

1 Review: Darwinism and Intelligent Design in the Classroom

Thesis

The thesis is: “By exploring the ideology of evolution and intelligent design, it can be determined whether these views are scientific or just theoretical and whether either has a place in the classroom.” The author outlines the basis of his or her analysis of the two subjects in a comprehensible fashion. The thesis is easily identifiable and effective at setting up potential arguments in the body paragraphs.

Arguments

Paragraph 1 (Intro) : *“Scientists have been debating about the origin of life for centuries.”* Behe does not assert that everything was designed, rather irreducible complex system that evolution *cannot* account for were designed. Although Darwinism is in opposition to the concept of intelligent design, it is wrong to use Darwinism interchangeably with modern evolution. Darwinism does not incorporate Mendelian genetics which is a key component of the modern evolutionary synthesis.

Paragraph 2: *“The appearance of Darwin’s theory of evolution was a life-changing discovery with numerous repercussions.”* The author begins to provide background information on the origin of evolution but does not fully develop his or her idea. However, the author correctly illustrates the use of the term Darwinism to discredit evolution by portraying it as a “a worldview, rather than a provisional scientific theory.” The point of the paragraph becomes unclear because the author does not go into enough detail in describing how it relates to the topic/thesis.

Paragraph 3: *“Behe proves that the Darwinian theory does not account for the molecular basis of life due to its absence from scientific literature all together.”* Absence of an explanation is not proof of Behe’s proposition just because he offers a possible explanation. The Darwinian theory is **NOT** the same as modern evolution. Principle of charity should be implemented to facilitate a more coherent argument.

Paragraph 4: *“A biological system that is irreducibly complex challenges Darwinian evolution...”* Stating that natural selection **chooses** implies sentience and undermines the fact that evolution is an undirected process. *“He then argues...”* The author articulates his or her point in a confusing and ineffective way. *“...cannot be disproven one proposed...”* this is not true in all cases. Geocentrism, the four humor theory, and spontaneous generation are all examples of theories disproven after proposed. The last sentence is an incomplete idea and should be reworded, made into its own paragraph and developed, or altogether omitted.

Paragraph 5: *“Once Behe’s proposal of intelligent design is comprehended, there is still that one missing piece of the puzzle...”* Author speculates the implications of God as the designer. The fact that the existence of god/or a designer is untestable and unobservable discredits the scientific merit of intelligent design. It is difficult to deduce the relevancy of this paragraph in relation to the thesis. Additionally, the fact that “90 % of americans believe in God” does not make God any more real from an empirical standpoint.

Paragraph 6: *“When people dedicate their lives to a specific cause...”* Empirical evidence is the only acceptable form of evidence to prove anything in science or as scientific. The author claims that intelligent design fails to meet these requirements because of the *multitudinous metaphors* Behe uses. Behe simplifies the concepts using metaphors but does not explicitly enlist metaphors as support of evolution.

Paragraph 7: *“The issue of what can be taught in a classroom boils down to who can decide what children are taught, and what is appropriate for children to know.”* The author discusses another controversial outgrowth of intelligent design and evolution; who has the right to decide what children are taught. The progression is logical and well stated. *“Due to such a controversial subject matter...”* Evolution is a widely accepted SCIENTIFIC theory. The controversy arises from religious prejudice rather than challenges from the scientific community. The conclusions is not particular strong but sufficient to bring closure to the paper.

Structure

The structure of the paper is somewhat choppy and does not flow well. Awkward wording and the lack of transitions between paragraphs are an unnecessary distraction that detracts/distracts from the authors argument. The arguments jumps from point to point in an unpredictable way and some ideas/arguments are out of place and/or not fully developed. The Last paragraph should be made into two paragraphs to distinguish the points in the beginning from the conclusion.

Language and Mechanics

As mentioned previously, Darwinism is not the same as modern evolution because it does not incorporate Mendelian genetics. Therefore, it cannot be used interchangeably with evolution. Words such as juxtapose and multitudinous sound awkward. The word subject in the sixth paragraph is ambiguous and confusing. Does it refer to intelligent design, evolution, or both?

Final Thoughts

The author needs to be more familiar with the topic he or she is trying to argue to avoid contradictory statements, false assumptions, and superficial arguments. Avoid extraneous and irrelevant statements. State points with purpose, develop ideas, and tie each point to the next to make the reading experience more enjoyable.