



Purpose Target

Task: Use the bullseye below to define the central, secondary, and tertiary purposes of your argument.

Instructions:

Purpose Verbs/ Phrases
Express / Reflect / Inquire / Explore / Inform / Explain/ Analyze / Interpret/ Take a stand / Evaluate / Judge/ Propose a solution / Seek common ground ¹

1. Consider the main purpose of your argument. (Use the list of verbs and phrases above to help you! Your purpose should begin with a verb.)
2. Write this main purpose in the center of the target.
3. Think about other purposes you might have – things you’d like to accomplish with your argument that aren’t the biggest, primary purpose.
4. Write these in the outsider circle.

What’s Next:

Your purpose target can help you throughout the argument-building process. Here are some ways you might use it:

- Consult this as you draft your argument to help you “keep the main thing the main thing.”
- Use this to help you decide what evidence to include and what to leave out.
- Return to your target when your argument is feeling confusing or unfocused to you as you build it.
- Give this to a partner and have them look at your argument and complete this – what feels like the main purpose to someone else? What other purposes are accomplished through your argument? Then, use this feedback to adjust!
- Revise your argument using your target. Have you accomplished your main purpose? Is your main purpose still the focus of the argument you’ve built?

¹ Bean, Chappell, & Gilliam, 2011

