

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY PRACTICE

Notes:

Template for an argumentative essay:

I. Introduction

- A. Hook/Attention Grabber.
- B. Background information on the topic.
- C. Thesis statement with your argument and main points.

II. Body Paragraphs

- A. Topic sentence for first main point.
- B. Evidence supporting first main point.
- C. Analysis and explanation of how evidence supports main point.
- D. Possible counterarguments and refutations.
- E. Transition sentence to next main point.

Repeat steps A-E for each main point, with at least 3 main points total.

III. Counterargument and Refutation

- A. Introduction to counterargument
- B. Explanation of counterargument
- C. Refutation of counterargument with evidence
- D. Possible concessions to counterargument

IV. Conclusion

- A. Restatement of thesis
- B. Summary of main points
- C. Final thoughts and implications of argument
- D. Call to action or recommendation

V. References/Bibliography (if applicable)

Note: Remember to adhere to any specific formatting requirements provided by your instructor or institution, and to properly cite any sources used in your essay. Good luck with your writing!

Expanding on introduction

An introduction is an important part of an argumentative essay as it sets the tone for the rest of the essay and provides background information on the topic. Here are some steps to follow when writing an introduction for an argumentative essay:

Start with a Hook: Begin your introduction with a sentence or two that captures the reader's attention and makes them interested in reading more. This could be a startling fact, a relevant quote, or an intriguing question.

Provide Background Information: Next, provide some context for your topic by giving a brief overview of the issue at hand. This will help the reader understand the significance of the topic and why it is important to discuss.

State Your Thesis: End your introduction with a clear and concise thesis statement that summarizes your main argument and the main points you will use to support it. This will help the reader know what to expect in the rest of the essay.

Transition to Body Paragraphs: In your final sentence of the introduction, provide a transitional sentence that connects your thesis statement to the first body paragraph. This will help guide the reader smoothly into the rest of your essay.

Expanding on thesis statement

[Topic] + [Position] + [Main Points/Arguments]

For example:

Topic: Online education

Position: Online education is a more flexible and accessible alternative to traditional classroom learning.

Main Points/Arguments: It allows students to learn at their own pace, provides access to a wider range of courses and resources, and offers a more affordable option for education.

So, the thesis statement would look like this:

"Online education is a more flexible and accessible alternative to traditional classroom learning, as it allows students to learn at their own pace, provides access to a wider range of courses and resources, and offers a more affordable option for education."

Expanding on body paragraphs:

The body paragraphs of an argumentative essay are where you present your main arguments and provide evidence to support your thesis statement. Here are some steps to follow when writing a body paragraph for an argumentative essay:

Start with a Topic Sentence: The first sentence of your body paragraph should be a clear and concise statement that summarizes the main point you will be discussing in the paragraph. This sentence is called the topic sentence.

Provide Evidence: Next, provide evidence to support your argument. This could include statistics, quotes from experts, or examples from history or current events. Be sure to cite your sources properly.

Analyse the Evidence: After presenting the evidence, explain how it supports your argument. This is the part of the paragraph where you demonstrate your critical thinking skills and show how the evidence supports your thesis statement.

Address Counterarguments: Anticipate and address counterarguments to your main argument. This helps to show that you have considered different perspectives on the issue and strengthens your overall argument.

End with a Concluding Sentence: The final sentence of your body paragraph should be a concluding sentence that summarizes the main point of the paragraph and connects it back to your thesis statement.

Here's an example of what a body paragraph for an argumentative essay might look like:

Topic Sentence: Stricter gun control laws can help reduce the number of gun-related deaths in the United States.

Evidence: According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, there were over 39,000 gun-related deaths in the United States in 2019 alone. Many of these deaths could have been prevented if it were more difficult for people to access firearms.

Analysis: By implementing stricter gun control laws, such as background checks, waiting periods, and limits on the sale of high-capacity magazines, we can reduce the number of deaths caused by gun violence. Studies have shown that states with stricter gun laws have lower rates of gun-related deaths compared to states with more lenient gun laws.

Counterargument: Some argue that gun control laws infringe upon the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens. However, the Supreme Court has ruled that reasonable restrictions on gun ownership are constitutional.

