**More Info on the Argumentative Essay**

The following criteria are essential 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 thesis. Your thesis, i.e., argument, must have two sides. It must be debatable. If you can write down a

thesis statement directly opposing your own, you will ensure that your own argument is debatable.

\*Disprove the opposing argument. 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. Use facts, statistics,

expert information, etc. as evidence.

**The Introduction**

The introduction has a "hook or grabber" to catch the reader's attention. Some

"grabbers" include:

1. Opening with an unusual detail: (Manitoba, because of its cold climate, is not thought of as a great place to be a

reptile. Actually, it has the largest seasonal congregation of garter snakes in the world!)

2. Opening with a strong statement: (Cigarettes are the number one cause of lighter sales in Canada!)

3. Opening with a Quotation: (Elbert Hubbard once said , "Truth is stronger than fiction.")

4. Opening with an Anecdote: An anecdote can provide an amusing and attention-getting opening if it is short and to

the point.

5. Opening with a Statistic or Fact: Sometimes a statistic or fact will add emphasis or interest to your topic. It may

be wise to include the item's authoritative source.

6. Opening with an Exaggeration or Outrageous Statement. (The whole world watched as the comet flew overhead.)

**The introduction should also include a thesis or focus statement.**

The **Thesis** is your statement of purpose. The thesis may be one sentence or a few sentences in length. This is the foundation of your essay and it will serve to guide you in writing the entire paper.

There are three objectives of a thesis statement:

1. It tells the reader the specific topic of your essay.

2. It imposes manageable limits on that topic.

3. It suggests the organization of your paper.

Through the thesis, you should indicate to the reader:

"I've thought about this topic, I know what I believe about it, and I know how to organize it."

**The Body**

The writer then provides evidence to support the opinion offered in the thesis statement in the introduction. The body should follow the cluster format (see the other hand out on this).

The following are different ways to support your argument:

Facts - 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.

Statistics - These can provide excellent support. Be sure your statistics come from responsible sources.

Always cite your sources.

Quotes - Direct quotes from leading experts that support your position are invaluable.

Examples - Examples enhance your meaning and make your ideas concrete. They are the proof.

**Hints for successful body paragraphs:**

1. Clarify your position in your topic sentence – state your argument or reason that

supports your position (thesis), think about what needs to be explained, and then

think about how you can elaborate.

2. Concession Statements (address opposing viewpoints):

**Concession: an acknowledgement of part of your opponent's argument as being valid.**

Remember that a concession is not a form of weakness. In fact a concession is a strength as it finds common ground with your opponent and establishes your ethical appeal: you are a reasonable person willing to listen to/acknowledge that there are more sides to an issue than yours.

\*\*You can’t ignore compelling opposing evidence. You must address strong arguments on the other side; if you don’t, it looks like you are not well prepared and have not looked at the issue you are writing about from all perspectives.\*\*

Example: "True, gun control legislation in Canada needs to be tightened to prevent the United States from becoming as violent as its neighbors to the south. The proposal that has been submitted, however, does not go far enough. Instead,…[now writer begins building his side of argument, showing how it is stronger than the opposing side’s!]

3. Use transitions between sentences to serve as cues for the reader (see other hand out)

**The Conclusion**

1. Restate your thesis or focus statement. Do not copy and paste.

2. Summarize the main points: The conclusion enables your reader to recall the main

points of your position. In order to do this you can paraphrase the main points of your

argument.

3. Write a personal comment or call for action. You can do this:

\*With a Prediction: This can be used with a narrative or a cause and effect discussion. The conclusion may

suggest or predict what the results may or may not be in the situation discussed or in similar situations.

\*With a Question: Closing with a question lets your readers make their own predictions, draw their own

conclusions.

\*With Recommendations: A recommendations closing is one that stresses the actions or remedies that

should be taken.

\* With a Quotation: Since a quotation may summarize, predict, question, or call for action, you may use a

quotation within a conclusion for nearly any kind of paper.

**Transition Signals:**

Transitions are words and phrases that connect ideas and show how they are related.

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| --- | --- |
| **To repeat an idea just stated:**  In other words,  That is,  To repeat,  Again,  To illustrate an idea:  For example,  For instance,  In particular,  To illustrate,  In this manner,  Thus | **To announce a contrast, a change in direction:**  Yet,  However,  Still,  Nevertheless,  On the other hand,  In contrast,  Instead of,  On the contrary,  Conversely,  Notwithstanding,  In spite of this, |
| **Time:**  At once,  In the interim,  At length,  Immediately,  At last,  Meanwhile,  In the meantime,  Presently,  At the same time,  Shortly,  In the end,  Temporarily,  Thereafter, | **To show cause and effect:**  As a result,  For this reason,  Therefore,  Hence,  Consequently,  Accordingly,  Conclusion:  In short,  To conclude,  In brief,  On the whole,  In summary,  To sum up, |
| **To mark a new idea as an addition to**  **what has been said:**  Similarly,  Also,  Too,  Besides,  Furthermore,  Further,  Moreover,  In addition, | **To restate an idea more precisely:**  To be exact,  To be specific,  To be precise,  More specifically,  More precisely, |