

2 Practice the Skill

By practicing the skill of analyzing the structure of arguments, you will improve your study and test-taking abilities, especially as they relate to the GED® Reasoning Through Language Arts Test. Study the table below. Then answer the question that follows.

a This author “sandwiches” evidence between the claim and conclusion. Evidence might include responses to opposing views or support for smaller claims related to the main claim.

b An author might use a pro/con structure to discuss buying a certain computer. There might be pros, such as more memory, and cons, such as high price. In the conclusion, the author might make a recommendation.

Structure	Description
Traditional “sandwich” structure	The author begins with an introduction that usually ends in a claim. The author then provides reasons and evidence to support the claim. The author ends with a conclusion that could include a call to action.
Pro/con structure	The author lists the positives (pros) and negatives (cons) related to a claim. This structure is effective when the author wants to acknowledge the drawbacks of a position or to suggest that a particular solution might not work in every situation or for everyone.
Refutation/proof structure	The author begins by referring to an opposing viewpoint or claim and stating that this claim is false or inaccurate. The author then provides evidence and reasons supporting his or her viewpoint. This structure is especially effective when an author’s claim is that another claim is inaccurate.
Order of importance	The author states a claim and then lists evidence in order of effectiveness. The author might start with the strongest evidence and move to the weakest, or vice versa. This structure is most effective when evidence or reasons are not equally convincing.

TEST-TAKING TECH

Before you click to submit an answer, reread the question and all four answer choices. Doing so will help you catch important information you might have missed.

1. If a scientist wanted to argue that another scientist’s conclusions were inaccurate, which structure would **best** support his or her ideas?
 - A. traditional “sandwich” structure
 - B. pro/con structure
 - C. refutation/proof structure
 - D. order of importance

★ Spotlighted Item: **FILL-IN-THE-BLANK**

DIRECTIONS: Read the passage. Then fill in your answer in the box below.

ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

- 1 Antibiotic resistance occurs when antibiotics no longer work against disease-causing bacteria. These infections are difficult to treat and can mean longer lasting illnesses, more doctor visits or extended hospital stays, and the need for more expensive and toxic medications. Some resistant infections can even cause death.
- 2 Although experts are working to develop new antibiotics and other treatments to keep pace with antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria, infectious organisms can adapt quickly. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria will continue to be a global health concern—and using antibiotics wisely is important for preventing their spread.

From the MayoClinic.com article ANTIBIOTICS: MISUSE PUTS YOU AND OTHERS AT RISK, accessed 2013

2. What does paragraph 1 provide to help readers understand paragraph 2 and the claim within it?

DIRECTIONS: Read the passage, read each question, and choose the **best** answer.

PROBLEMS WITH ANTIBIOTICS

- 1 If antibiotics are used too often for things they can't treat—like colds, flu or other viral infections—not only are they of no benefit, they become less effective against the bacteria they're intended to treat.
 - 2 Not taking antibiotics exactly as prescribed also leads to problems. For example, if you take an antibiotic for only a few days—instead of the full course—the antibiotic may wipe out some, but not all, of the bacteria. The surviving bacteria become more resistant and can be spread to other people. When bacteria become resistant to first line treatments, the risk of complications and death is increased. ...
 - 3 When you misuse antibiotics, you help create resistant microorganisms that can cause new and hard-to-treat infections. That's why the decisions you make about using antibiotics—unlike almost any other medicine you take—have far-reaching consequences. Be responsible in how you use antibiotics to protect your health and that of your family, neighbors and community.
3. Which claim do paragraphs 1 and 2 **best** support?
 - A. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria are a threat.
 - B. Antibiotics must be used wisely.
 - C. Antibiotics may cause serious complications.
 - D. Antibiotics provide only partial cures.
 4. The structure of this passage helps the author build an argument based on the assumption that
 - A. doctors require more funding to research antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
 - B. infections are the greatest health crisis the world currently faces.
 - C. organisms that adapt quickly are generally very dangerous.
 - D. misuse of antibiotic medications is a significant problem.

From the MayoClinic.com article ANTIBIOTICS: MISUSE PUTS YOU AND OTHERS AT RISK, accessed 2013