

Essay #2: Analyzing Sources

Your Assignment

The author of *The Humble Argument* states, “When you look for evidence with a mind that’s already made up, you tend to accept the facts that support your idea and reject everything else. You become entrenched in the ideas you started with Instead, make [your] search for evidence your own personal mission to find the best answer available” (Humble 73). For this essay, you will choose a source from a list of options to analyze and evaluate. Your starting question should be “Is this a credible source of information?” To answer this question you should do the following: (1) identify the claim (thesis) and supporting ideas in the article, (2) evaluate the support—including extending your research to additional sources that can inform your understanding of the topic, (3) draw a conclusion about the overall reliability and credibility of the article, and (4) present your findings in an essay.

Research, Analysis, and Developing Your Claim

To answer your starting question, “Is this a credible source of information?” you should answer the following questions:

- What is its claim and what is its support?
- How current is this information and its supporting sources?
- How reliable is this information and its supporting sources?
- What authority/credibility does this author have?
- What authority/credibility do its supporting sources have?
- From what point of view is this written? Is there slanted language? Evidence of bias?
- How does this information fit in with other reliable and credible sources on the topic?
- How effective and appropriate are its appeals to logic, emotion, and character?

NOTE: Find important resources for conducting your analysis on pp. 155-156 in *The Chemeketa Handbook* and “Ch. 4: Consider the Evidence” from *The Humble Argument*.

The conclusion you reach will be the basis for your claim, and it should answer your starting question: “Is this a credible source of information?” Ultimately, your claim should offer your readers an insight into the article you picked and its value as a tool for research. You should include your claim (thesis statement) in the introduction of your essay.

Other Considerations

- At the beginning of your essay, you should include a summary of the article to orient your readers.
- In addition to quotes or paraphrases you may use from the article you analyze, you should include quotes or paraphrases from at least three other sources that help inform your judgement about whether the article you are analyzing is a reliable and credible source of information.
- Your essay should be approximately 4 pages in length, typed and double-spaced.
- Your paper should include correct MLA documentation and formatting, including in-text citations and a Works Cited page.