Concluding Sentence: In summary, stricter gun control laws can help reduce the number of gun-related deaths in the United States by making it more difficult for dangerous individuals to access firearms.

Expanding on introductions:

An introduction within a body paragraph of an argumentative essay is called a "topic sentence." It is a sentence that introduces the main idea or argument of the paragraph. Here are some steps to follow when writing a topic sentence for a body paragraph in an argumentative essay:

Connect to the Thesis Statement: The topic sentence should relate to the thesis statement and the overall argument of the essay. It should introduce a specific aspect or point of the argument that will be discussed in the paragraph.

Provide a Clear and Concise Statement: The topic sentence should be clear and concise, providing a straightforward statement of the main argument or idea of the paragraph.

Preview the Evidence: The topic sentence should provide a preview of the evidence that will be presented in the rest of the paragraph to support the argument.

Avoid Generalizations: Avoid making general statements or using vague language in the topic sentence. Be specific and precise in what you are trying to convey.

Make it Interesting: Finally, try to make the topic sentence interesting and engaging for the reader. Use language that captures their attention and makes them interested in reading further.

Here is an example of a topic sentence within a body paragraph for an argumentative essay:

Topic Sentence: The use of fossil fuels as the primary source of energy is no longer sustainable for our planet, as it leads to environmental degradation and climate change.

In this example, the topic sentence connects to the thesis statement, which argues for a shift towards sustainable and renewable energy sources. The topic sentence provides a clear and concise statement of the argument, previewing the evidence that will be presented in the paragraph to support the claim. Additionally, it avoids generalizations and makes the topic interesting by mentioning environmental degradation and climate change.

Expanding on evidence analysis:

E: Introduce the Evidence

P: State the Purpose

Q/P: Provide a Quote or Paraphrase

A: Analyse the Evidence

C: Make a Connection

CA: Address Counterarguments

CS: Concluding Sentence

Here's what each component of the formula means:

E: Introduce the Evidence - Start by introducing the evidence you will be analysing. Provide a brief explanation of the source and how it relates to your argument.

P: State the Purpose - Explain the purpose of the evidence and why it is relevant to your argument.

Q/P: Provide a Quote or Paraphrase - Insert a direct quote or paraphrase of the evidence to support your analysis. Be sure to properly cite the source.

A: Analyse the Evidence - Explain how the evidence supports your argument. This could involve providing context, identifying key themes or ideas, or showing how the evidence fits into the overall argument.

C: Make a Connection - Connect the evidence back to your thesis statement or the main argument of the essay. Explain how the evidence helps to support your overall position on the issue.

CA: Address Counterarguments - Consider possible counterarguments to the evidence you have presented and address them. This helps to demonstrate that you have considered multiple perspectives on the issue.

CS: Concluding Sentence - End the paragraph with a concluding sentence that summarizes the main point of the analysis and transitions to the next paragraph.

By following this formula, you can effectively analyse evidence and use it to support your argument in an organized and persuasive manner.

Further expansion:

Introduce the Evidence: Start by introducing the evidence you will be analysing. Provide a brief explanation of the source and how it relates to your argument.

State the Purpose: Explain the purpose of the evidence and why it is relevant to your argument.

Provide a Quote or Paraphrase: Insert a direct quote or paraphrase of the evidence to support your analysis. Be sure to properly cite the source.

Analyse the Evidence: Explain how the evidence supports your argument. This could involve providing context, identifying key themes or ideas, or showing how the evidence fits into the overall argument.

Make a Connection: Connect the evidence back to your thesis statement or the main argument of the essay. Explain how the evidence helps to support your overall position on the issue.

Address Counterarguments: Consider possible counterarguments to the evidence you have presented and address them. This helps to demonstrate that you have considered multiple perspectives on the issue.

Concluding Sentence: End the paragraph with a concluding sentence that summarizes the main point of the analysis and transitions to the next paragraph.

Here's an example of what a body paragraph with evidence analysis might look like:

Topic Sentence: Stricter gun control laws can help reduce the number of gun-related deaths in the United States.

