

Smart, Creative and Entrepreneurial



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ESSAY WRITING

SRI LESTARI, MA

SESSION 11

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY: OUTLINING



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students are able to
 - Identify the structure of argumentative essay
 - identify the characteristics of argumentative essay
 - outline an argumentative essay

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WHAT TO LEARN?

WHAT

- The characteristics of argumentative essay
- The structure of argumentative essay

HOW

- Start to write an argumentative essay
- Write an outline of an argumentative essay

WHAT IS ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY?

- The argumentative essay is a genre of writing that requires the student **to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.**
- Argumentative essay generally call for extensive **research of literature** or previously published material. They may also require **empirical research** where the student collects data through interviews, surveys, observations, or experiments.
- Regardless of the amount or type of research involved, argumentative essays **must establish a clear thesis and follow sound reasoning.**

WHAT IS ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY?

- An **argumentative essay** is an essay in which you **agree or disagree** with an **issue**, using **reasons** to support your **opinion**. Your goal is to **convince** your reader that your opinion is **right**.
- Students have to **take a stand on** an issue, support their stand with solid reasons, and support their reasons with **solid evidence**.
- You do not just give reasons to support your point of view. You must also **discuss the other side's** reasons and then **rebut** them.

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WHAT IS ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY?

- **Rebut** means to **point out problems** with the other side's reasons to **prove** that they are not good reasons.
- It is because we want readers to know that we have **considered all sides** of the issue. When we show that we are reasonable and open-minded, readers are more likely to **listen to our point of view**.

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HOW TO STRUCTURE ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

INTRODUCTION

- The hook introduces controversial issue; can be a question, a story, a surprising statement or fact
- The middle sentence introduce why the issue is important; give background information
- The thesis statement present the writer's point of view.

BODY PARAGRAPHS

- The topic sentence has a controlling idea that support the main argument in the thesis
- The following sentences support the topic sentence with reasons, facts and explanations to help the reader understand the writer's point of view
- Include an opposing opinion (counter-argument). The writer argues against the counter-argument (refutation). In the refutation, the writer points out weaknesses in the counter argument and show how his argument is stronger

CONCLUSION

- Restate the writer's opinion; using different , more persuasive language
- May offer a warning, a prediction, or other type of comment that reinforces the writer's point of view

HOW TO STRUCTURE ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY?

- There are several ways to organize an argumentative essay. You can use a **block pattern** or a **point-by-point pattern**.
- There are many **variations** on these two patterns. Which pattern you use will **depend on your topic**. With some topics, one pattern works better than others.
- **The important thing is** to present your side and rebut the other side in a **logical and organized way**.

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ORGANIZATION OF ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

Block Pattern	Point-by-Point Pattern
<p>I. Introduction Explanation of the issue Thesis statement</p> <p>II. Body</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Block 1</p> <p>A. Summary of other side's arguments B. Rebuttal to the first argument C. Rebuttal to the second argument D. Rebuttal to the third argument</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Block 2</p> <p>E. Your first argument F. Your second argument G. Your third argument</p> <p>III. Conclusion—may include a summary of your point of view</p>	<p>I. Introduction Explanation of the issue, including a summary of the other side's arguments Thesis statement</p> <p>II. Body</p> <p>A. Statement of the other side's first argument and rebuttal with your own counterargument B. Statement of the other side's second argument and rebuttal with your own counterargument C. Statement of the other side's third argument and rebuttal with your own counterargument</p> <p>III. Conclusion—may include a summary of your point of view</p>

FIVE KEY ELEMENTS

- An explanation of the issue
- A clear thesis statement
- A summary of the opposing arguments
- Rebuttals to the opposing arguments
- Your own arguments

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THE STRUCTURE OF ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

- A clear, concise, and defined **thesis statement** that occurs in the first paragraph of the essay.
- Clear and **logical transitions** between the introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Body paragraphs that include **evidential support**.
- **Evidential support** (whether factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal).
- A conclusion that does not simply restate the thesis, but **readdresses** it in **light of the evidence** provided.

THE INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

- The introductory paragraph contains **an explanation of the issue**, which is a necessary part of an argumentative essay.
- You may also begin an argumentative essay with a hook, which introduces a controversial issue, for **more engaging introduction**-with *surprising statistics, a dramatic story, an anecdote, a question or a fact*.
- If you write **an attention-getting introduction**, you may need to explain the issue in a second introductory paragraph and write your **thesis statement** at the end of this (the second) paragraph.
- The thesis statement presents **the writer's point of view**.

