Preparing an academic argument

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What is argument?

**Popular Usage**

**Academic usage**

- To bring evidence, to convict, to prove.
- To afford good ground for inferring.
- To show weighty reasons for supposing.
- To bring forward reasons concerning a matter in debate.
- To make statements or adduce facts for the purpose of establishing or refuting a proposition.
What is argument?

A claim

Reason/persuasion

Evidence
What is argument?

1. **Thesis**: key idea, theory, concept
2. **Evidence**: (convincing/reliable) to support thesis.
3. **Evaluation**: testing of evidence
4. **Counter-arguments**: on the other hand
5. **Examples**: (positive and negative)
6. **Conclusion**: therefore, this shows that.....
Are leaders born or made? Critically evaluate the literature, integrating theory with practical examples.

**Great Man Theories (B)**

**Trait Theories (B)**

(Carlyle 19th C, & others) combination of personal charisma, intelligence, wisdom, or Machiavellianism

(Galton 19th C, & others) a set of traits common to all leaders

‘Personality era’ (Van Seters & Field 1990)
Are leaders born or made? Critically evaluate the literature, integrating theory with practical examples.

- **Great Man Theories (B)**
- **Trait Theories (B)**
- **Behavioural Theories (B/M?)**

People can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation - by developing behavioural traits (Griffin, Skivington & Moorhead 1987).
Are leaders born or made? Critically evaluate the literature, integrating theory with practical examples.

- Great Man Theories (B)
- Trait Theories (B)
- Behavioural Theories (B/M?)
- Situational Theories (B/M?)

Effectiveness as a leader contingent on circumstances in which they find themselves (Bass 1981) ‘Right place-right time’ (Hook 1943)
Are leaders born or made? Critically evaluate the literature, integrating theory with practical examples

- Great Man Theories (B)
- Trait Theories (B)
- Behavioural Theories (B/M?)
- Situational Theories (B/M?)
- Contingency Theories (B/M?)

No leadership style is best in all situations. Success depends upon a number of variables (Fiedler 1967; Evans 1970; Vroom & Yetton 1973)
Are leaders born or made? Critically evaluate the literature, integrating theory with practical examples.

- Great Man Theories (B)
- Trait Theories (B)
- Behavioural Theories (B/M?)
- Situational Theories (B/M?)
- Contingency Theories (B/M?)
- Transformation Theories (M?)

Leaders motivate followers by emphasizing the importance of task outcomes, thus generating greater commitment (Bass 1985; 1996).
Are leaders born or made? Critically evaluate the literature, integrating theory with practical examples.

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- Situational Theories (B/M?)
- Contingency Theories (B/M?)
- Transformation Theories (M?)
- Charismatic Theories (B/M?)

Leaders must articulate an innovative strategic vision, showing sensitivity to member needs, displaying unconventional behaviour, taking personal risks, and showing sensitivity to the environment (Conger and Kanungo 1988, 1998).
Are leaders born or made? Critically evaluate the literature, integrating theory with practical examples

- Great Man Theories (B)
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- Behavioural Theories (B/M?)
- Situational Theories (B/M?)
- Contingency Theories (B/M?)
- Transformation Theories (M?)
- Charismatic Theories (B/M?)
Constructing an argument
This essay will argue that leaders are...

...born, not made
...made, not born
...mostly born, but also made
...mostly made, but also born
...some made, some born
...neither born nor made
...born or made? It’s impossible to say
...born or made? Is not a valid question
Qn. What or who caused the financial crisis of 2008?

...the financiers
...poor governance
...the macroeconomic backdrop
...the European banks
...conflicts of interest
...too big to fail.
Financiers

Too big to fail

Conflicts of interest

European banks

Poor governance

Macroeconomics