Evidence: According to a study by the American Journal of Public Health, states with background check requirements for all gun purchases have a 35% lower firearm homicide rate compared to states without such requirements.

Analysis: This study provides compelling evidence that background checks can be an effective tool in reducing gun-related deaths. It suggests that states with these requirements are doing a better job of keeping firearms out of the hands of dangerous individuals. Furthermore, it supports the argument that implementing stricter gun control laws, such as background checks, can help to reduce gun-related deaths.

Connection: The evidence presented here aligns with the overall argument that stricter gun control laws are necessary to reduce the number of deaths caused by gun violence in the United States.

Counterargument: Some may argue that background checks are ineffective and do not prevent criminals from obtaining firearms through other means. However, studies have shown that background checks can significantly reduce the likelihood of gun violence and help keep firearms out of the hands of those who pose a threat to society.

Concluding Sentence: In summary, this evidence demonstrates that implementing background checks for all gun purchases can help to reduce gun-related deaths, supporting the need for stricter gun control laws in the United States.

Expanding on counter arguments

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND

THIS CONTAINS SOME PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE BUT STILL USEFUL FOR SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Identify the Counterargument: Think about what someone who disagrees with your argument might say or think. Identify the main points of the counterargument.

Present the Counterargument: State the counterargument clearly and accurately. This shows that you have considered multiple perspectives on the issue.

Refute the Counterargument: Explain why the counterargument is flawed or incorrect. Use evidence or reasoning to support your refutation.

Provide Supporting Evidence: Use additional evidence to support your rebuttal of the counterargument. This could be in the form of statistics, expert opinions, or examples.

Address Limitations: Acknowledge any limitations or weaknesses in your own argument. This shows that you are fair-minded and willing to consider opposing viewpoints.

Reiterate Your Main Argument: After addressing the counterargument, reiterate your main argument and why it is still the strongest position on the issue.

Concluding Sentence: End the paragraph with a concluding sentence that summarizes the main point of the counterargument and transitions to the next paragraph.

Here's an example of what a body paragraph with a counter argument might look like:

Topic Sentence: Stricter gun control laws are necessary to reduce the number of gun-related deaths in the United States.

Counterargument: Some argue that gun control laws are ineffective and will not prevent criminals from obtaining firearms.

Refutation: While it is true that criminals may still be able to obtain firearms through illegal means, this is not a valid argument against gun control laws. Studies have shown that stricter gun control laws can significantly reduce the number of gun-related deaths, regardless of whether or not criminals still have access to firearms. In fact, states with stricter gun control laws have lower rates of gun-related deaths overall.

Supporting Evidence: For example, a study by the Journal of the American Medical Association found that states with universal background checks for firearms had a 15% lower gun-related homicide rate compared to states without such laws.

Limitations: While it is true that gun control laws may not completely eliminate gun violence, they can still be an effective tool in reducing the number of deaths caused by firearms.

Reiteration: In summary, despite the counterargument that gun control laws may not be completely effective, the evidence shows that they can still significantly reduce the number of gun-related deaths in the United States.

Concluding Sentence: This supports the need for implementing stricter gun control laws to help prevent unnecessary deaths caused by gun violence.

Further expansion:

TS: Topic Sentence

CA: Counterargument

R: Refutation

SE: Supporting Evidence

AL: Address Limitations

MA: Reiterate Your Main Argument

CS: Concluding Sentence

Here's what each component of the formula means:

TS: Topic Sentence - Start with a clear and concise topic sentence that states the main argument you will be addressing in the paragraph.

CA: Counterargument - Present the counterargument, acknowledging the opposing viewpoint to your argument. This shows that you have considered multiple perspectives on the issue.

R: Refutation - Refute the counterargument by explaining why it is flawed or incorrect. Use evidence or reasoning to support your refutation.

SE: Supporting Evidence - Use additional evidence to support your rebuttal of the counterargument. This could be in the form of statistics, expert opinions, or examples.

AL: Address Limitations - Acknowledge any limitations or weaknesses in your own argument. This shows that you are fair-minded and willing to consider opposing viewpoints.

MA: Reiterate Your Main Argument - Reiterate your main argument and why it is still the strongest position on the issue.

