

**Evaluating an Argument****CCLS**

**RI.7.8:** Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

Theme: *Energy and Our Future*

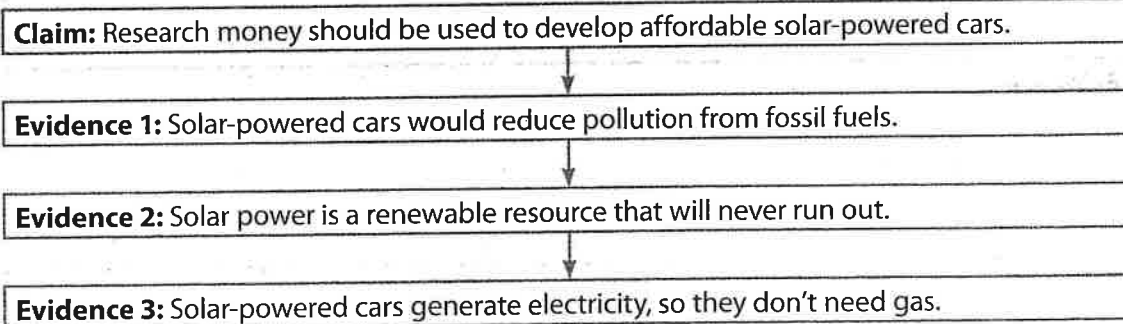
When you hear the word *argument*, do you picture people involved in some kind of shouting match? That may be what some arguments look like, but in writing, an **argument** is a text that explains why an author's position on an issue is valid.

When building an argument, a writer makes one or more **claims**, or statements he or she believes to be true. Then the writer backs up each claim with **evidence**, or information that supports the claim. Part of figuring out the strength of an argument is determining whether there is enough evidence to support the claim—and also whether the evidence does, in fact, act as support at all.

**Read the following from an argument about solar-powered cars. First, circle the claim. Next, underline evidence. Finally, cross out any information that does not support the claim.**

Dedicating research money to the development of affordable solar-powered cars would be a wise investment. First, solar cars would help end our dependence on fossil fuels like oil and coal, which contribute to the pollution of our atmosphere. In addition, solar power is a renewable resource; unlike fossil fuels, it will never run out. Solar cars would also help the consumer save money. Panels attached to cars can collect sunlight and turn it into electricity, so no one would ever need to buy another tank of gas. Finally, solar-powered cars would also come in all the same colors as gas-powered cars.

**Read the chart below to see how the author constructed the argument.**



To trace the reasoning behind an argument, identify the author's claims and evidence. Then judge whether the author provides enough evidence and whether it is relevant, or actually supports each claim. If the ideas have a sound basis in logic, then the argument is valid.

# Practice Article

## Should a Bad Call Change Baseball?

roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/06/03/should-a-bad-call-change-baseball

### The Opinion Pages

The Commissioner Is Wrong ] stop + jot -



what does the title tell us about the author's argument?

**Buzz Bissinger** is the author of "Friday Night Lights" and "Three Nights in August," which is about the strategy of baseball through the eyes of Tony La Russa, the St. Louis Cardinal manager. ] stop + jot - why is the reader given this information?

I don't blame umpire Jim Joyce for the call that deprived<sup>1</sup> Detroit Tigers' pitcher Armando Galarraga of a perfect game<sup>2</sup> Wednesday night. Suspect calls are made all the time in baseball; the human eye is not equipped for such decisions when the difference between out and safe may be a hundredth of a millimeter. Just watch any major league game.

Instead of obfuscating<sup>3</sup>, Joyce did come out and say he had made a mistake, probably because the call was so horrendous<sup>4</sup> — I still give him credit for that. Nor do I think there should be instant replay. If that was the case, most baseball games would last longer than England versus India in cricket.

The person I give no credit to is Bud Selig<sup>5</sup>. The commissioner should have reversed the call. The outcome of the game was not an issue and a perfect game, one of the rarest events in all of sports (at least up until this season), was at stake.

Some may argue that Selig would be setting a precedent<sup>6</sup> counter<sup>7</sup> to the game's traditions. But sometimes there are exceptions, just like the rampant<sup>8</sup> steroid use that was commonly accepted despite its illegality.

→ Human beings make errors.

