**AP English Language and Composition Brassil**

**Preparing for an Argument**

**So, you’re giving substance and shape to “an argument.”  
Fundamentally, after reflecting on the matter at hand, you must decide “what” needs to be in** *YOUR* **argument.**

What’s at issue? What is the “matter at hand” here? What is controversial here? Remember: YOU are now “entering” a conversation that is already underway; the conversation around this issue or controversy has some kind of history-- a past. Perhaps it’s a conversation that’s been going on for ages or perhaps one that’s recently sprung into being. However long it’s been underway, it’s up to you to provide a context for the argument *YOU* are *NOW making*; account for and acknowledge what’s already been said about the issue. Begin to make the **link** between your argument and the ongoing conversation by clearly framing the issue. Source incorporation can prove useful as you begin, develop, or punctuate your argument.

Your argument the substantive, informed, and insightful remarks that you bring forward into the ongoing conversation as you represent your perspective and stance on the issue or matter at hand.

Ask questions as you prepare your debate points

√ Keeping your perspective (and your argument is, after all, about accounting for and developing your perspective) in mind, ask:

What needs to be said here?

What matters?

What counts?

What substantial factors associated with the various, important perspectives on the issue/matter under discussion call for your commentary?

This element of your argument invites additional source incorporation (not just naming the “other” positions (rebuttal) but providing commentary about these other positions as you develop your own case).

What does your audience need to know about your thinking on this matter?

What details, specifics, and other views explain, illustrate, and support (that is, *LINK* with) your thesis? Source incorporation (whether the sources are supplied or you harvest them yourself through research, reflection, etc.) helps strengthen those links.

What details (such as your personal knowledge, your life experiences, or your reading) distinguish your perspective from the perspectives of others who have entered this ongoing conversation?

What about the future?

What about what happens next?

What does your audience need to think or do as a result of your commentary?

What implications associated with this issue matter beyond the immediate circumstance? Given what you have had to say, how does this conversation “go forward” beyond the here and now? This is the “we’ll see” element of your argument.