

Elements of Persuasive/Argument Papers

What is a persuasive/argument essay? Persuasive writing, also known as the argument essay, uses logic and reason to show that one idea is more legitimate than another. It attempts to persuade a reader to adopt a certain point of view or to take a particular action. The argument must always use sound reasoning and solid evidence by stating facts, giving logical reasons, using examples, and quoting experts. When you write a persuasive essay you must:

1. Introduce the topic of the paper and the thesis statement. (The thesis statement is almost always at the end of the introduction.)
2. State the facts of the case.
3. Prove the thesis with your arguments.
4. Disprove your opponent's arguments.
5. End the essay.

Explain the important points of your topic so that the audience can understand the paper's position.

Remember that there are many parts of any argument. The topic of your paper should give information about the specific aspects of the issue that you plan to address.

Give facts that support YOUR side of the argument.

Facts can consist of statistics, researched information, and other materials that are found in scholarly journals, government publications, and other academic or professional fields. Remember to cite all information.

Present the facts in a manner or sequence that builds the argument from least important to most.

The presentation of facts for the argument should follow the same organization presented when clarifying the important points. The first issue stated in the thesis should be the first topic approached in the persuasion/ argument section of the paper. And they should always build to your most important point.

Form and state conclusions.

The conclusion should never be thought of as just a summary of the essay. Answer the question, "Why am I writing *this* paper to *this* audience?" By doing this, you can create a stronger conclusion that does what it was intended to do, persuade.

When planning a persuasive essay, follow these steps:

- 1. Choose your position.** Which side of the issue or problem are you going to write about, and what solution will you offer? Know the purpose of your essay.
- 2. Analyze your audience.** Decide if your audience agrees with you, is neutral, or disagrees with your position.
- 3. Research your topic.** A persuasive essay must provide specific and convincing evidence. Often it is

necessary to go beyond your own knowledge and experience. You might need to go to the library or interview people who are experts on your topic.

4. Structure your essay. Figure out what evidence you will include and in what order you will present the evidence. Remember to consider your purpose, your audience, and your topic.

The following criteria are essential if you want to produce an effective argument:

Be well informed about your topic.

To add to your knowledge of a topic, read thoroughly about it, using legitimate sources. Take notes.

Test your claim.

Your thesis or *claim*, i.e., argument or proposition, must be part of a larger issue that has at least two opposing points. It must be debatable. If you can write down a claim that directly opposes your own, you will ensure that your own argument is debatable.

Disprove the opposing claim (REFUTATION).

Understand the opposite viewpoint of your position and then counter it by providing contrasting evidence or by finding mistakes and inconsistencies in the logic of the opposing argument.

Support your position with evidence. Remember that your evidence must appeal to reason. The following are different ways to support your argument:

- ◆ Using **facts** is a powerful means of convincing. Facts can come from your reading, observation, or personal experience. **Note:** Do not confuse facts with truths. A "truth" is an idea believed by many people, but it cannot be proven.
- ◆ Using **statistics** can provide excellent support to your argument. Be sure your statistics come from responsible sources. Always cite your sources.
- ◆ Using **quotes** from leading experts that support your position is an invaluable tool.
- ◆ Using **examples** enhances your meaning and makes your ideas concrete. They are the proof