

## Argument Analysis: Evidence

When making an argument, writers and speakers will often draw on evidence. Citing evidence—which can take the form of studies, research, statistics, graphs, facts and figures—brings credibility and authenticity to an argument.

The use of evidence may encourage readers to see the writer as informed and considered in their understanding of an issue, creating the perception of reliability. The tone of a piece of writing doesn't necessarily have to be logical to use evidence, even writers who adopt a highly emotive approach to making their argument may draw on evidence.

In addition to the evidence itself, writers and speakers often exploit the credibility of the source of evidence. When evidence comes from an authoritative source, readers might be more likely to accept the evidence and the writer's overall contention.

### Evidence in action

**Activity:** Read the following opinion piece, identify persuasive techniques, including evidence, and explain the effect they may have on the intended audience.

## Game over for video games and violence

Scarlet Briggs, March 18, 2020.

1 The American Psychological Association recently declared there is no evidence to suggest that violent video games cause violent behaviour. The resolution, which was published earlier this year, suggests that violence is a complex social problem that stems from a range of factors.

Finally, one of the world's peak psychological institutions has admitted what geeks, nerds and gamers have been trying to tell you for years: playing *Grand Theft Auto* for hours on end won't turn you into a homicidal maniac. In fact, playing video games with your friends has been linked to a range of pro-social outcomes.

2 The case against violent video games has always been a bit sketchy. When it was released in the early eighties, the arcade game *Space Invaders* was blamed for delinquent behaviour. Critics claimed that children would resort to theft and blackmail to satisfy their addiction to the game. In the United Kingdom, MP George Foulkes proposed a bill called 'Control of Space Invaders and Other Electronic Games'. In his speech to parliament, Foulkes 3 quoted a woman whose absurdly claimed that her son undertook a 'Jekyll and Hyde change' when he played the game. In 1997, the driving simulator *Carmageddon* inspired a backlash when players were awarded points

4 for mowing down pixelated pedestrians. The controversy turned out to be a storm in a teacup. In the UK, where the game was initially banned, it was eventually released uncut.

The notion that video games cause violent behaviour just isn't logical. *Farmville* doesn't cause random acts of agriculture. *Minecraft* hasn't led to a spate of sandcastles. And *Red Dead Redemption* won't make commit a daring train heist. Probably.

5 In his 2013 meta-analysis of twenty-five years of research into the effect of violent video games, researcher Christopher J Ferguson concluded that research simply doesn't support the idea that video games are a public health risk.

6 Likewise, researchers such as Professor Henry Jenkins, have demonstrated how children and teenagers use video games to connect with their peers and form online communities where they create content and mentor each other.

7 Video gaming events like Pax Australia illustrate the sheer joy and excitement that video games bring to people's lives. The thousands of enthusiastic, costumed gamers who congregate at these events are all the evidence you need that it's game over for tired old arguments about video games and violence.

## Argument Analysis: Game over for video games and violence

Read the article 'Game over for video games and violence'. Identify the issue, contention, audience and tone of the piece. Identify the persuasive techniques in the piece and explain the effect they are intended to have on the audience.

**Issue:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contention:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Audience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tone:** \_\_\_\_\_

#	Technique	Effect
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