

APSU Writing Center
Argumentative Essay

What is an Argumentative Essay?

- An argumentative essay takes a clear position on an issue and defends it with reasons and evidence.
- Your goal is to convince readers that your position is worth considering.

The Structure of an Argumentative Essay

1. Introduction

- Your introduction should:
 - Introduce the issue
 - Provide enough context for readers to understand the debate
 - End with a clear thesis statement
 - Your thesis is the claim you plan to defend

2. Body Paragraphs

- Each body paragraph should develop one reason that supports your thesis.
- A strong body paragraph usually:
 - Begins with a topic sentence that states the reason
 - Includes evidence (research, examples, data, expert opinion)
 - Explains how that evidence supports your claim
 - Connects clearly back to the thesis

3. Counterarguments

- Strong arguments acknowledge that other viewpoints exist.
- When addressing a counterargument:
 - Present the opposing view fairly.
 - Explain why some people find it convincing.
 - Respond with reasoning or evidence that strengthens your own position.

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4. Conclusion

- Your conclusion should not simply repeat your introduction, instead, it should:
 - Reaffirm your thesis in new wording
 - Remind readers of your key reasons
 - Explain why the issue matters

Organizing Your Arguments

- Consider the order of your arguments:
 - Which point is strongest?
 - Do some ideas build on others?
 - Does my audience need to understand one concept before accepting the next?

Using Evidence Effectively

- Research strengthens your credibility. When incorporating evidence:
 - Use reliable academic sources
 - Introduce quotations clearly
 - Analyze the evidence instead of letting it speak for itself
 - Cite sources properly

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Argumentative Essay Outline

Introduction: Introduce your topic and end with a clear thesis statement that states your main claim.

Body Paragraph 1: Present your first reason with evidence and explain how it supports your thesis.

Body Paragraph 2: Present your second reason with evidence and explain its significance to your thesis.

Counterargument Paragraph: Acknowledge a reasonable opposing view and explain why your thesis still holds.

Conclusion: Restate your thesis in new words, summarize your main points, and explain why your argument matters.



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References

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