

# DEVELOPING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING SKILLS ON SOCIAL ISSUES THROUGH THE TOULMIN ARGUMENTATION MODEL

**Lam Tran Son Ngoc Thien Chuong**  
An Giang University (VNU-HCM)

**Thông tin chung:**

Ngày nhận bài: 07/09/2025

Ngày phản biện: 10/09/2025

Ngày duyệt đăng: 05/12/2025

\*Tác giả chính:

ltsntchuong@agu.edu.vn

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.70879/CNN nkSnvu>

**Title:**

Phát triển kỹ năng tạo lập văn bản nghị luận xã hội cho học sinh trung học phổ thông qua mô hình lập luận Toulmin.

**Từ khóa:**

học sinh, kỹ năng, mô hình Toulmin, nghị luận xã hội, tạo lập văn bản.

**Keywords:**

Students, skills, Toulmin model, social argumentative writing, text composition.

**TÓM TẮT:** Trong dạy học Ngữ văn ở trường phổ thông hiện nay, việc rèn luyện kỹ năng viết văn nghị luận xã hội cho học sinh vẫn còn gặp nhiều hạn chế. Thực tế cho thấy, nhiều bài viết của học sinh còn thiếu chiêu sâu lập luận, lý lẽ chưa đủ sức thuyết phục, cấu trúc chưa rõ ràng và đặc biệt là ít thể hiện năng lực phản biện. Xuất phát từ thực trạng đó, nghiên cứu này đề xuất vận dụng Mô hình lập luận Toulmin như một giải pháp mang tính khoa học và khả thi nhằm khắc phục những tồn tại nêu trên. Với sáu thành tố cơ bản gồm: Luận điểm, bằng chứng, luận cứ, hỗ trợ, hạn định và phản bác, mô hình Toulmin đã chứng minh tính hiệu quả trong việc cung cấp một khung lý thuyết hệ thống, giúp học sinh hình thành tư duy lập luận có cơ sở, logic và chặt chẽ. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy, việc áp dụng mô hình này vào dạy học không chỉ giúp học sinh từng bước xây dựng văn bản nghị luận xã hội có tính thuyết phục cao mà còn rèn luyện tư duy phản biện và sáng tạo. Thông qua việc minh họa quy trình áp dụng bằng một đề bài cụ thể, nghiên cứu gop phần khẳng định ý nghĩa thực tiễn của mô hình Toulmin trong giảng dạy, đồng thời gợi mở hướng đổi mới phương pháp dạy viết ở trường phổ thông theo định hướng phát triển năng lực.

**ABSTRACT:** In the teaching of Literature at high schools today, the development of students' argumentative writing skills on social issues still faces many limitations. In reality, many students' essays lack depth in reasoning, present unconvincing arguments, show unclear structures, and, in particular, demonstrate little critical thinking—a key requirement of the 2018 General Education Curriculum. From this situation, the present study proposes the application of the Toulmin Argument Model as a scientific and feasible solution to overcome these shortcomings. With six fundamental components—Claim, Data, Warrant, Backing, Qualifier, and Rebuttal—the Toulmin Model has proven effective in providing a systematic theoretical framework that enables students to develop well-grounded, logical, and coherent arguments. The findings reveal that applying this model in teaching not only helps students gradually construct more persuasive argumentative essays on social issues but also fosters their critical and creative thinking. By illustrating the application process with a sample essay prompt, this study affirms the practical significance of the Toulmin Model in teaching, while also suggesting new directions for innovating the teaching of writing in high schools in line with competency-based education.

## 1. Introduction

Social commentary writing skills hold an important position in the high school literature curriculum, not only as a core requirement of the subject but also as an essential tool to help students express their viewpoints and engage with life issues using logical and persuasive arguments. According to the 2018 General

Education Program, the Vietnamese Language subject at the high school level aims to achieve the goal of "proficiently writing argumentative and explanatory texts (combining expressive methods and argumentative techniques), following the correct process, with personal opinions, ensuring logic and persuasiveness" [1]. Specifically, students need to meet the

requirement of "writing argumentative texts about a social issue, clearly presenting their viewpoints and a system of arguments; having a tight structure with an impressive introduction and conclusion; using persuasive reasoning and evidence that is accurate, reliable, appropriate, and complete," while also "knowing how to debate issues with opposing viewpoints; having an open-minded attitude and appropriate debate culture; being able to listen to and evaluate the content and form of presentations; and having an interest in expressing their own opinions and personality in debates" [1]. These requirements affirm that social essay writing not only trains students' logical thinking but also encourages them to actively engage with social issues, thereby contributing to the formation of responsible citizens.

