

The Argumentative Essay

What is an Argumentative Essay?

- ✧ The purpose of an argumentative essay is to persuade the reader to accept—or seriously consider--your opinion on a controversial issue
- ✧ Has five parts: Thesis (Claim), Reasons, Evidence, Counterclaim, Rebuttal
- ✧ (plus Introduction and Conclusion)

Consider your Audience

- ⌘ Whom are you trying to reach?
- ⌘ What do they already know about your topic?
- ⌘ What is your relationship with your audience and how does it impact your word choice and tone?

THESIS/CLAIM

- ⌘ Your opinion or position on an issue
- ⌘ Must be supported with reasons and evidence
- ⌘ Evidence can include quotes, facts, and data
- ⌘ Evidence **MUST** be explained

REASONS

- ⌘ Your reasons support the thesis and form argument with your evidence.
- ⌘ Typical supporting paragraph structure goes like this: topic sentence (A reason why your thesis is correct), then evidence/support of that reason. Finally, include an explanation of the evidence.
- ⌘ Be sure to repeat a similar structure with every body paragraph

COUNTER CLAIM

- ⌘ Consider the opposite side
- ⌘ Argues **against** your claim
- ⌘ Turn against your argument to challenge it
- ⌘ Then turn back to reaffirm your position

REBUTTAL

- ⌘ Turn back to your original position
- ⌘ Responds to and refutes* issues presented by the counterclaim
- ⌘ *Refute-prove (a statement or theory) to be wrong or false; disprove.

The Opposing Side

- ⌘ Ask these questions:
- ⌘ 1. Who might disagree with my position?
Why?
- ⌘ 2. What reasons do people have for disagreeing with me?
- ⌘ 3. What evidence would support an opposing argument?

Counter Claim

- ⌘ **Key phrases to use:**
- ⌘ One might object that...
- ⌘ It might seem that...
- ⌘ It's true that...
- ⌘ Admittedly...
- ⌘ Of course...

EXAMPLE

- ❧ CLAIM: “More Americans are choosing low-carb diets because the media promotes low-carb diets as the new way to a skinnier body.”
- ❧ COUNTER CLAIM: “Some Americans don't watch television commercials because they own a DVR or Tivo, but most Americans are exposed to other forms of advertisement in magazines, newspapers, and highway billboards.

Where to put it?

- ✧ Introduction w/Thesis
 - ✧ Reason 1 w/Evidence
 - ✧ Reason 2 w/Evidence
 - ✧ Counter Claim/Rebuttal
 - ✧ Conclusion w/Restated Thesis
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- ✧ Each of these will be one paragraph!