

**READINGS OF STUDENTS.
SPECIMENS OF
ARGUMENTATION:
MODERN**

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Readings of Students. Specimens of Argumentation: Modern by George P. Baker

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Readings for Students

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OF
ARGUMENTATION

MODERN

COMPILED BY

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PREFACE.

THIS little book has been compiled to meet two needs that have arisen in the editor's experience with classes in Argumentative Composition at Harvard University and Wellesley College. The first need is for a small, inexpensive collection of specimens of argumentation, edited especially for classes in Argumentative Composition. Constantly students have asked: "Where can we find the speeches from which the illustrations in the lectures are drawn, and other arguments that illustrate the suggestions and the rules that have been given us?" The difficulty in referring such students to the existing collections of speeches and arguments has been of several kinds. To become really familiar with the necessary illustrations, with the speeches chosen, a student must own the book containing them, but the large collections are too expensive for most students. The smaller and cheaper books almost surely lack one of the speeches most desired by the instructor. To ask a student to read one illustration here, another there, is to put the speeches as a set beyond his purse, or if he is to look up all in some library, to make too great a demand on his time. Moreover, nearly all of the collections contain many specimens

of oratory famous, not for their power as arguments but for mere brilliancy of style or for the conditions under which they are given. Students browsing in such books unguided—as is the case in nearly all the collections—by any notes to point out what is the really great argumentative work and why it is great, are pretty sure to be attracted by what is clever and entertaining merely, rather than by what is structurally perfect and convincing in argument. It has seemed worth while, then, to select a half-dozen arguments in which students could find corroboration of the lecturers' words and further illustrations of them, and to edit these carefully with notes to show the condition under which the arguments were uttered; wherein their power lies; and whence it comes.

The editor has tried, also, in his selecting, to find material that should show to the beginner in Argumentative Composition what, often, he does not seem to understand, that argumentation is not a thing apart, confined to law courts, but has its important place in literary and scientific work. For this purpose, Lord Mansfield on the Evans case, the "Junius" letter, and Professor Huxley's lecture, are printed side by side.

The second need arose from a special feature of the work in Argumentative Composition at Harvard College that may require a word of explanation. All the prescribed argumentative writing at the college has greatly improved since a system of briefs preliminary to the written arguments was arranged. By this system a student makes an outline for his argumentative essay, consisting of introductory headings and of

the headings of the brief proper. The former summarize, as briefly as possible, the facts that must be made clear before the argument itself can begin; the latter are all phrased as reasons for the conclusion to be reached, and are carefully correlated by numbers and letters, so that the relations of the different parts, the structure as a whole, and the meaning at every point, shall be clear to a reader. These briefs, corrected by the instructors for structural or other faults, are returned to the students, who revise them in accordance with the written suggestions of the instructors, and make the revised briefs the bases of their "Forensics," so-called.

A class, before drawing briefs from its own material, is asked to make a brief of some masterpiece of argumentation, that it may learn what a brief is, and may recognize the careful structure that underlies all great argumentation. To provide material for this first brief of all has been a problem. As Mr. Johnston¹ has noted, modern public speaking is losing the careful structure that belonged to the orations of the past—just what the student of brief work needs to study. Therefore, much that the collections of speeches contain is unavailable for briefs. Nor must the selection be long, for in analyzing a long argument a student will get hopelessly involved. Finally, a student cannot be asked to buy a book to get the material for but one exercise of the year. The editor hopes that this compilation will meet these difficulties that have faced him each year when a class was studying the drawing of briefs. Three of the selections, Lord Mansfield's speech, the "Junius" letter, and Professor Huxley's

¹ American Orations.

lecture, are so marked in structure that to draw a brief from any one of them should not be too difficult a task for a beginner in Argumentative Composition. So brilliant, too, are all of them as arguments that the analysis necessary for the brief will in its results more than repay the student. That the beginner may see what a brief is and the way in which it may be drawn from an argument, the brief of Lord Chatham's speech and the original have been printed.

Because some of the speeches were to be used for briefs, it has several times been difficult, in the editing, to point out in detail the method by which the great effects are gained, without giving such an outline of the speech that a student, reading it, could have no further difficulty in making a brief of the speech. If in any place the analysis of a speech seems inadequate the fault should be attributed to this reason, for in several places it seemed wisest to leave to the student, guided by his instructor, detailed analysis of methods.

The editor hopes, then, that the work will be useful in three ways : as a fund of illustration for lectures on Argumentative Composition which a class may easily possess in common with its instructor ; as material for training in the drawing of briefs ; and for analyses by the class or the instructor, by the methods used in the notes, not merely for structure but also for persuasive methods and argumentative skill.

Though the first four selections are intended especially to bear on the drawing of briefs, Lord Erskine's speech on the handling of evidence, and Henry

Ward Beecher's speech on persuasion, all of these illustrate more than one idea, and in the book as a whole, the student should find illustrations for nearly all, if not all, of the rudimentary rules for argumentation.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.,
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GEO. P. BAKER.