However, practice shows that despite the high school literature program focusing on social argumentative writing, many students still struggle with writing; their work is often superficial, lacks depth in reasoning, and arguments are not well-structured; evidence is inappropriate; and they don't know how to critique and defend their viewpoints. Most of the articles are more emotional than scientifically reasoned. One of the main reasons stems from the teaching method for writing, which still leans toward literary appreciation, emphasizing formal correctness rather than guiding argumentation skills; it has not equipped students with a systematic and effective model for argumentation. Meanwhile, both globally and in Vietnam, research on the Toulmin model of argumentation has been quite widely implemented, primarily focusing on applying this model in essay writing instruction and developing logical thinking. While yielding some notable results, limitations remain, particularly regarding the scope of application and target audience.

At the international level, Rex et al. (2010) is one of the early studies to apply the Toulmin model in teaching logical reasoning and argumentative writing. The author focuses on correcting "flaws in grammar and style" [2] by organizing arguments tightly, and the results show a significant improvement in the quality

of student writing. However, this study primarily utilizes data from university students, does not consider long-term impacts, and has not been compared with other models, which limits its generalizability to high school students. Building on the experimental research direction, Özdemir (2018) conducted a study to verify the effectiveness of teaching the Toulmin model on the skill of constructing argumentative elements in dissertations. The research results show that "the majority of students have reached a partially successful level" [3] after the training process, with clear improvement in elements such as grounds, claim, and warrant, although rebuttal remains a weakness. Specifically, through quantitative measurement methods using pre-tests and post-tests, the study demonstrated significant progress, with the success rate for some factors increasing from under 20% to over 60%. Nevertheless, the study still has limitations, as the sample size only includes 33 students and lacks comparison with traditional teaching methods, leading to a lack of depth in the comparative analysis.

Based on this, Magalhães (2020) expanded the application of the Toulmin model to the field of teaching business communication to university students. The results show that this model "can be used to verify the soundness and completeness of arguments" [4] and can be effectively integrated with modern teaching methods, such as project-based learning, thereby helping students construct more persuasive arguments. However, this study is limited to the context of business major training, does not focus on high school students, and has not been applied to social commentary texts. Adding to this series of studies, Karbach (1987) introduced the Toulmin model as a practical tool for teaching essay writing at the university level, emphasizing that "the claim, its grounds, and its warrant" are core elements. Through specific examples like "Smoke is pouring from Ann's bedroom" leading to "Ann's bedroom is on fire," the author has clarified how to apply the model to arguments [5]. However, this study is more descriptive than experimental and has not yet been compared with other models such as Rogerian, which limits its

practical value.

## 2. Research Methods

This study was conducted using a theoretical research methodology, with a focus on analyzing, synthesizing, and systematizing domestic and international works related to the Toulmin argument model, writing pedagogy theories, and the Ministry of Education and Training's guidelines on the 2018 General Education Program for Vietnamese Language. This approach aims to build a solid scientific foundation, thereby demonstrating the suitability and applicability of the Toulmin model in teaching social argumentative writing in general education schools. Based on that theoretical foundation, the study models the teaching and learning process into a specific procedure with four steps: identifying the thesis, searching for data, constructing arguments, and anticipating rebuttals. This process not only helps clarify the operations teachers can use in organizing teaching and learning activities but also guides students on how to apply the Toulmin model logically, scientifically, and effectively in the process of text creation.

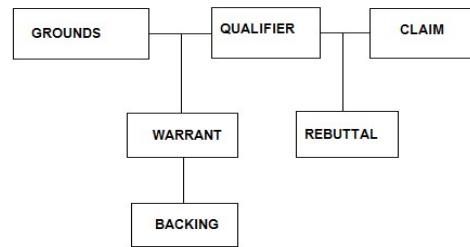
## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Overview of the Toulmin Argument Model

The Toulmin argument model was first proposed by Stephen Toulmin, a British philosopher, in his work *The Uses of Argument* (1958). Born in a context where analytical philosophy was seeking to move beyond the formalism and absolutism of Aristotle's syllogistic model, Toulmin brought a new theoretical framework that emphasized practicality, context, and persuasiveness in the process of argumentation. His uniqueness lies in shifting the focus from proving the absolute rightness or wrongness of an argument to considering its acceptability in each specific communication situation. In other words, instead of asserting an argument as "truth" or "fallacy," the Toulmin model is concerned with whether that argument is persuasive enough for the listener/reader in a given context.