CS: Concluding Sentence - End the paragraph with a concluding sentence that summarizes the main point of the counterargument and transitions to the next paragraph.

By following this formula, you can effectively address and refute counterarguments, while still maintaining a clear and persuasive argument in your essay.

Expanding on a linking sentence:

TS: Topic Sentence

CA: Counterargument

R: Refutation

SE: Supporting Evidence

AL: Address Limitations

MA: Reiterate Your Main Argument

CS: Concluding Sentence

Here's what each component of the formula means:

TS: Topic Sentence - Start with a clear and concise topic sentence that states the main argument you will be addressing in the paragraph.

CA: Counterargument - Present the counterargument, acknowledging the opposing viewpoint to your argument. This shows that you have considered multiple perspectives on the issue.

R: Refutation - Refute the counterargument by explaining why it is flawed or incorrect. Use evidence or reasoning to support your refutation.

SE: Supporting Evidence - Use additional evidence to support your rebuttal of the counterargument. This could be in the form of statistics, expert opinions, or examples.

AL: Address Limitations - Acknowledge any limitations or weaknesses in your own argument. This shows that you are fair-minded and willing to consider opposing viewpoints.

MA: Reiterate Your Main Argument - Reiterate your main argument and why it is still the strongest position on the issue.

CS: Concluding Sentence - End the paragraph with a concluding sentence that summarizes the main point of the counterargument and transitions to the next paragraph.

Further Explain:

TS: Topic Sentence

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence

SE: Supporting Evidence

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence

CA: Counterargument or Contradictory Evidence

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence

RE: Refutation or Explanation

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence

LS: Link to the Next Paragraph

Here's what each component of the formula means:

TS: Topic Sentence - Begin the paragraph with a clear and concise topic sentence that states the main argument you will be addressing.

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence - Use a transitional phrase or sentence to link the previous paragraph to the current one. Examples of transitional phrases include "In addition," "Furthermore," and "Similarly."

SE: Supporting Evidence - Provide evidence to support your argument. This could be in the form of statistics, expert opinions, or examples.

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence - Use a transitional phrase or sentence to connect the evidence to the next idea. Examples of transitional phrases include "Moreover," "In contrast," and "Conversely."

CA: Counterargument or Contradictory Evidence - Acknowledge any counterarguments or contradictory evidence that may exist. This shows that you have considered multiple perspectives on the issue.

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence - Use a transitional phrase or sentence to introduce your refutation or explanation. Examples of transitional phrases include "However," "Nevertheless," and "On the other hand."

RE: Refutation or Explanation - Refute the counterargument or explain why the contradictory evidence does not undermine your argument. Use evidence or reasoning to support your refutation or explanation.

TP: Transition Phrase or Sentence - Use a transitional phrase or sentence to link your refutation or explanation to the next idea. Examples of transitional phrases include "As a result," "Therefore," and "Thus."

LS: Link to the Next Paragraph - End the paragraph with a sentence that links to the next paragraph. This could be a summary of the current argument or a transition to the next topic.

Further Expanding on Counter Arguments

Introduce the Counterargument: Begin by introducing the counterargument you will be addressing. This can be done in a few sentences or a single statement.

Provide Evidence for the Counterargument: Present evidence for the counterargument. This could be in the form of statistics, research, or expert opinions.

Refute the Counterargument: Refute the counterargument by explaining why it is flawed or how it does not undermine your argument. Use evidence or reasoning to support your refutation.

Provide Evidence for Your Argument: Provide evidence to support your argument. This could be in the form of statistics, research, or expert opinions.

Summarize and Transition: Summarize your argument and transition to the next paragraph.

Here's a formula you can use to write a counterargument paragraph in an argumentative essay:

CI: Counterargument Introduction

CE: Counterargument Evidence

CR: Counterargument Refutation

SE: Supporting Evidence for Your Argument

ST: Summary and Transition

Here's what each component of the formula means:

CI: Counterargument Introduction - Begin the paragraph by introducing the counterargument you will be addressing.

CE: Counterargument Evidence - Present evidence for the counterargument. This could be in the form of statistics, research, or expert opinions.