ARGUMENT OR OPINION?

- Argumentative essay is also known as 'persuasive essay' or '**opinion essay**'.
- **An argument** involves arriving at a **judgement** which is based on an evaluation of **relevant ideas and evidence**.
- **An opinion**, on the other hand, is a **point of view** formed **without sufficient evidence** to support it. It tends to **reflect an individual's instinctive reactions and personal experience**. It is a statement of personal preference.
- Opinion + evidence → argument

FACTS VS OPINIONS

- Writers use both facts and opinions **to support their position or argument.** They state their opinion and back it up with facts. The difference between facts and opinions is shown below.
- ✓ **Fact:** a truth that is scientifically proven or generally accepted.
 - *Antibiotics cure infections.*
- ✓ **Opinion:** one point of view among many.
 - *Antibiotics are the most important invention of the twentieth century.*

EXERCISE 1

- ***Write F if the statement is a fact and O if it is an opinion.***
- 1) ___ Small airplanes are used in advertising.
- 2) ___ The modern disposable diaper has dramatically improved parents' lives.
- 3) ___ Many nations are working together to build and maintain the International Space Station.
- 4) ___ Internet dating services offer an excellent way to find a husband or a wife.
- 5) ___ Online courses are easier than classroom courses.

INTERPRETING FACTS TO SUPPORT OPINION

- After the writer gives factual examples, she or he then **interprets the facts**, explaining how they support her or his opinion. Look at the example below.
 - ✓ **Opinion** → *Animals use language to communicate with each other.*
 - ✓ **Factual examples** → *Arctic wolves, for example, communicate the presence of caribou through their howls and barks. Other wolves hear the messages and are able to meet their pack to join the hunt.*
 - ✓ **Interpretation** → *Clearly, if another animal can understand vocalized messages that tell him or her the location of food, then that animal is using language.*

EXERCISE 2

○ Read each opinion and fact below. Then write a sentence interpreting the fact to support the opinion.

1). Opinion: The Internet takes too much time away from family life.

- Fact: The average adult in the United States spends six hours per week on the Internet.
- *Those six hours could be spent doing family activities, such as gardening, helping children with homework, or playing games.*

2) Opinion: The cell phone industry is a good place to invest money.

- Fact: One out of every six people owns a cell phone.
-

3) People spend too much money on food.

- Fact: Americans eat meals outside the home an average of five times per week.
-

THESIS STATEMENT

- The thesis statement in an argumentative essay states clearly **which side you are for**. For example,
 - ✓ *In my opinion, stem cell research should receive the full support of our government.*
- A thesis statement often mentions the opposing point of view
- The **writer's opinion** is expressed in **the main (independent) clause**, and the **opposing point of view** is normally put into **a subordinate structure**. For example,
 - ✓ *Although there are certainly reasons to be cautious with stem cell research or any new technology, I believe that its potential benefits far outweigh its dangers.*

THESIS STATEMENT

- Use expressions such as the following **to introduce opposing points of view.**
 - ✓ *Smokers say that they have a right to smoke.*
 - ✓ *Many think that genetically engineered crops are a grave danger to the environment.*
- Then, connect the opposing point of view to your own with **transition signals of contrast.**
 - ✓ *Smokers say that they have a right to smoke **in spite of the fact that/despite the fact that** smoking will kill them.*

EXERCISE 3

✓ Add *an opposing point of view* to each of the following *thesis statements*. If necessary, rewrite the part of the sentence that is given to you. No. 1 has been done for you.

1) Doctors or family members should never be allowed to "pull the plug."

Although some people believe that doctors and family members should never be allowed to "pull the plug," I believe that it is sometimes more humane to do so.

2) The sale of CDs with songs containing lyrics that degrade women should be prohibited.

3) The Internet takes too much time away from family life.

4) People spend too much money on food.

THE BODY PARAGRAPHS

- Each paragraph has a **topic sentence**. The topic sentence has a controlling idea that supports the writer's main argument in the thesis.
- The following sentences **support the topic sentence with reasons, facts, and explanations** to help the reader understand the writer's point of view.
- The body paragraph often includes a statement that describes **the opposing opinion**, called **the counter-argument**. The writer then argues against the counter-argument, called **refutation**. In the refutation, the writer points out weaknesses in the counter argument, and **show how his own argument is stronger**.

