

# arguments versus explanations

The best way to tell whether a sentence of the form 'X because Y' is an explanation, rather than an argument, is to ask yourself which is more obvious (or widely accepted): X or Y.

- If X is, then the sentence is probably an explanation of X.
- If Y is, then the sentence is probably an argument for X.

This is because arguments generally attempt to establish something less obvious by giving something more obvious as a reason, whereas explanations start with something obvious and propose something less obvious as a cause.