CR: Counterargument Refutation - Refute the counterargument by explaining why it is flawed or how it does not undermine your argument. Use evidence or reasoning to support your refutation.

SE: Supporting Evidence for Your Argument - Provide evidence to support your argument. This could be in the form of statistics, research, or expert opinions.

ST: Summary and Transition - Summarize your argument and transition to the next paragraph.

Further Expansion (Refutation)

Address the Counterargument: Begin by clearly stating the counterargument you are refuting. This shows that you understand the opposing viewpoint and are taking it seriously.

Provide Evidence to Support Your Refutation: Use evidence, reasoning, or examples to explain why the counterargument is flawed. This could include pointing out logical fallacies, highlighting contradictory evidence, or demonstrating why the argument is based on faulty assumptions.

Anticipate and Address Potential Rebuttals: Consider potential counter-rebuttals and address them in your refutation. This helps to strengthen your argument by showing that you have thought through potential objections and have responses to them.

Stay Focused on the Main Argument: While it's important to address counterarguments, make sure to stay focused on your main argument. Your refutation should ultimately support your position and strengthen your overall argument.

Here's an example of how you might write a refutation in a counterargument paragraph:

Counterargument: Some people argue that raising the minimum wage will lead to job losses, as businesses will be unable to afford to hire as many workers.

Refutation: While it's true that some businesses may struggle to adapt to a higher minimum wage, research suggests that the overall impact on employment is minimal. In fact, studies have shown that in many cases, raising the minimum wage actually stimulates economic growth by increasing consumer demand. Furthermore, even if some jobs are lost, the benefits to workers who are able to earn a living wage often outweigh the costs.

In this example, the writer addresses the counterargument that raising the minimum wage will lead to job losses by providing evidence to the contrary. The refutation strengthens the writer's overall argument by demonstrating that the benefits of raising the minimum wage outweigh the potential costs.

Expanding on a conclusion

Restate Your Thesis: Start by reminding your reader of the main argument of your essay. Restate your thesis statement in a way that is both clear and concise, so that your reader understands exactly what you are arguing.

Summarize Your Main Points: Summarize the key points you made in your essay, highlighting the evidence and reasoning you used to support your argument. This reinforces the strength of your argument and reminds your reader of the most important information you presented.

Emphasize Your Argument's Significance: Explain why your argument matters and why it is important for your reader to consider. You can do this by highlighting the real-world implications of your argument or explaining how it contributes to a broader conversation or debate.

Call to Action: End your essay with a call to action, encouraging your reader to take a specific action or consider your argument in a new light. This can be a powerful way to leave a lasting impression on your reader and make your essay more impactful.

Here's an example of how you might write a conclusion paragraph for an argumentative essay:

In conclusion, it is clear that the benefits of implementing a universal healthcare system far outweigh the potential costs. By providing all citizens with access to affordable healthcare, we can improve public health outcomes, reduce healthcare costs in the long run, and create a more equitable and just society. While there are certainly challenges to implementing such a system, it is clear that the benefits are too great to ignore. As we continue to debate the merits of different healthcare systems, it is important that we keep these benefits in mind and work towards creating a healthcare system that serves all members of society.

Expanding on call to action

Be Clear and Direct: Your call to action should be clear and concise, so that your reader understands exactly what you are asking them to do. Use strong, action-oriented verbs to convey your message.

Emphasize the Importance: Explain why it is important for your reader to take action or consider your argument in a new light. This helps to reinforce the significance of your argument and motivate your reader to act.

Provide Specific Steps: If possible, provide specific steps that your reader can take to act on your argument. This makes it easier for them to take action and helps to create a sense of urgency.

Use Persuasive Language: Use persuasive language to make your call to action more compelling. This might include emotional appeals or rhetorical questions that encourage your reader to engage with your argument.

Here's an example of a call-to-action sentence for an argumentative essay:

"By taking steps to reduce our carbon footprint and invest in renewable energy sources, we can help to protect our planet for future generations. I urge you to consider the impact of your daily choices on the environment and take action to make a positive change today."

Practice Essay 1:

Practice Essay 2:

Practice Essay 3:

Practice Essay 4: