Structuring Arguments
Aristotle believed “syllogism” was crucial in an argument. He argued that this kind of tight reasoning was important when trying to persuade an audience.

– For example…

- *Shellfish makes me ill.*

- *Lobster is a kind of shellfish*

- *Lobster will make me ill.*
A Good Argument...

1. Begins with a **CLAIM** – called the PRIMARY CLAIM
   - Claims are debatable and controversial statements or assertions that you hope to prove.
   - Syllogisms sometimes make for stronger primary claims
   - Claims can be created by posing a question…and then answering it.

   For example...

   Should North Farmington change its parking policies for students?
   **North Farmington should change its parking policies.**

   Is this a claim? **Yes**

   Is this an **effective claim?**

   Let’s see…

   (Use your “THESIS” handout to test this claim.)
How Do I Begin?

Edmund Burke, an author, orator, political theorist, and philosopher from the late 1700s, once said “the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” In a well organized, carefully constructed essay, [defend, refute, or qualify] this quote. 

[DISAGREE] 

[AGREE] Let's talk about this.
How Do I Begin?

• Dissect the **PROMPT**

• Examine the **verbs**
  – **Define** important ideas and concepts
  – Turn the prompt into a **question** you must answer.
  – Use the **REASONS – SO – SINCE** method.

  REASON          SO
  SINCE
IMPORTANT

• **DO NOT** **OVER-THINK** **THE CLAIM**

Write down the claim – set it to the side – and then organize the rest of your essay.

Good writers write introductions when it feels “right” – and sometimes this is when the paper is nearly finished.