The Toulmin model consists of six basic elements: claim, grounds, warrant, backing, qualifier, and rebuttal. This six-element

structure has helped to shorten The structure of the Toulmin model can be illustrated by the following diagram:



**Figure 1. Toulmin's Model of Argumentation [8]**

In Toulmin's structure, six elements form a cohesive and hierarchical argument:

- *Claim*: This is the central point of the entire argument, expressing what the writer or speaker wants to assert. The claim is directional because it determines the entire structure and direction of development of the remaining elements. An argument is considered strong when it meets the requirements of clarity, definability, and relevance to a specific issue that is meaningful within the context of the debate.

- *Grounds*: This is the foundation of the argument, including the information, data, or materials used to prove the claim. Grounds ensure that the argument does not become an isolated assertion but is supported by a system of practical or theoretical foundations. The main function of grounds is to create persuasive weight, forcing the recipient to consider and acknowledge the validity of the argument.

- *Warrant*: This is the logical link between the grounds and the claim, helping the recipient understand why the evidence can lead to the argument. Warrants often contain accepted principles, conventions, social norms, or theoretical foundations. It clarifies the rationality of transitioning from factual data to concluding statements, thereby creating a logical coherence throughout the entire reasoning process.

- *Backing*: This is a factor used when the warrant is not convincing enough or is easily doubted. Backing provides additional secondary arguments, which could be theoretical perspectives, scientific evidence, or endorsements from reputable sources, to strengthen the reliability of the warrant.

Thanks to this, the system of argumentation avoids monotony while increasing depth and certainty.

- *Qualifier*: This is the element that indicates the certainty or scope of the argument. Qualifiers play a regulatory role, preventing arguments from falling into absolute assertions that are easily refuted and instead demonstrating a scientific and flexible attitude. Thanks to the presence of qualifiers, arguments are placed within specific conditions and limitations, reflecting the inherent probability and complexity of practice.

- *Rebuttal*: This element indicates anticipation and response to opposing viewpoints or potential exceptions that could weaken the argument. Rebuttal demonstrates the comprehensiveness of critical thinking, as it proves the arguer is aware of the existence of other viewpoints and actively seeks to refute or reconcile them. Thanks to rebuttal, the argument becomes more objective, balanced, and highly persuasive.

Thus, these six elements do not exist in isolation but operate in a reciprocal relationship. The claim is the destination, the grounds are the foundation, the warrant is the link, the backing is the support, the qualifier is the adjustment, and the rebuttal is the counterweight. All of this forms a flexible yet rigorous system of argumentation, ensuring both logical consistency and increasing persuasiveness in practical communication.

In the field of education, the Toulmin model has proven its effectiveness. Rex et al. (2010) emphasize that this model helps students overcome "flaws in grammar and style" by focusing first on the relationship between the thesis, data, and reasoning, rather than worrying about the form of expression. Magalhães (2020) asserts that Toulmin "can be used to verify the soundness and completeness of arguments," indicating that it is not only an analytical tool but also a measure for evaluating the quality of reasoning. Additionally, integrating the model into activities such as group discussions, project-based learning, or debates will train students' ability to organize logical thinking, critical prediction, and evidence reinforcement.

In summary, the Toulmin model is not only a theoretical framework for analyzing arguments but also a valuable pedagogical tool. Its six elements (claim, grounds, warrant, backing, qualifier, and rebuttal) form a comprehensive argumentative structure that is both logically sound and flexible in practical application. Applying this model not only helps learners understand how to form and defend an argument but also how to anticipate counterarguments, strengthen their reasoning, and adjust the level of assertion to suit each communication context. Thanks to this, Toulmin has become an important foundation for training critical thinking, developing argumentation skills, and enhancing the ability to write social argumentative texts in the current educational environment.

### **3.2. *Characteristics of social commentary texts***

Social commentary texts in the high school literature curriculum have prominent characteristics, closely linked to the goal of training students' thinking abilities, reasoning skills, and critical thinking qualities. According to the 2018 General Education Program, students need to be able to "write argumentative texts about a social issue, clearly present their viewpoints and system of arguments, have a tight structure with an impressive introduction and conclusion, and use persuasive reasoning and evidence that is accurate, reliable, appropriate, and complete" [1]. This shows that a standard social commentary text not only expresses personal opinions but must also simultaneously meet the criteria of timeliness, authenticity, theoretical depth, and critical thinking—the four elements that constitute the value of the genre.

First, timeliness plays a key role. An argumentative text is only truly persuasive when it is connected to issues that society is currently concerned with, reflects the current situation, or highlights prominent phenomena in life. This element helps the article stay grounded in reality, making it a direct channel of dialogue with life. This not only provides educational value but also evokes empathy and sharing from the reader. It can be said that timeliness is the "gateway" for a text to reach

readers, ensuring the connection between the writing and the current social flow.

Second, the authenticity of the evidence is a prerequisite for building trust with the reader. Students are guided to "use persuasive reasoning and evidence: accurate, reliable, relevant, and sufficient" [1]. This means that evidence should not only be illustrative examples but should also be selected from clearly substantiated and verified events, data, or phenomena. A text can be logically structured, but if it lacks reliable data, the arguments easily become emotional and unconvincing. Therefore, the requirement for authenticity in citations is both a standard of academic ethics and a core principle of scientific thinking.

Third, the depth of the argument reflects the students' thinking prowess and level of problem understanding. This requirement is specified in the instruction "clearly present the viewpoint and system of arguments; well-structured" [1]. A social essay is not just a collection of isolated arguments; it must be arranged into a logical system where each argument supports and illuminates the others, creating a cohesive argumentative process from beginning to end. Depth is also demonstrated by the ability to explain cause-and-effect relationships, point out the multi-faceted nature of the issue, and avoid simple, superficial, or repetitive statements.

Fourth, the sharpness of critical thinking is the pinnacle of social commentary. The program states that students need to "know how to debate issues with opposing viewpoints and have an open-minded attitude and appropriate debate culture" [1]. This emphasizes that social commentary texts should not only be one-sided affirmations but must also engage in dialog with different, even opposing, viewpoints. The ability to identify, analyze, and refute opposing arguments demonstrates sharpness while also requiring the writer to have an open attitude and respect for diverse opinions. Thanks to this, the text doesn't fall into authoritarianism but is academically argumentative, contributing to the formation of a healthy critical culture.

According to the 2018 General Education Program, the learning outcomes for writing

social commentary texts are clearly differentiated across grade levels, increasing in complexity, depth of reasoning, and critical thinking. In Grade 9 (lower secondary), students are only required to "write a short argumentative essay on a problem that needs to be addressed; present a feasible and persuasive solution" (MOET, 2018), focusing on basic structure and simple reasoning. At the upper secondary level, the requirements become more diverse and advanced: Grade 10 students must "write a social commentary text that presents a clear viewpoint and a coherent system of arguments, using convincing evidence that is accurate, reliable, relevant, and sufficient," as well as "write an essay persuading others to give up a habit or belief" and "write a personal essay," emphasizing logical reasoning, evidence-based argumentation, and personal expression. In Grade 11, the task extends to "writing a social commentary text on an issue reflected in a literary work," requiring the integration of social awareness and literary analysis with logical and expressive writing. By Grade 12, students are expected to "write an essay analyzing and evaluating complex social issues with coherent reasoning, multi-dimensional argumentation, and both theoretical and practical evidence, demonstrating critical and creative thinking." This progression reflects a developmental trajectory from comprehension (Grade 9) to application (Grade 10), analysis (Grade 11), and creativity (Grade 12). The Toulmin model provides a flexible argumentative framework that supports this progression, helping students construct coherent reasoning, strengthen evidential support, and enhance critical argumentation in alignment with the program's writing outcomes.

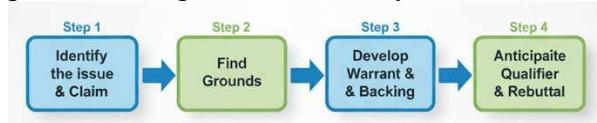
From the above characteristics, it can be seen that the Toulmin model is particularly compatible with the requirements of social commentary texts. The six elements of the model—Claim, Grounds, Warrant, Backing, Rebuttal, and Qualifier—form a comprehensive framework for argumentation. This allows students to form clear arguments (claims), select and use authentic evidence (grounds), develop logical reasoning

(warrants), supplement theoretical foundations or provide evidence from reputable sources (backing), anticipate and address opposing viewpoints (rebuttals), and express appropriate levels of certainty for each context (qualifiers). This entire process directly addresses the requirements for "tight structure" and "persuasiveness" set by social commentary texts in the 2018 General Education Program.

### **3.3. Applying the Toulmin model in teaching social argumentative writing**

#### **3.3.1. The process of developing social argumentative writing following the Toulmin model**

The process of writing a social commentary essay using the Toulmin model can be carried out in four basic steps. Each step has its own goal, linked to developing reasoning skills and training the ability to write coherent and persuasive argumentative essays.



**Figure 2. Steps in the Toulmin-based process of creating social argumentative writing**

#### **Step 1: Identify the problem and develop a claim**

First, teachers need to guide students to identify the social issue to be discussed and ask the question, "What do I want to assert?" to form the claim—the main argument. This is the opening stage, which plays a guiding role for the entire argumentation process. The claim must be clearly stated, in the form of an assertion, avoiding ambiguity or being turned into a question. A standard argument should focus on a specific concept, reflect the writer's stance, and serve as the foundation for subsequent arguments.

#### **Step 2: Search for and select Grounds**

After identifying the thesis statement, students are guided to find appropriate evidence and ask themselves, "What do I base that on?" Grounds—the evidence in an argument can be specific individuals, data, news information, research results, or real-life experiences. The selection of evidence/proof must ensure the following criteria: accuracy, reliability, and direct relevance to the argument, while avoiding superficial and

emotional examples. This is the initial basis for creating persuasiveness in the document.

#### **Step 3: Develop the Warrant and Backing**

This is the central step in the process. Students need to answer two questions: "Why does this evidence prove that point?" and "What basis makes my argument valid?" Warrant—the main argument is a logical explanation that creates a link between the grounds and the claim. To enhance credibility, students must use backing (supporting evidence), which is often scientific knowledge, social rules, ethical principles, or expert opinions. Thanks to this, the argument is not only based on personal intuition but is also supported by an objective and rational foundation.

#### **Step 4: Anticipate Qualifiers and Provide Rebuttals**

In the final step, students need to use qualifiers—limiters—to indicate the certainty of their arguments, using words like "frequently," "most," or "in many cases" instead of making absolute statements. Simultaneously, students are guided to put themselves in the position of the opponent, asking the question, "Who might disagree with me, and what are their reasons?" Are there any exceptions to my argument? This is the rebuttal, which allows students to anticipate opposing viewpoints and prepare arguments to refute, counter, or limit their impact. This helps the argument be both scientific and demonstrate a cautious, open-minded attitude.

Thus, the above process not only helps students gradually form a well-structured social commentary but also trains critical thinking, the ability to select data, express scientific arguments, and anticipate opposing viewpoints. When implemented synchronously, the Toulmin model becomes an effective tool for students to practice social argumentation skills, ensuring that their writing meets the standards of the 2018 General Education Program while also demonstrating independent thinking and a spirit of dialogue.

#### **3.3.2. Illustration of applying the Toulmin model in teaching social argumentative writing**

When teaching the lesson "Writing a

persuasive essay on a social issue" (Vietnamese Language textbook, Grade 11, Creative Horizons Book Series), the Toulmin model serves as an effective framework to guide students in systematically constructing their essays—from identifying the issue to developing well-reasoned and convincing arguments. This lesson not only strengthens students' argumentative writing skills on issues relevant to their daily lives but also fosters critical and logical thinking, which are essential competencies in modern education. To demonstrate how this model can be effectively applied in the classroom, we select the topic "Reflecting on the Role of Creativity in Life." This topic both aligns with the textbook's orientation and invites students to engage with contemporary Vietnamese realities. Teachers can combine group discussions, collaborative analysis, and individual writing practice to help students gradually master each component of the Toulmin model and produce a complete, coherent persuasive essay. The following section provides a detailed guide for each element of the model, illustrated through specific examples to support classroom teaching and student learning.

