**DEFINITIONS**

**Claim:** A debatable statement

**Evidence:** Any factual information presented to support a claim.

**Reasoning:** Key link in your argument that explains how your evidence helps prove your claim.

 

**Reasoning is the “glue” that connects your evidence (chair legs) to your claim (chair seat).** Reasoning holds your argument together, just like the glue holds together the parts of a chair.

**Reasoning**

**Glue**

Claim

Evidence

Evidence

Evidence

Evidence

**EXAMPLES**

**Claim:** Spinach is better for you than chocolate.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence** | **Reasoning**  |
| Chocolate has caffeine in it, but spinach does not. | Too much caffeine is shown to have negative effects on health, so spinach is a healthier choice than chocolate because it’s caffeine-free. |

**Complete Argument (Claim + Evidence + Reasoning):** Spinach is better for you than chocolate, because chocolate has caffeine, which can have negative effects on health, and spinach is caffeine-free.

**STRONG REASONING CHECKLIST**

Make sure your reasoning does the following:

* **Clearly and fully explains how the evidence connects to the claim.**
	+ Reasoning is *not* just restating the evidence in different words!
* **Makes connections explicit (openly stated).**
	+ Doesn’t assume the reader knows or believes certain things.
* **Is precise about what the evidence says about the claim.**
	+ Doesn’t overstate things, or draw too big a conclusion.
* **Avoids generalizations and stereotypes.**
* **Speaks to the audience and what the audience might care about.**

**What Are the Elements of Strong Reasoning?**

An argument contains strong reasoning if it:

* + Eg, “Wealthy people only care about money.”
* “Speaks” to the audience, connects to what the audience might care about.