The following is an argumentative essay submitted by student writer Alexandra Rooney in response to a prompt regarding the corporate sponsorship of schools. Read it carefully and then identify the different parts of the six-part oration (Exordium, Narration, Partition, Confirmation, Refutation, and Peroration) and evaluate how effectively the essay fulfills them.

**Corporate Sponsorship in Today’s Schools**

Alexandra Rooney

Anyone who has sat at a hometown football game has seen the banners along the fence for local businesses. Look at the last few pages of an old yearbook and what does one find? Advertisements from restaurants to car shops to mall salons. Corporate sponsorship has grown from mom and pop shops donating $25 to a school for a business card sized advertisement in the school newspaper to things such as funding of new school buildings by businesses and exclusive contracts with companies such as Frito Lay in which only Frito Lay products would be sold in vending machines in exchange for large donations to the school. Corporate sponsorship involves a company giving money to a school in exchange for advertisement and/or exclusive distribution on school grounds.

Corporate sponsorship of schools is a very debatable topic. Many are strongly opposed to corporate funding, but is it really a bad thing? Each year there are growing needs in public education, which means more spending of public funds. As technology advances there are new demands for computer labs, smartboards, and even personal computers for students all the way down to the elementary level. With expanding immigrant populations there is a growing need for educators capable of working with ESL students. Often brand new programs are needed for these students. Technology and teachers cost money. As the list of needs grows from year to year the taxpayer’s budget gets tighter and tighter. As America slowly recovers from a financial recession, people would like to hold onto their money, but at the same time they do not want to sacrifice the quality of their child’s education.

In sweep corporate sponsorships to save the day! If a company supplies the funds for that new computer lab then the taxpayer can hold on to their money, and their children can still reap the benefits of the improved school facilities. Of course, things cannot be that easy. There are people who are swift to naysay.

Many argue that the majority of sponsorship funds go to school athletics, in particular football and/or basketball, only benefitting a minority of the students. First, there are several other extracurricular activities that benefit from corporate sponsorship, for example, the school newspaper. School newspapers are struggling to survive, and one way they can raise money is by selling advertisement space in the paper. It is not as glamourous as a brand new scoreboard funded by a large, local company, but it is necessary for the survival of the newspaper. Also, when outside funds are being used for athletics, it allows state funding, the actual taxpayers dollar, to be used for educational purposes.

What about the influence a large corporation can have in a school’s decisions due to the school’s dependence on that corporation’s support? Corporate sponsorship should never be the primary financial source of a public school and have that kind of power to dictate decisions down to what is taught in the classroom. A teacher should never be afraid to bring up the correlation between unhealthy junk food and obesity because a large soft drink company has an exclusive contract with the school.

What about the pressure on children subjected to the advertising and limited resources as a result of certain contracts? If they see a Coca-Cola vending machine in every hallway are they not significantly more likely to drink Coca-Cola products? Issues, especially health-related issues such as obesity, are already bad enough. Should we encourage unhealthy eating? What if they do not want what is offered in the vending machine? What if they are missing out on other, better options? Children are subject to advertisements everywhere. Even if a Coca-Cola advertisement is not hanging in the gymnasium, chances are they will see other students carrying Coca-Cola products around campus. A logo may even be printed on another student’s shirt. If students would like other options, they are welcome to bring a different drink in their backpacks. And, once again, corporate sponsorship should not provide a large enough percentage of funding to run a school. If students are being forced to look at advertisements on their textbooks each day, chances are there is too much dependence on a sponsor. When sponsorships have that much sway, schools have put too much emphasis on financial concerns and disregarded providing a quality education for students.

With growing needs and tight budgets, schools often have to be creative when it comes to improving facilities and opportunities for new programs and improvements. State funding is not distributed evenly, and different districts have different needs. Local businesses and corporations can often provide for those specific needs the state cannot afford or chooses not to address.

Source: Jolliffe, David A., and Hephzibah Roskelly. *Writing America: Language and Composition in Context*. Boston: Pearson Education, 2014. 117-119. Print.