Argument Structure
VI) Lesson 4: Theme Changers (with Independent Reasons)

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to
✓ Explain what independent reasons are
✓ Use theme changer expressions to communicate and analyze arguments with independent reasons

Dr. Dona Warren, Department of Philosophy
The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Leslie should get a dog.

Leslie needs company. + A dog is good company.

Leslie would take a dog for a walk everyday. A dog would help Leslie to get more exercise.

Leslie should get a dog.

Two or more ideas or groups of ideas are independent reasons in support of a conclusion if each idea or group of ideas is capable of supporting the conclusion on its own. They give us independent lines of reasoning.
Leslie should get a dog.

Leslie needs company. + A dog is good company. 

Leslie would take a dog for a walk everyday. 

A dog would help Leslie to get more exercise. 

Leslie should get a dog. 

“Company” Theme

Each line of reasoning has its own theme. 

“Exercise” Theme

“Lastly” Lesson 4 – Slide 3

“Leslie should get a dog. After all, Leslie needs company and a dog is good company. Besides, Leslie would take a dog for a walk every day so a dog would help Leslie to get more exercise.”

“Leslie needs company and a dog is good company. It follows that Leslie should get a dog. In addition to this, a dog would help Leslie to get more exercise since Leslie would take a dog for a walk every day.”

“Theme Changer Expressions”

“Besides,” “Furthermore,” “In addition to this,” “As if that weren’t enough,” “For one thing… For another thing…” “First… Second… Third…”, “Finally”
“Leslie wouldn’t have to move in order to get a cat because her apartment complex permits them. That’s one good reason why Leslie should get a cat. In addition to this, Leslie just doesn’t have time to walk an animal every day and cats don’t require daily walks.”