

# ANALYZING AN ARGUMENT

**DEBATE: "Should the Penny Be Retired"**

**ISSUE DATE: May 9, 2011**

<p><b>AUTHOR/CREDENTIALS:</b></p> <p>Jeff Gore, 'Citizens for Retiring the Penny'</p>	<p><b>AUTHOR/CREDENTIALS:</b></p> <p>Mark Weller, Executive Director - 'Americans for Common Sense'</p>
<p><b>Author's Main Claim/Argument/Thesis:</b></p> <p>It's time to retire the U.S. penny.</p>	<p><b>Author's Main Claim/Argument/Thesis:</b></p> <p>It isn't time to retire the U.S. penny.</p>
<p><b>CLAIM/REASON 1:</b></p> <p>The penny is no longer useful as a currency.</p>	<p><b>CLAIM/REASON 1:</b></p> <p>People benefit from the penny.</p>
<p><b>EVIDENCE to Support Reason 1:</b></p> <p>Inflation, which requires us to periodically reform our coinage systems, has eroded the penny's value; it costs more than a penny to make one.</p>	<p><b>EVIDENCE to Support Reason 1:</b></p> <p>It helps consumers-if we start rounding to nickels, companies will inevitably round up in order to maximize their own profit, so goods and services will just become more expensive.</p> <p>It helps charities, who help people-they raise millions of dollars through penny drives, i.e. The Cancer and Lymphoma Society raised 1.5 billion pennies, which is 15 million dollars. Salvation Army and Ronald McDonald charities also cited.</p>

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<p>CLAIM/REASON 2:</p> <p>Pennies slow down cash transactions.</p>	<p>CLAIM/REASON 2:</p> <p>Strong public support for the penny still exists.</p>
<p>EVIDENCE to Support Reason 2:</p> <p>Canada, whose monetary system is similar to ours, retired their penny for this reason; according to Canadian Parliament's Senate Financial Committee, pennies slow grocery lines and just end up in the seat of our couches.</p>	<p>EVIDENCE to Support Reason 2:</p> <p>Polls show that two-thirds to three-quarters of the people want to keep it in circulation.</p>
<p>CLAIM/REASON 3:</p> <p>Instead of the penny, there's a better solution/alternative.</p>	<p>CLAIM/REASON 3:</p> <p>It is not cost-effective if we dismiss the penny; it won't save the government money.</p>
<p>EVIDENCE to Support Reason 3:</p> <p>Rounding transactions up or down to the nearest nickel will solve the problem—we already do this on U.S. military bases, so it works.</p>	<p>EVIDENCE to Support Reason 3:</p> <p>It costs a dime to make a nickel, which is much pricier than making pennies.</p>

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DRAW CONCLUSIONS...Which argument is stronger? Explain why here:

- ➔ Both sides discuss the price of making the various currencies, but Weller specifies the precise cost of nickels versus pennies, whereas Gore just mentions that it "costs more than a penny to make a penny." WELLER
- ➔ Weller speaks on behalf of a group that is funded by the zinc industry, the material used to make pennies, so obviously he is going to present information with more bias than his opponent. GORE
- ➔ Gore offers a solution, but Weller dismisses it with convincing evidence. Gore does show, however, that his solution has been known to work on a small scale at military bases. BOTH
- ➔ Gore compares our system to Canada to prove his point that the penny is outdated, and this works because Canada has a comparable monetary system; meanwhile, Weller only relies on the vague mention of "polls" that apparently demonstrate continued popularity for the penny. GORE
- ➔ Gore mentions that pennies slow down cash transactions, but Weller counters this by mentioning our increasing tendency to purchase with debit and credit cards. WELLER
- ➔ Weller offers concrete evidence of pennies working to serve the people; he cites a diverse group of charities that benefit the poor, children, and those suffering from medical ailments like cancer, whereas Gore lacks a range of evidence to prove any of these points. WELLER
- ➔ Weller has a stronger argument for the consumer by exposing the logical point that businesses will seek to satisfy their aims of higher profit. WELLER

**5-3 in favor of WELLER!!!!**