*Step 1: Identify the problem and develop a claim*

To initiate the learning process, teachers can help students clarify the central issue by posing guiding questions such as: "What is your stance on the role of creativity, and why do you choose this viewpoint over neutrality or opposition?" This approach helps students avoid vague, descriptive essays that lack argumentative focus, while encouraging independent and reflective thinking. In class, teachers may ask students to formulate their claim as a concise statement—for example, "Creativity is a key factor leading to personal and societal success"—then share and refine it through peer feedback. This activity allows students to understand that the claim functions as the guiding star of the entire essay, orienting their arguments and evidence. For 11th-grade learners, who are in the stage of forming social awareness and argumentative reasoning, this practice builds both confidence and responsibility in expressing viewpoints.

Without a clear claim, the essay can easily become fragmented or unfocused—a common issue when students merely list examples without integrating them into a coherent line of reasoning.

*Step 2: Search for and select Grounds*

Grounds serve as the factual basis that supports the claim, providing the essay with authenticity and persuasive strength. For the topic "Discussing the role of creativity in life," appropriate Grounds might include:

Concrete examples of creative individuals such as Steve Jobs—whose invention of the iPhone transformed global communication—or Hoàng Tuấn Anh, a young Vietnamese entrepreneur who invented "rice ATMs" and "mask ATMs" to assist communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Empirical data from innovative enterprises, such as Vingroup's VinFast, which achieved billions in revenue within a few years by investing in electric vehicle technology—an example reflecting Vietnam's movement toward sustainable industries by 2025.

International examples like South Korea, where research and development (R&D) spending accounts for 4.5% of GDP, propelling the nation from poverty to a global technology powerhouse within decades.

Teachers can organize a "search for evidence" activity in which students answer the question, "What do you base your argument on?" and collect supporting information from newspapers, textbooks, or personal observations—ensuring that evidence is accurate and directly relevant to the claim. Within the Creative Horizons Literature 11 textbook, this step can be reinforced through reading comprehension exercises where students practice citing and integrating evidence from model texts. However, teachers should remind students to avoid redundant or irrelevant examples. For instance, if a student cites Edison's 1,000 inventions, the teacher can prompt deeper analysis with questions like, "How does this example specifically prove your claim? Is it applicable to the Vietnamese context?" This guidance helps students move beyond general or emotional appeals toward scientifically grounded reasoning, in line with the General Education

Program's standards for logic and persuasiveness.

#### *Step 3: Develop the Warrant and Backing*

A warrant explains the logical connection between the Grounds and the Claim—it answers why the presented evidence supports the argument. In this case, the Warrant could be expressed as: “In a rapidly changing world, only creativity creates competitive advantage and enables the discovery of new, more effective solutions.” Teachers can stimulate critical thinking by asking: “Why do examples like Steve Jobs or VinFast prove that creativity is crucial?” and “What underlying principle connects them?”

For example, in analyzing VinFast’s innovation, students may reason that investing in electric vehicles not only enables the company to compete globally but also contributes to environmental protection—aligning with the worldwide sustainable development trend by 2025. Teachers can visually represent this reasoning using a diagram linking Grounds → Warrant → Claim, helping students understand the logical chain of persuasion. Group activities can then focus on collaboratively constructing and revising these links.

To strengthen arguments, students add Backing—theoretical, factual, or policy-based reinforcement that validates the Warrant. In this topic, Backing may include Joseph Schumpeter’s theory of “creative destruction”, which asserts that innovation replaces outdated systems and drives progress, or Vietnamese government policies such as the National Innovation Fund, which has supported hundreds of tech startups since 2020. Teachers might ask, “What additional evidence—academic, theoretical, or policy-based—can you use to reinforce your reasoning?” For instance, connecting Schumpeter’s theory to South Korea’s development or Vietnam’s innovation policies helps students link evidence to broader principles.

At an advanced level, Backing serves not merely as supplementary information but as a defensive shield against counterarguments. When skeptics question whether creativity is always necessary, referencing national policy proves that innovation is a strategic

imperative. Through this step, students practice applying interdisciplinary knowledge (economics, politics, social studies), overcoming the common high-school limitation of “argument without foundation,” and thereby transforming their essays into well-reasoned academic discourse.

#### *Step 4: Anticipate Qualifiers and Provide Rebuttals*

Qualifiers express the degree of certainty in an argument, helping writers avoid overgeneralization and demonstrate nuanced thinking. In this topic, students might write: “Creativity is a key factor in most fields leading to individual success and social development.” The phrase “in most fields” functions as a Qualifier, showing flexibility and realism. Teachers can encourage the use of words like “usually,” “typically,” “in many cases” to help students refine claims and avoid absolute statements. In-class activities can involve rewriting claims with appropriate qualifiers and explaining the rationale behind each revision. This helps students shift from one-dimensional assertions to multiperspective reasoning, aligning with the Creative Horizons series’ goal of fostering analytical rigor in writing.

