

Argument-Centered Education -- Critique Builder

MODEL: SOCCER IS NOT BEST

Argumentative Position (the position that you are critiquing)	Argumentative Counter-Position (the position that your counter-claim supports)
Soccer is not the best sport in the world.	Soccer may be the best sport in the world.
Argumentative Claim (the claim that you are critiquing)	Argumentative Counter-Claim (the claim that your critique supports)
Soccer has long stretches of scorelessness, which makes it too unexciting to be the best sport.	Soccer is not too scoreless to be the best sport in the world.
Evidence (evidence that supports the argument you are critiquing)	Critique of Evidence
<p>In 1900 the average number of goals in a World Cup soccer game was 4.6. By 2010, that number had fallen to 2.4. "This is a worrying trend. Due to advances in defensive strategies, it is possible that we may witness goals dying out altogether" (Chris Anderson, professor of statistics, Cornell U., Slate.com, May 13, 2013).</p>	<p>(1) There are two isolated data points named in the evidence. The number of goals in soccer may have been going up and down throughout that period. These statistics do not prove a downward trend in goals. (2) Since it is a competition and a game, it is very unlikely for the average number of goals to ever dip below 2. Both teams have to score a goal to have a chance to win the game, so they will have maximal incentive to score at least one goal. (3) Goals are one metric for measuring excitement, but a better piece of data would be "scoring chances," since each of those generate excitement, even if the goal-tender blocks the scoring chance. Their evidence actually includes the wrong data.</p>
Reasoning (reasoning that supports the argument you are critiquing)	Critique of Reasoning
<p>This statistical evidence comes from the most prestigious and important soccer competition and reveals an almost 50% reduction in the number of goals in today's game. It is fair to conclude that the average soccer game is won 2 - 1 or 2 - 0. Scoring is too closely connected to the excitement a sport generates for this fact to be dismissed. Soccer observers sit through nearly three hours to watch only two or three goals; less than one per hour of watching time. The game is simply too slow from a scoring standpoint to ever be called the world's greatest game.</p>	<p>(1) Scoring isn't the key metric for excitement or level of interest in a sport. Scoring <i>chances</i> generate excitement, even if a team doesn't score. (2) All of the viewers and fans of soccer around the world obviously do not agree with the warrant that their side is using to make scoring in a sport so important. (3) All sports, including soccer, include defense as a factor of primary importance. A lot of people find defensive play in soccer and other sports very exciting. (4) U.S. sports fans clearly do not measure a sport on the basis of how much scoring there is. Baseball has far less scoring, for instance, than basketball, but historically baseball ("America's pastime") has been more popular. Football gives arbitrary numbers to its scoring (6 points, 3, 2, or 1 point) and no one seems to comment on that. Scoring by itself is of small importance, if any at all, in how fans react to a sport.</p>