

APSU Writing Center

Persuasive vs. Argumentative Essay

Persuasive Essay

- Identify the topic and choose your side.
- Convince the audience to agree with your viewpoint.
- Write the essay in a way that presents your opinion as right or correct.

Persuasive Thesis Statement Examples:

- Is a college education necessary?
- Should the minimum wage be increased?

Argumentative Essay

- Identify the topic, research evidence, and decide which side to support.
- Inform the audience and support your claim with evidence.
- Write the essay in a way that acknowledges opposing claims and supports it with evidence
- Supporting evidence can include:
 - Examples
 - Statistics
 - Quotes by experts or scientists
 - Anecdotes
 - Experiments
 - Summarized textual evidence

Formatting an Argumentative Essay

- State the thesis statement in a clear concise way in the first paragraph.
- Include logical transition sentences between each paragraph to enhance connection between ideas.
- Incorporate strong evidence with citations throughout the essay.
- Readdress the thesis in a new way in the conclusion, summarizing the information.

APSU Writing Center

Persuasive vs. Argumentative Essay

Argumentative Thesis Statement Examples:

- Cloning research should not be restricted by governmental laws.
- Animal testing is unethical and should be outlawed.

Know Your Audience

- Who is my audience? What beliefs do they hold? What disagreements might arise?
- What concerns or stakes does the audience have regarding this topic?
- How much time does the audience have to consider my argument?
- How can I respectfully address counterarguments?

	Persuasive Essay	Argumentative Essay
Goal	Convince the reader to agree with your viewpoint.	Convince the reader that your viewpoint is valid.
Technique	Mix of facts and emotion, Focuses on one side, sometimes briefly acknowledging and dismissing the opposing view.	Provide relevant reasons, credible facts, and strong evidence to support your perspective.
Viewpoint	Persuasion has a single-minded goal. The writer presents one side as the only sensible perspective. Opposing views may be briefly acknowledged but are quickly dismissed.	Acknowledge opposing views to show fairness and counter them logically. Present multiple perspectives while clearly supporting one side.
Audience	Understand your audience's beliefs and perspectives. Persuasive writing targets them directly, aiming to win them over.	The writer does not need to convince the audience rather focus is on presenting a reasoned argument.
Attitude	Persuasive writing is personal, passionate, and emotional. The writer seeks to "gain a vote" by appealing strongly to the reader's feelings.	Aim to show that your idea is worth considering. The goal is to inform and persuade through logic, not emotion.



APSU Writing Center

References

Academic Centers for Enrichment. (2011). *Argumentative vs. Persuasive Writing Subtle, but Significant, Differences*. Middlesex Community College.

<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/ace/downloads/tipsheets/persvsargu.pdf>

Purdue University. (2023). *Argumentative Essays*. Purdue Online Writing Lab.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/argumentative_essays.html

Purdue University On-Campus Writing Lab. (2023). *Effective Persuasion Presentation*. Purdue

University On-Campus Writing Lab. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/teacher_and_tutor_resources/teaching_resources/effective_persuasion_presentation.html

The Catholic University of America Writing Center. (2019). *Argumentative Writing Basics*. The

Catholic University of America. https://success.catholic.edu/academic-support/writing-center/argumentative-writing_wc-spring-2019-.pdf