

Central Claim & the Larger Idea: The “So What?” in Your Argument

As essential part of writing a successful argumentative paper is to explain to your reader what the significance or importance of your argument is.

Great arguments try to answer the “so what” questions that readers may have in their minds. Not every successful central claim has to be this long or complex; however, sometimes you can make your central claim more focused and persuasive by trying to respond to some of the “so what” questions your readers might have. Even trying to address one or two of these “so what” questions can help strengthen your central claim.

Imagine that your reader is skeptical about having to read your paper and may be thinking, “Why is this important for me to read and understand?” or “So what, what is the significance of this in the story? Why is this important for me to think about?”

When creating a central claim you want to try to answer your own question to what you’ve read explaining why that is important to you, to your reader and to the text.

- 1) What the most important idea about this reading. Why do you think so?
- 2) What is a very confusing aspect of this story and why is it important to consider about this reading?
- 3) What particular idea do I want to focus on in this reading and why?
- 4) Is there something in this reading that angers or upsets me? What it is and why is it upsetting?
- 5) Is the reading connected to you in a meaningful way? What is it and why is it significant?

As you begin to answer these questions, keep asking yourself the same question: Why is this important to the reading? What do your answers help you to realize or come to understand about the text that you did not understand about the reading when you first read it.