Claims, Counterclaims, & Rebuttals!

Think about a recent argument you were in.
What was the point you were trying to make?
What’s a claim?

- A claim is an *arguable statement*—
  - the claim shares your opinion and can be argued one way or another.

- For example:
  - Students should be allowed to chew gum at school.
  - There are two sides to this issue and I could argue that chewing gum at school is a good or bad idea!
1. There is one main claim for your whole essay,
   - in the introductory paragraph (also called a thesis)
   - EX: Students should be allowed to chew gum

2. Reasons for your main claim are woven into your body paragraphs (3 prongs/points).
   - Gum can help you focus
   - If students could chew gum they’d be less stressed
   - Gum can improve your mood and lead to students being nicer to each other.
What is a counterclaim?

- This is what your audience may say to disagree with you. You need to address your audiences concerns so you can refute them! To do this well you MUST know your audience!!!

For Example:

- My teacher may say: Gum may cause a distraction if you chew it loudly
- My principal may say: Gum causes messes that take too much of our custodian’s time and makes our school look bad.
How do I respond to the counterclaim?

With a rebuttal!

- The rebuttal is the “comeback”

- How will you shoot down their disagreement and bring them back to “your side” to see your vision and why you are correct.

- For example:
  - If students weren’t afraid of being caught, they wouldn’t feel the need to stick gum to desks to hide it from their teachers.
Sentence Starters!

**COUNTERARGUMENT**
- “Some people may argue that...” OR “May people believe that...”
- “A possible concern regarding this point is...” OR “It is often thought that...”
- “A common counterpoint is often...”
- “Those who believe... say that...”
- “Those on the other side of the issue may say that...”

**REBUTTAL**
- “This may be an understandable concern, however...”
- “This argument is wrong because...”
- “Although some people think... others understand...”
- “The evidence, however, overwhelmingly supports the argument that...”