**What is a researched argument?**

[MUSIC PLAYING]

When you hear the word argument, you might think of a shouting match. That's definitely not what an academic argument is like. Instead of using your vocal chords, you got to use your head. A researched argument based on reason and evidence is a balanced examination of something that is important to you. You ask a question about a debatable issue, position yourself in the debate, present evidence as support, and respond to objections.

Even though there's a disagreement in a debate, your researched argument isn't combative. The early part of your argument should present the context or background of the debate, plus your position or thesis. Tell your audience what's at stake, where you stand, and why they should care.

Arguments rely on evidence. And to get good, relevant evidence to support your position, you got to do some digging. This is where the research part comes in. You want to look for a variety of evidence-- facts, statistics, expert opinion, and more from reliable sources, both in favor of and in opposition to your position. This way, you respond to the arguments of others and use their arguments to support, counter, or advance your own.

A researched argument often appeals to a specific audience. Consider what combination of evidence will work best for your target audience. You can appeal to your audience's sense of logic and reasoning or logos. You might also appeal to your audience's beliefs and values with emotion or pathos. Or it may work to appeal to your audience with fairness and credibility or ethos. Using a combination of all three approaches can help you convince even the most skeptical reader.

Speaking of skeptical readers, remember that reasonable people might disagree with the position you take in an argument. When you acknowledge and address counterarguments, positions that are opposed to your own, you actually strengthen your own argument by coming off as reasonable and well-informed. In fact, the most appealing and persuasive arguments attempt to reach some common ground with the audience.

And boom, you're ready to write your researched argument, just remember to hit upon those four key features--context, thesis, evidence, and counterarguments. And you'll be able to hold your own in any debate. That beats shouting any day.