

## Analyzing Arguments

# Divorce Isn't the Worst Thing in the World

**Directions:** Read the article. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, analyze the author's argument. What is her claim? Does she support it with evidence? What kind of evidence? Is the evidence convincing? Why or why not?

Ask 9-year-old Annie what the worst thing was that ever happened in her house last year, and she won't tell you that it was her parents divorcing, although they did. No, what Annie remembers most are the horrible fights leading up to the announcement about the divorce which was, as it turned out, and despite her parents' anxiety about telling her, "not that big of a deal." "I already knew they were not getting along," Annie says. "Every night after I went to bed, I would hear my parents fighting. It made me really unhappy. When they finally decided to get a divorce, all of that stopped."

Annie's experience is more common than you might think, and there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence to suggest that "staying together for the sake of the children" is not all it's cracked up to be, and may ultimately do more harm than good. According to psychologists Lynn Martingdale, hearing their parents argue is often more stressful for children than separation and divorce, and if you think that your children don't know that there's trouble in paradise, then you're kidding yourself. The home life of children whose parents have an unhappy marriage is often far from ideal, and in the worst case scenarios, parents will compound the problem by taking their unhappiness out on the children.

The Center for Moving Forward conducted a study in 2014 in which they followed twenty-five families whose parents had been in marriage counseling. After tracking these families for 5 years, they found that the children of the parents who had eventually gotten divorced were not worse off than the children of those who had remained together, and in some cases had fared better. The study took into consideration, social and extra-curricular activities, and the children's general sense of wellbeing.