The Rebuttal anticipates and addresses opposing viewpoints, demonstrating critical awareness and enhancing persuasiveness. For example, opponents may argue that creativity sometimes leads to risk and failure—many startups collapse from lack of capital—or that in certain fields such as aviation, strict adherence to procedure outweighs innovation for safety reasons. Teachers can pose reflective questions: “Who might disagree with your claim, and why?” Students can then construct rebuttals such as: “Although creativity involves risks, failures are valuable lessons that lead to eventual success—just as Edison viewed each unsuccessful experiment as a step closer to discovery. Even in aviation, creativity is indispensable during design and technological development, though it must be balanced with procedural discipline.”

Teachers can turn this into a class debate, assigning roles of proponents and opponents to simulate authentic argumentative contexts. This not only refines students’ reasoning and

evidence use but also nurtures a culture of respectful debate, teaching learners to listen, counter, and adapt—skills emphasized in the 2018 General Education Program for developing critical and communicative competence.

Through the illustrative topic “Reflecting on the Role of Creativity in Life,” the Toulmin model transforms the lesson “Writing a persuasive essay on a social issue” into a dynamic and inquiry-based learning process. Each component—from Claim to Rebuttal—functions as a scaffold, enabling students to build essays that are well-structured, evidence-driven, and logically coherent. This model helps learners overcome typical weaknesses such as emotional reasoning, lack of depth, or inappropriate evidence, while promoting independent thinking and academic rigor. Teachers can assess progress through full essays, peer feedback sessions, or rubrics based on Toulmin’s criteria, adjusting instruction to student needs. Ultimately, this approach not only fulfills textbook objectives but also concretely contributes to achieving the 2018 Vietnamese General Education Program’s aims of nurturing critical, creative, and socially responsible citizens in the modern era.

### *3.3.3. Advantages and disadvantages of applying the Toulmin model*

Applying the Toulmin model in teaching social argumentative writing brings significant advantages but also presents numerous challenges that need to be considered to improve effectiveness, especially within the context of Vietnamese general education.

#### *- Advantages*

First of all, the Toulmin model provides students with a systematic framework for argumentation, helping them learn how to organize their ideas logically and coherently. With six basic elements (claim, grounds, warrant, backing, qualifier, and rebuttal), students can easily grasp the writing steps: from stating the main point (claim), providing evidence (grounds), explaining the relationship (warrant), and adding support (backing) to anticipating counterarguments (rebuttal) and adjusting the degree of assertion (qualifier). This is particularly helpful for high

school students who often struggle with organizing scattered ideas. For example, when teaching the lesson "Writing a persuasive text about a social issue" in the 11th-grade Literature textbook (Chân trời sáng tạo series), teachers can guide students using a series of questions: "What do I want to assert? (Claim), "What am I basing this on?" (Grounds), "Why does this evidence prove the argument?" (Warrant), which helps students write coherently and avoid rambling.

Second, the Toulmin model encourages the development of critical thinking—an important skill in social argumentation. The rebuttal component forces students to anticipate opposing viewpoints and find ways to reasonably refute them, thereby both defending their own position and honing their analytical skills and respect for other perspectives. During class hours, group discussions based on this model often create a lively atmosphere. For example, when discussing the role of creativity, students not only point out the benefits but also discuss the limitations, thereby forming a multifaceted perspective. This is a direction that aligns with the current goals of general education, which emphasize debate skills and independent thinking.

Third, the Toulmin model can be flexibly integrated with many modern teaching methods, such as project-based learning or group discussions, which are encouraged by many studies. Teachers can organize practical exercises linked to real-life situations, such as analyzing the creative meaning from the case of Hoang Tuan Anh's rice ATM. This allows students to both absorb theory and practice application skills, while teachers can adjust the content to suit students' levels and interests, creating higher learning motivation.

