

ARGUMENT PARAGRAPH

Name : _____

We can put the *debatable claim* and *evidence* together in a paragraph to form a persuasive argument.

Year-round school improves students' academic achievement. Because students have multiple breaks throughout the year, they experience less academic burnout. They have frequent opportunities to refresh and restart their learning experience. Year-round schools have lower drop-out rates (2%) than traditional schools (5%) (StatisticBrain.com). In addition, one study of six elementary schools, three on traditional calendars and three on year-round schedules, found positive effects of year-round education. The sample of students in the year-round schools posted overall test-scores that were higher than students at the schools with traditional calendars (*Education Week*). Not only do students at year-round schools do better throughout the year, but they also retain more of their knowledge and skills over the summer. I myself forgot fewer of my math skills over the summer because my summer break was so short, thanks to year-round school. The experts agree. A review of 39 studies confirmed summertime learning loss in students who attend schools with traditional calendars: test scores drop over summer vacation (Cooper, et al., 1996).

Challenge Questions: What order is the evidence in? Give the evidence type numbers from the previous page (#1 - #5) in the order that they appear in the paragraph above.

Why put the evidence in this order? Would another order of the evidence work just as well or better? Explain.

You Try!

Provide two pieces of evidence to support the debatable claim:

Year-round school improves students' academic achievement.

Your Personal Experience

Reasons

Name That Evidence Type!

Instructions:

1. Read the evidence below that addresses the claim.
2. Assign a label to each piece of evidence: personal experience, reasons, confirmed facts, statistics, or expert research.

DEBATABLE CLAIM	
<i>Year-round school DOES NOT improve students' academic achievement.</i>	
Evidence Type?	EVIDENCE
	Year-round school and traditional schools are the same academically because they both require students to go to school for 180 days per year.
	Bradley McMillan, from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, examined achievement differences between year-round and traditional-calendar students using data for more than 345,000 North Carolina public school students. He found that achievement in year-round schools was no higher than in traditional schools (<i>Education Week</i>).
	I get really tired attending year-round school. Because we don't have an extended summer break when I can go to camp or play sports or relax with my friends, it just seems like I'm in school endlessly.
	In Salt Lake City, Utah, of the district's elementary year-round schools, only 50% made Adequate Yearly Progress on standardized tests last year. Eighty percent of the traditional calendar elementary schools made Adequate Yearly Progress (<i>Deseret News</i>).
	The year-round calendar, with its multiple 3-week breaks, offers more chances for students to forget concepts and skills than a traditional school calendar with one long summer break.

Challenge Questions: Which pieces of evidence did you find most persuasive? How come?

This evidence directly contradicts the evidence about year-round school from the previous lesson. What does that tell you about arguments?