any thinking person would choose to protect a child.

Of course, logic tells us that if we are responsible parents, we will protect our children by putting them into a restraining seat while we are traveling in a car. However, not every parent is wise enough to recognize this truth. Therefore, strong penalties for drivers who fail to protect their children properly should be enacted. Police would much prefer having to stop and cite a negligent adult than clean up the remains of an unprotected infant.

Avoid elements which can damage the ethical appeal. The following items can result in a weakened argument:

- Using faulty material, especially material the audience knows to be false
- Being overly emotional
- Appearing to be too personally involved in the subject to be rational – appear to cling to illogical justifications
- Using logical fallacies