#### *- Difficulties*

Despite its many advantages, applying the Toulmin model in teaching also faces some obstacles. First of all, the model requires students to have a fairly high level of analytical and logical thinking skills. In reality, not every 11th-grade student immediately meets the requirements. Many students feel awkward when constructing a warrant or backing because these two components require a

certain theoretical basis or social knowledge, which is still limited for this age group. For example, when asked, "Why does creativity lead to success?" (Warrant), some students only answered emotionally, such as "Because it's cool," without providing convincing reasoning.

Second, time constraints in the literature program also pose difficulties. A 45-minute class period is hardly enough for teachers to fully implement the steps from Claim to Rebuttal and Qualifier, especially when students need more time to find real-world evidence or conduct group discussions. In Özdemir's (2018) study, teaching the Toulmin model over 5 weeks to 33 students, including pre- and post-assessments, only yielded significant results. This shows that if applied in common conditions in Vietnam, teachers will be under a lot of time pressure.

Thirdly, the professional capacity of teachers is also an obstacle. Not all literature teachers are familiar with the Toulmin model, as it originates from philosophy and logic rather than from the tradition of teaching literature. Therefore, there are cases where the teacher's guidance is still formulaic and hasn't fully tapped into the model's potential. Evaluating student essays using this model also requires specific criteria, such as the reasonableness of the warrant or the persuasiveness of the rebuttal, and not all teachers have extensive experience.

However, to overcome the aforementioned difficulties, teachers can break down the teaching process into multiple steps, starting with simple examples (such as "Smoke is a sign of fire") and gradually increasing the complexity. Simultaneously, training and development programs are needed to ensure teachers thoroughly understand the model and how to implement it in practice. Additionally, using support tools such as mind maps, tables, or study sheets will help students clearly visualize the relationships between the components, making it easier for them to apply the knowledge. When applied flexibly and reasonably, the Toulmin model not only maximizes its advantages but also gradually overcomes its limitations, contributing to the improvement of social commentary teaching

effectiveness in general education schools.

#### 4. Conclusion

Thus, the study has contributed to demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of applying the Toulmin Argument Model in teaching social argumentative writing to high school students. This model not only provides a tool to help students organize their writing systematically and coherently but also contributes to the development of critical thinking, argumentation skills, and the ability to engage in dialog with diverse perspectives. The direct application of the model meets the requirements of "tight structure" and "persuasiveness" set by the 2018 General Education Program for Literature, while also helping students develop social argumentative writing skills in a systematic and logical manner.

However, to effectively apply the Toulmin Model in teaching social argumentative writing, teachers must first be flexible in adapting and adjusting the model to suit the level and specific characteristics of each type of writing. Additionally, breaking down the 4-step process into individual learning activities spread across multiple class periods will give students enough time to practice everything from identifying the thesis to rebutting it. At the same time, schools and the Department of Education and Training need to enhance professional development for teachers to help them master the theory and become proficient in the techniques for guiding students in applying the model. Finally, the Toulmin Model should be combined with active teaching methods such as group discussions, debates, or project-based learning, transforming writing lessons into a lively and creative space for dialog. With these practical implications, Toulmin can be considered a modern educational method that contributes to the innovation and improvement of the quality of teaching and learning Vietnamese literature in general education schools.

---

#### References

1. Ministry of Education and Training. (2018). *General Education Program, Vietnamese Language Subject Program*. Ministry of Education and Training.

2. Rex, L. A., Thomas, E. E., & Engel, S. (2010). Applying Toulmin: Teaching logical reasoning and argumentative writing. *The English Journal*, 99(6), 56–62.
3. Özdemir, S. (2018). The effect of argumentative text pattern teaching on success of constituting argumentative text elements. *World Journal of Education*, 8(5), 112–124.
4. Magalhães, A. L. (2020). Teaching how to develop an argument using the Toulmin model. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary and Current Educational Research (IJMCER)*, 2(3), 01–07.
5. Karbach, J. (1987). Using Toulmin's model of argumentation. *Journal of Teaching Writing*, 8(1), 81-91.
6. Pham, T. M. H. (2019). A brief introduction to Toulmin's model of argument. *Scientific Journal - Ho Chi Minh City University of Education*, 16(5), 186–190.
7. Hoang, N. T. T. (2022). Assessment of non-native English speakers' ability to write English essays based on the Toulmin model of argumentation. *Proceedings of the National Scientific Conference on Research and Teaching of Foreign Languages, Linguistics, and International Studies in Vietnam*, 654-659.
8. Toulmin, S. (2003). *The Uses Of Argument*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.