



University of Tikri
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English Department
Third Stage

Argumentative Essay

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Argumentative Essay Writing

In an argumentative essay, your job is to make the reader agree with your opinion about a controversial topic. You have to (1) state your opinion, (2) give reasons to support your opinion, and (3) argue against the opposite opinion. Overall, you must convince the audience that your side of the argument is correct. To convince the audience, your essay must be balanced—it must include your viewpoint and the opposing viewpoint, or counterargument. Even though you are arguing only one side of an issue, you must think about what the other side would say about your opinion. After you give the counterargument, you must refute it by showing that it is wrong. If your essay is balanced, a reader is more likely to agree with you.

ORGANIZATION

The most common type of argumentative essay has six paragraphs. Like all essays, it begins with an introduction and ends with a conclusion. In between are the body paragraphs where you must do three things: support your opinion, present the opposing point of view, and tell why that viewpoint is wrong. See the following table:

Organization of Argumentative essay

Introduction	Paragraph 1	Hook Connecting/Background Information Main idea Statement/Thesis Statement
Body	Paragraph 2	Support 1 (first reason) • Explanation, detail, example • Explanation, detail, example
	Paragraph 3	Support 2 (second reason) • Explanation, detail, example • Explanation, detail, example
	Paragraph 4	Support 3 (third reason) • Explanation, detail, example • Explanation, detail, example
	Paragraph 5	Opposite Side • Counterargument 1 • Refutation (ATTACK) • Counterargument 2 • Refutation (ATTACK)
	Paragraph 6	Repeat your thesis statement in different words Suggestion/Opinion/Prediction for the future
Conclusion		

Studying an Argumentative

Essay The following essay argues for the use of school uniforms. Discuss the Preview Questions with the class. Then read the example essay and answer the questions that follow.

TOPICS FOR ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

What is a great topic for an argumentative essay? Obviously, it should be an issue that you feel strongly about, know something about, and would like to share

your opinion about. What is your opinion, why do you feel this way? Can you think of some reasons why people might disagree with you?

When you choose a topic, consider these two questions:

- Does the topic have two sides?
- How much do you know about the topic?

Look at the list of argumentative topics below. What is your opinion about each topic? Are they two sides of each topic?

Topics for Argument	
Banning cigarettes	Banning violent video games
Requiring school uniforms	Using animals for medical research
Mandating military service	Requiring a test for people who want children
Lowering the drinking age to 18	Banning cell phones in schools
Getting rid of zoos	Requiring a year of study abroad

Identifying Topics for Argumentative Essays

Read these eight topics. Put a check mark (✓) next to the ones that could be good topics for argument essays

_____ 1. The first time I flew in a plane.
_____ 2. University education should be free.

_____ 3. How and why birds fly south for the winter. _____

4. High school teachers need a higher salary. _____

5. Steps needed to get a driver's license. _____

6. Legalizing gay marriage. _____

7. Increasing tax on imported food. _____

8. How to become a karate master.

Can you think of three additional topics that would be excellent for an argumentative essay?

1.

_____ 2.

_____ 3.

TOPICS FOR ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

After you choose a topic, think about what you know about it. What do you know about your side of the argument and what do you know about the opposite side of the argument? A good way to organize your ideas is to use a Pro & Con T-chart. [Pro = in favor of thesis statement, Con = against thesis statement] If you cannot think of several ideas for one or both sides, you should do more research about that topic or choose a different topic.

Planning with an Outline

Try to complete the following outline before you begin writing your essay. You may use more support sentences if you need. And try to use complete sentences when it is possible.

1. Introduction (Paragraph 1)

A. Hook: _____

B. Connecting Information: _____

C. Thesis Statement: _____

2. Body

A. First Reason (Paragraph 2) topic sentence: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

B. Second Reason (Paragraph 3) topic sentence: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3.

C. Third Reason (Paragraph 4) topic sentence: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

D. Counterargument (Paragraph 5)

1. Counterargument

#	Refutation	(attack):
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2. Counterargument #2: _____

Refutation (attack): _____

3. Conclusion (Paragraph 6)

A. Restated Thesis: _____

B. Opinion/Suggestion/Prediction: _____