REBUTTAL VS REFUTATION

- Rebuttal and refutation are similar.
- **Rebut:** "To contradict ... or oppose, esp. in a formal manner by argument, proof, etc. as in a debate."
(*Webster's New World College Dictionary*)
- **Refute:** "To prove (a person) to be wrong; confute. ... To prove (an argument or statement) to be false or wrong, by argument or evidence." (*Webster's New World College Dictionary*)

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COUNTER-ARGUMENT

- To convince the reader, the writer includes a **counter-argument and a refutation**.
- **The counter-argument** is the opposing opinion. It disagrees with the writer's position. By including the counter-argument, the writer shows an understanding of other points of view.
- **The refutation** is the writer's response to the counter argument. In the refutation, the writer shows why the counter-argument is weak and the writer's position is strong. The refutation may also address doubts the reader may have about the writer's position.

COUNTER-ARGUMENT

- ✓ Look at the example below:
 - **Counter-argument** → *Many people think that a child is unhappy without brothers or sisters, however, most only children would disagree with this statement.*
 - **Refutation** → *An only child receives more attention from parents, gets into fewer fights, and has plenty of social contact with friends and classmates.*
- In the above example, the writer raises a **counter argument** (that people think children are unhappy without siblings). Then the writer gives a **refutation**: only children are not unhappy, and then gives reasons to support the argument.

EXERCISE 4

- *Read each statement below. Underline the counter-argument. Circle the writer's refutation.*

1. Even though many photographers love film and say they will never give it up, digital cameras are the cameras of the future.
2. Train travel may be inexpensive and relaxing; however, airplanes are a much more important means of transportation because they are fast and efficient.
3. Most people agree that a traditional home-cooked meal is best, but they have to admit that convenience and low cost is making fast food more popular with students.
4. While some people believe that online courses will never be as popular as traditional classrooms; technology, cost, and convenience are increasing the demand for online instruction.
5. Some people criticize credit cards for causing debt; however, it is the irresponsibility of consumers, not credit cards, that causes credit card debt.
6. People often comment that technology makes life easier, but in reality, technology only makes it possible for people to do more work in less time.

THE CONCLUSION

- This **restates** the writer's opinion, but often using different, more persuasive language.
- It may also offer a warning, a prediction, or other type of comment that reinforces the writer's viewpoint.

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ANALYZING AN ESSAY

➤ *Examine the organization of the essay by answering the questions below.*

1. What strategy does the writer use to hook the reader's attention?
 - a. a surprising statement
 - b. a story
 - c. a question
2. Circle the background information that the writer provides.
3. Which of the following best summarizes the author's thesis statement?
 - a. Space exploration creates history.
 - b. Space exploration has improved daily life on earth.
 - c. Scientists discover many things by accident.
 - d. The technology needed for space exploration can be used in other ways.
4. Underline the topic sentence of the body paragraph.
5. Underline examples that support the topic sentence.
6. Do all the supporting sentences relate to the topic sentence? _____
7. Do the examples include facts and explanations? _____
8. Write the counter-argument in your own words. _____

What Can Space Exploration Do for Me?

Whether we realize it or not, space exploration has changed our lives in dramatic ways. People have walked on the moon, and robots have traveled to Mars. These exciting events have created history, but they are also important because they have provided many practical benefits for humans here on earth.

The importance of space programs can be seen in the technology we use every day. Satellite technology allows people to watch TV shows and listen to radio programs from everywhere on earth. Also, many of the advances in computer technology were first invented to support space exploration. For example, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has contributed to the creation of software that people use every day in manufacturing and design. Robotic technology is another famous example. Engineers designed robots to work on the International Space Station, but now robots are being developed to do jobs here on Earth. Even with all these advances, some people say that space exploration is an expensive luxury that takes money away from important programs such as health care and education. However, if they considered how space technology has improved life on Earth, they would see that space exploration is actually important to civilization.

Space exploration creates a need for technological advances. Later, these advances are used in other ways that help people. Wonderful new inventions such as satellites and computers are just a beginning. In the future, space exploration will provide useful and amazing new inventions that we cannot even imagine in the present.

WRITING AN OUTLINE

- INTRODUCTION
 - Hook
 - Background information
 - Thesis statement
- BODY PARAGRAPHS (more than one paragraph)
 - Topic sentence
 - Example/Reasons
 - Counter-argument
 - Refutation
- CONCLUSION
 - Summary and comment

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