

The Argument Essay

Introduction

Identify, explain, and/or summarize the significance of the issue or topic

Address **OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**. (Why? How? What is? In what way?)

Frame the controversy: What are the different sides of the debate?

State your position clearly in a thesis statement (Agree, Disagree, or Qualify)

Do not start with a generalization that is too broad:

"In this day and age", "Since the dawn of time"; "Since the beginning of the dawn of the everlasting ages of the eternal..." - NO!!!

Paragraph #1

Topic Sentence (Reason #1)

Reason for your thesis

Introduce example

-Cite ONE example: specific, developed, appropriate

-Ask **INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS**: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Develop example

-Does that prove your topic sentence and thesis?

-How does that prove your thesis?

Connect your example to the topic sentence and thesis statement

****Explain how your example supports your position****

Conclude with a "finished feeling" or a transition to the next paragraph.

Paragraph #2

Topic Sentence (Reason #2)

Do the same thing as the previous paragraph.

Paragraph #3

Counterargument (or another regular body paragraph)

Introduce opposition

Explain opposition

Rebut opposition

w/ another example from your side

Conclusion

What is the significance of YOUR position? (as opposed to the significance of the issue)

What conclusion can you draw from what you wrote?

What can the audience learn from your argument?

Argumentation: The Art of Persuasion

One of the most overlooked methods of argumentation is pathos. This is the ability of the writer to evoke certain emotions in the reader through vivid description and colorful details. Most people assume an argument can only rely on strong statements and loud opinions. However, without relevant details that also give a memorable impression, an argument can be inadequate and ineffective. The same is true for your evidence. Each example in your body paragraphs must be specifically detailed in order to be convincing. You will not convince your readers by merely stating your opinions over and over again in different ways.

>>>>>>>>>DESCRIPTION IS A FORM OF PERSUASION<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

Here are some guidelines:

- **Take time to brainstorm**

If your instructor asks you to describe your favorite food, make sure that you jot down some ideas before you begin describing it. For instance, if you choose pizza, you might start by writing down a few words: sauce, cheese, crust, pepperoni, sausage, spices, hot, melted, etc. Once you have written down some words, you can begin by compiling descriptive lists for each one.

- **Use clear and concise language.**

This means that words are chosen carefully, particularly for their relevancy in relation to that which you are intending to describe.

- **Choose vivid language.**

Why use *horse* when you can choose *stallion*? Why not use *tempestuous* instead of *violent*? Or why not *miserly* in place of *cheap*? Such choices form a firmer image in the mind of the reader and often times offer nuanced meanings that serve better one's purpose.

- **Use your senses!**

Remember, if you are describing something, you need to be appealing to the senses of the reader. Explain how the thing smelled, felt, sounded, tasted, or looked. Embellish the moment with senses.

- **What were you thinking?!**

If you can describe emotions or feelings related to your topic, you will connect with the reader on a deeper level. Many have felt crushing loss in their lives, or ecstatic joy, or mild complacency. Tap into this emotional reservoir in order to achieve your full descriptive potential.

- **Leave the reader with a clear impression.**

One of your goals is to evoke a strong sense of familiarity and appreciation in the reader. If your reader can walk away from the essay craving the very pizza you just described, you are on your way to writing effective descriptive essays.

- **Be organized!**

It is easy to fall into an incoherent rambling of emotions and senses when writing a descriptive essay. However, you must strive to present an organized and logical description if the reader is to come away from the essay with a cogent sense of what it is you are attempting to describe.

Argument Essay Practice Worksheet

*******SAMPLE*******

<p>1) Topic Sentence</p>	<p>What is one reason for your thesis statement? What topic or category will you be writing about?</p>	<p>“The benefits reaped from incentive-based charity are immense. Most people don’t think of contributing to charities on their own, but when the donation is attached to something that is a part of their daily lives, the impact can be huge.”</p>
<p>2) Example Introduction</p>	<p>Summarize your example in 1-2 sentences only.</p>	<p>“For example, ‘American Idol’ is a TV cultural phenomenon that reaches around 30 million viewers per week.”</p>
<p>3) Example Description</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Specific” “Appropriate” “Developed”</p>	<p>Now give ONE—and ONLY ONE—specific scene / episode / incident from this example. Be detailed, but include only relevant information. Ask investigative questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?</p>	<p>“Recently, the show ran a special episode entitled, ‘Idol Gives Back’, in which large corporations such as Exxon-Mobil pledged to donate to charity \$0.25 for every vote cast by viewers at home for their favorite singer on the show. In combination with corporate sponsorship and private donations called in by viewers, the event raised over \$70 million benefitting victims of Hurricane Katrina along with malaria victims in Africa.”</p>
<p>4) Example Explanation</p>	<p>Then, explain how your example proves or illustrates your topic sentence or thesis statement.</p>	<p>“This novel event created by the producers of ‘Idol’ sets a great precedent for the power of incentive-based charity. The show received more votes for their contestants than ever before because people feel good about themselves when they are voting for not only the contestants but for those in need across the world as well.”</p>
<p>5) Concluding Sentence</p>	<p>Bring your paragraph some closure. You can add some final, extra thoughts or reiterate the topic sentence, without repeating it verbatim.</p>	<p>These incentives encourage people to give to worthy causes around the world.</p>

The Argument Essay

“Please Take the Stairs”

Thesis

What do you need to prove your thesis?

What do your examples need to show?

How will your examples prove your thesis?

Topic Sentence

Example

Explanation + Connection

Have you proven
your thesis?