

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

- I. **DEFINITION** – In an argumentative essay, the author attempts to persuade readers to change their minds about a controversial issue. Argumentative essays always focus on topics that have differing points of view; thus, it is the author’s purpose to convince the readers that his/her viewpoint is the best choice.
- II. **DEVELOPMENT** – To argue a viewpoint, the author must first know all the different sides of the issue and which viewpoints he/she agrees with. Then, he/she must clearly understand the opposing viewpoint. In an argumentative essay, the author usually states his/her viewpoint in a clear and direct manner and then identifies the opposing side which will be addressed/refuted later in the essay.

III. METHODS OF ORGANIZATION

Method 1	Method 2	Method 3
1. Introduction a. Explanation of the issue (Use an introductory technique, such as turning an argument on its head.) b. Statement of both sides of the issue c. Argumentative thesis statement	1. Introduction a. Explanation of the issue (Use an introductory technique, such as turning an argument on its head.) b. Statement of both sides of the issue c. Argumentative thesis statement	1. Introduction a. Explanation of the issue (Use an introductory technique, such as turning an argument on its head.) b. Statement of both sides of the issue c. Argumentative thesis statement
2. Argument 1 for your stance a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.	2. Refute the opposing stance with Argument 1 a. Statement of the opposing stance b. Detail 1 c. Detail 2 d. Etc.	2. Counter-argument a. Statement of the opposing view b. Refutation of opposing view 1 c. Refutation of opposing view 2 d. Etc.
3. Argument 2 for your stance a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.	3. Refute the opposing stance with Argument 2 a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.	3. Argument 1 for your stance (weakest) a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.
4. Argument 3 for your stance a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.	4. Refute the opposing stance with Argument 3 a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.	4. Argument 2 for your stance (stronger) a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.
5. Counter-argument a. Statement of the opposing view b. Refutation of opposing view 1 c. Refutation of opposing view 2 d. Etc.	5. Conclusion a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.	5. Argument 3 for your stance (strongest) a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.
6. Conclusion a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.		6. Conclusion a. Detail 1 b. Detail 2 c. Etc.

IV. UNITY – In order to create unity in argumentative essays, it is important to argue for only ONE viewpoint. Otherwise, the author may weaken his/her argument. For example, arguing for more than one point of view may confuse the reader. Furthermore, it may even lend credibility to other points of view if the author does not stay focused on one point of view.

V. COHERENCE

A. ***ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE TRUE THAT, DESPITE THE FACT THAT***

1. Function - to say that something is true before saying something else about it.
2. Use – ***Although it may be true that & despite the fact that*** are used to concede a point that supports the opposing argument. These transition expressions are followed by a clause that introduces the opposing view, but the independent clause always downplays the significance of the opposing view by stating the author's stance.
3. Examples
 - ***Although it may be true that there appear to be dry riverbeds on the planet mars***, this does not prove that water or life once existed there.
 - ***Despite the fact that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line***, you cannot often drive or walk in a straight line to your destination.

B. ***CERTAINLY***

1. Function – to say that the writer agrees with something without any doubt
2. Use - ***Certainly*** is an adverb used in argumentative writing to lend credibility to the writer's stance
3. Examples
 - ***Certainly*** one would not wish to risk the lives of innocent people by driving recklessly.
 - The new regime will ***certainly*** take over the formerly private industry to make it publicly controlled.

C. ***SURELY***

1. Function – implies that the writer has faith in the statement that follows
2. Use – ***Surely*** is an adverb used to express certainty. It differs slightly from ***certainly*** in that ***surely*** expresses more urgency and persuasion.
3. Examples:
 - ***Surely*** if the banks run into trouble, the Federal Reserve should lower interest rates again.
 - Nuclear power plants ***surely*** represent the most efficient energy sources for today's needs.