Breakdown of an Argument

Cue Words for Arguments:
Our language provides guidance in our efforts to identify reasons and conclusions. Certain key words, known as cue words, signal that a reason is being offered in support of a conclusion or that a conclusion is being announced on the basis of certain reasons. For example, in response to Caroline’s conclusion that society sometimes has to make an example of someone to convince people of the seriousness of the situation, Dennis gives the following argument:

Reason: In the first place, it’s not right to punish someone unfairly just to provide an example.
Reason: In the second place smoking marijuana is nothing like using drugs such as heroin or even cocaine.
Conclusion: It follows that smoking marijuana should not be against the law.

In this argument the phrases in the first place and in the second place signal that reason is being offered in support of a conclusion. Similarly, the phrase it follows that signals that a conclusion is being announced on the basis of certain reasons. Here is a list of the most commonly used cue words for reasons and conclusions:

Cue Words signaling Reason
Since in view of
For first, second
Because in the first (second) place
As shown by may be inferred from
As indicated by may be deduced from
Given that may be derived from
Assuming that for the reason that

Cue words signaling Conclusions
Therefore then
Thus it follows that
Hence thereby showing
So demonstrates that
(Which) shows that allows us to infer that
(Which) proves that suggests very strongly that
Implies that you see that
Points to leads me to believe that
As a result allows us to deduce that
Consequently
Below there are several arguments presented. Please list the reasons and conclusion of each argument presented.

Medical marijuana has an excellent safety record—no one has ever died from marijuana overdose. The dose of marijuana necessary to produce death is exponentially higher than a dose a user would be able to consume in a day. The most recent study has found little relationship between lung cancer and marijuana smoking. The effects of marijuana tend to be positive with feelings of relaxation and well-being along with enhanced sensory perceptions. There is abundant evidence exists that medical marijuana aids people who have certain diseases.

**Reason:**
**Reason:**
**Conclusion:**

There is no incontrovertible evidence that marijuana is safe and cannot be treated any differently than any other drug that must be approved by the FDA. Public opinion is not a reliable measure if the drug should be approved as safe. Marijuana smoke contains many carcinogenic ingredients that can lead to cancer and other diseases of the lungs. Use of marijuana during pregnancy restricts fetal growth which means lower birth weight. Recent studies have indicated marijuana in increasing mental health diseases such as short term memory loss, lowered IQ, anxiety, and psychotic experiences.

**Reason:**
**Reason:**
**Conclusion:**

People who use marijuana will turn to more addictive drugs. Profiteers of the drug want more people on the drug so they can make more money selling medical marijuana. Teens with a prescription can share the drug with their friends who are vulnerable to peer pressure. There has been an increase in crime in the areas where the medical marijuana dispensaries are located. This in turn draws the law enforcement agencies away from other crime and neighborhoods go downhill fast without police protection. Legalizing medical marijuana is not the humane solution for people in pain.

**Reason:**
**Reason:**
**Conclusion:**
Now is the time to legalize marijuana. Students have failed to show that the drug leads to hard core addiction to other drugs. In other parts of the world where marijuana is legal, the rates of abuse are no higher than any other country. Marijuana use will offer relief from the addiction of OxyContin and Vicodin and is harmless. More studies have proven that legalizing medical marijuana will not lead to increased teen drug use. Keeping medical marijuana illegal actually increases crime by encouraging the sale in the black market.

Reason:
Reason:
Conclusion:

© Linda Abel and Indian Hills Community College