Claim = the argument you are trying to prove

Evidence = the facts that will support and help prove your claim

Commentary = the glue that holds this argument together

Commentary is an explanation in your own words. It explains HOW the evidence supports your claim. With commentary, your argument is personalized. You have taken someone else’s idea (since your evidence is likely to be a quote taken from someone else’s work), and you have made it your own. You have shown how it fits into your argument.

You’ll (hopefully) be creating lots of insightful commentary this year, and today is your first day to practice!

ASSIGNMENT: Interview a classmate with whom you are paired. While speaking with him/her, listen for a pithy statement. Write a paragraph in which the pithy statement becomes the evidence in your argument. So, you’ll start with the evidence and work backward to the claim. Then you’ll have to add your commentary to make it complete. This is NOT a biographic paragraph about your partner.

Pithy – adj – concise, succinct, to the point

Paragraph:

Intro (to provide context)

Claim

Evidence (use your partner’s pithy statement)

Commentary
Here’s a sample, created by Yours Truly!

Christine is a 9th grade teacher who moved around a lot as a kid, which really shaped who she is – an open-minded person, respectful of others’ values. People who travel around and expose themselves to new cultures and different ways of doing things are able to adjust more easily to life and the many different kinds of people who comprise it. “When you move a lot, you see a lot,” Christine reasons. Change of scenery and introduction to new ideas isn’t terrifying or something to be avoided. It’s exciting and should be apart of everyone’s life. How gratifying it must be to live life embracing new and different people and ideas, rather than fearing and avoiding them.