

## Argumentative Essay

### Before writing:

- Choose a topic that is controversial. There needs to be someone who disagrees with you on the issue, so you shouldn't choose a topic like child slavery. Not many people are supportive of this issue.
- When you have a basic idea of what you want to look for, you should start to research. Use the FCC databases to search for academic articles about your topic.
- Based off what you know and what you have researched, develop claims to support your thesis.
- A helpful tip is to make what is called a data sheet. This is just a collection of all the quotes you may want to use organized under the citation of the source it came from. This will help eliminate that citing issue the day before the paper is due when you aren't sure which information came from where. Some instructors have you do the same format on notecards. Either way works.
  - Example:
    - Harding, John. "Pigs Can Fly." *Fallacy*. Fallacy. 2 Mar. 2011. Web. 11 Dec. 2012.  
"Opposed to popular belief, pigs have developed a new way to fly. They are more agile than their predecessors of the winged variety."  
"Pigs can fly because their noses allow them to filter the air through their bodies, making them lighter. They then can float through the air. .001% of pigs can do this."

### Thesis statement:

- The argumentative thesis statement needs to be definitive, to the point, and without bias!
- Do **NOT** announce what you are going to be arguing.
  - "I will be writing about capital punishment."
- It should take a stand on whatever topic you are arguing and include at least three points you will be arguing.
  - "Capital punishment should be illegal because it is immoral, expensive, and does not deter crime."

### Introduction:

- As always, begin with a hook, which is a statement that grabs your reader's attention.
- Here is where you want to give a background of the issue at hand. What are the sides? Why are people for the issue? Why are they against it? Your thesis statement is going to tell us which side you will be arguing for.
- Do **NOT** begin arguing in your introduction. Save it for your body paragraphs.
- Your thesis statement should be included in your introduction. Depending on your instructor, it usually is found as the last sentence but can vary in location.

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### **Body:**

- There is a bit more freedom here. Depending on how you want to set up your argument, you have two choices:
  - Point-counter, point-counter, point-counter.
    - You lay out your claims with the objections in each paragraph. You give your point and what other people say against it.
    - Make sure, when you use this method, you use clear transitions that tell the reader who believes what.
  - Point, point, point, counter.
    - Here you lay out your argument completely, and then, before the conclusion, you mention the counter arguments.
- Be sure to ask which method your instructor wants you to use.
- Either way, you need to **refute** or disprove the counter arguments.
- Give support to your claims using your resources.
- When you use your quotes, be sure to use the “sandwich method”:
  - Introduce the quote (who said it?)
  - Use the quote (what did it say?)
  - Analyze the quote (what does it mean?)
- Some instructors may also allow you to write a paragraph with your personal opinion to show where you may personally stand on the issue. Always refer to the prompt first and ask your instructor on what they want.
- **Tip:** Organize your arguments from strongest to weakest. What you want to do is begin strong and end strong. Take your first strongest paragraph and make it the last body paragraph before your conclusion. Take your second strongest paragraph and make it your first body paragraph. Your reader will remember the first and the last thing they read. Stick your weakest arguments in the middle of the essay.

### **Conclusion:**

- Restate your thesis in different way. Do **NOT** just copy and paste your thesis into the conclusion.
- Restate your three best or main points that you argued. This will remind your reader of your greatest arguments.
- Do **NOT** bring in new information. You want to end your paper here. Do **NOT** make it seem like another body paragraph.
- Here you can also make a world connection, what the implications could be if your argument is not paid attention to, and conclude with your final thoughts.

## Argumentative Essay Outline #1

### **I. Introduction**

- Hook
  - o What makes the audience or reader want to read your paper out of everyone else's
- Thesis
  - o What it is you are arguing; your way is the only way and you have to prove why

### **II. Body**

#### **A. Point 1:**

- i. First point or idea that supports your overall argument
- **Support**
  - o Depending on the prompt, you may or may not use outside sources. If not, consider using examples to support your argument
- **Counter argument 1**
  - o How others will argue with you
- **Rebuttal**
  - o Your refutation of the counter argument or disagreement

#### **B. Point 2:**

- **Support**
  
- **Counter argument 2**
  
- **Rebuttal**

#### **C. Point 3:**

- **Support**
  
- **Counter argument 3**
  
- **Rebuttal**

### **III. Conclusion**

- Restatement of thesis
- Leaving the reader with something to think about
  - o Secretly winning the other side over

**Argumentative Essay Outline #2**

**I. Introduction**

- Hook
  - o What makes the audience or reader want to read your paper out of everyone else's
- Thesis
  - o What it is you are arguing; your way is the only way and you have to prove why

**IV. Body**

**A. Point 1:**

- i. First point or idea that supports your overall argument

**- Support**

- o Depending on the prompt, you may or may not use outside sources. If not, consider using examples to support your argument

**B. Point 2:**

**- Support**

**C. Point 3:**

**- Support**

**D. Counter argument**

- i. How others will try to argue with you or disagree

**- Support for counter argument**

**- Your Rebuttal**

- o Your refutation of the counter argument or disagreement

**V. Conclusion**

- Restatement of thesis
- Leaving the reader with something to think about
  - o Secretly winning the other side over

\*Please note this is one of the many ways to do an argumentative essay.