

EQ: How do writers use their arguments to express ideas in literary text?

# The Steps to Tracing an Argument

*ELACC6RI8: Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.*

# Step # 1 Subject of the Claim

- Note the subject of the claim in the margins of your text. Determine the subject of the argument by reading background information about the author and the work; this information comes directly before the actual literary text and can also be found in the footnotes and endnotes.

## Step # 2 Main Claim of Argument

- Note the main claim of the argument by underlining it. Examine the wording in the first introductory paragraph. Notice if the author makes any personal declarations by using first person "I."

## Step # 3 Where is the Author's Claim?

- Note where you see the author claiming something or believing something, by circling the statement and writing in the margins “Author's Claim.” Notate the author's beliefs about what he has written and her stance.

## Step # 4 Number Supporting Evidence

- Note the supporting evidence by numbering it and/or using alphabetical letters. Outline the supporting evidence that clearly identifies a pro stance; do the same with an opposing stance. Note how and where the author positions the supporting evidence.

## Step # 5 Identify the Keywords

- Note keywords in the text by using a highlighter. Determine how the author defines certain keywords. Note the context in which the author places these keywords. Highlight the keywords and their definitions.

## Step # 6 Compare and Contrast

- Notate how the author compares and contrasts examples, people and contexts.

## Step # 7 Repetition of Words & Ideas

- Notate repetitions in words and ideas. Note how the author makes a point of repeating statements and phrases.



# Step # 8 Conditional Statements

- Notate hypothetical statements. Note if the author presents conditional statements. Write out the conditional statement. Explain how the author uses the statement within the argument.

## Step # 9 Concluding Claims

- Notate the author's concluding claim. Note within the margins of your text if the author's introduction argument parallel's the conclusion argument. If the author deviates in any way or places a condition on the introduction claim, then note this in the margin of your text and in your paper.