

## ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY OUTLINE

- I. **Introduction** -- (sets the tone for the entire essay -- be serious, formal, convincing)
  - A. **Lead** (hook, attention-getter, motivator)
    - 2-4 well-developed sentences
    - Use an anecdote (a little story), startling facts, surprising statistics, a quotation, a contrary opinion, an emotionally charged statement, or any combination of the above.
  - B. **Background information** (2-3 sentences to explain the history or background or seriousness of the issue)
  - C. **Thesis statement/Claim** (strong, clear statement of your position on the issue)  
Samples:
    - Participation in school athletics builds character.
    - Children up to the age of ten and pregnant women should receive free medical care.
    - A class in multicultural literature should be required for graduation.(The thesis always includes the topic + position.)
  - D. **Blueprint** (a sentence that offers 2-3 lines of argumentation that will support the thesis statement) Sample:
    - Jogging is an overrated form of exercise. (Thesis statement)
    - Few joggers consider that jogging can be hazardous to one's emotional, financial, and physical health. (Blueprint)
- II. **First body paragraph** (use order of importance and **start with your weakest argument**)
  - A. **Transition + Topic sentence** (begins each body paragraph; your first line of argumentation in your blueprint)
  - B. **Support/Evidence**
    - facts/statistics
    - examples/observations
    - expert's/authority's opinion
  - C. **Concluding sentence** (ties the above together and leads into next paragraph)
- III. **Second body paragraph (stronger argument**-the second line of argumentation in your blueprint) Include transitions.
  - A. Transition + Topic sentence

- B. Support/evidence
  - C. Concluding sentence
- IV. **Third body paragraph** (the **strongest argument**—the third line of argumentation in your blueprint.) Include transitions and points A, B, and C above.
- V. **Counterclaims/Concessions** --the opposing point of view (admitting they have a point) **and rebuttals/counter arguments/refutations** (countering the opposing view). Not necessarily a separate paragraph but may be structured that way. May be included in the intro, the body, or the conclusion.
- Sample:
- Some people argue that teenagers are better drivers than older people. It's true that young people have faster reflexes, but they also have less experience on the road...
- VI. **Conclusion** (should be powerful and leave a lasting impression) **A. Reworded thesis statement/claim**
- B. One or more of the following:
    - **call to action** (what is the next logical step) Examples:
      - Our responsibility is...
      - Research the subject
    - **solution**
  - C. **Clincher statement** (tie it back to the lead—this rounds everything out for the reader)
- VI. **Works Cited** (a list of sources or references on a separate page at the end of the essay)

### **Additional Argumentative Essay Helps -- Phrases to Use When Presenting Evidence**

1. One piece of evidence that shows this . . .
2. Proof of this is obvious when . . .
3. Further proof of . . . is obvious when . . .
4. Additional proof of . . . is shown by . . .
5. More evidence of . . . can be seen in . . .
6. . . . is also revealed through . . .
7. . . . can also be seen when . . .
8. . . . is also shown by . . .
9. It is obvious from . . . that . . .
10. It should be clear from what . . . says that . . .
11. . . .'s words reveal that . . .
12. There can be no doubt that . . .
13. Undoubtedly . . . / Without a doubt . . .
14. There can be no question that . . .
15. As the evidence correctly shows . . .
16. One is forced to conclude that . . .
17. Finally, the most important evidence showing that . . . is revealed when . . .
18. Final proof of . . .

19. The evidence is clear: (add reworded topic sentence)
20. Only one conclusion can be drawn: (add reworded topic sentence)

**DO NOT USE phrases such as the following:**

**DO USE:**

as I have said    in fact    obviously as I have proved    clearly certainly as you can  
see    truly    definitely    surely    to sum up