Selig cited inherent flaws in any situation involving the human element. But what really worried him was the possible backlash of major league umpires, the most prickly group in all of sports with their endless grudges of under-appreciation.

### \* Footnotes -

1. deprived - took away
2. perfect game - term in baseball used when a pitcher allows no hits
3. obfuscating - acting confused or clueless
4. horrendous - awful; horrible
5. Bud Selig - Commissioner, or leader, of Major League Baseball
6. precedent - an example being set
7. counter - go against
8. rampant - constant + common

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Author's Perspective in Baseball

Article: Practice Independent

Directions: close read the article. make sure you answer the Stop & Jots AND add your own questions & comments. Fill in the graphic organizer when you are done close reading.



2. What is the author's purpose in writing?

Persuade

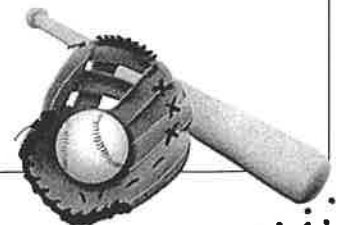
Inform

Entertain

3. What is the author's perspective about "the worst call in baseball?"

4. Copy one piece of evidence from the article the author uses to support his perspective.  
(Don't forget your " " marks.)

5. Is this author's perspective reliable, or trustworthy? Why or Why not?



# Independent Article

## Should a Bad Call Change Baseball?

roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/06/03/should-a-bad-call-change-baseball

### The Opinion Pages

#### What's Really Fair?



**Jim Bouton**, a former Yankee pitcher, is the author of "Ball Four" and has just finished writing "Ball Four: The Musical." ] Stop + Jot - Does this make the author's perspective reliable?

I never believed a game was lost because of a bad call by an umpire. Games were lost because the loser didn't build a sufficient margin to overcome the inevitable missed calls, part of any game. (Note: Players make far more mistakes than umpires).

In fact, I've enjoyed the occasional classic missed call that has had an impact on Playoff and World Series games. The teams (but not the fans) get over it, no real harm is done and the participants have many years of good banquet material.

This is why I'm not in favor of expanding video replays in baseball. As Scar, in "The Lion King," is famous for saying: "Life's not fair." ] Stop + Jot - why does the author include this line?

It can also be needlessly cruel, as with the obvious bad call on what would have been the last out of Armando Galarraga's perfect game. But, in this case, the call should be reversed by the baseball Commissioner, precisely because it does not have an impact on an important game, and there was nothing the pitcher could have done to protect against it. Galarraga was already perfect, including his great play covering first base on what would have otherwise been a hit.

This may be the most unlikely missed call in Perfect Game history. Normally a debatable call in a game like that will favor the pitcher. Like everyone else in the ballpark, (except Fenway where all bets are off), the umpires don't mind being part of a Perfect Game. After all, everyone needs stories to tell.

That may explain a questionable call by umpire Babe Pinelli in Don Larson's Perfect World Series game in 1956. In the last of the ninth at Yankee Stadium, with two outs and a two-strike count on Dale Mitchell, Larson threw a pitch that, on film, appears high and outside. Pinelli, who was also working his last game before retiring, hollered "Strike threee!" and Larsen had his Perfect Game. Mitchell is seen arguing that the pitch was high and outside. Pinelli is alleged to have replied, "Not today, it wasn't."

Stop + Jot - why does the author include this information

The missed call should be reversed in the best interest of the game, if not the mental health of the umpire who will have to live with this the rest of his life. There are certainly enough questionable baseball records as a result of [performance enhancing drugs]. We could use a little fairness for a change.

Stop + Jot - Both articles we've read talk about steroids, or performance enhancing drugs. Why is this included in an article about this bad call?

#### Footnotes -

1. sufficient margin - they didn't have a big enough lead anyways
2. favor - help

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Author's Perspective in Baseball

Article: Practice

Independent

Directions: close read the article. make sure you answer the Stop & Jots AND add your own questions & comments. Fill in the graphic organizer when you are done close reading.



2. What is the author's purpose in writing?

Persuade

Inform

Entertain

3. What is the author's perspective about "the worst call in baseball?"

4. Copy one piece of evidence from the article the author uses to support his perspective.  
(Don't forget your " " marks.)

5. Is this author's perspective reliable, or trustworthy? Why or Why not?

