

Argumentative Paper *Sample* Format

I. INTRODUCTION

o **PURPOSE:** To set up and state one's claim

1-2 paragraphs: Includes:

-OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

o Make your introductory paragraph interesting. How can you draw your readers in?
o What background information, if any, do we need to know in order to understand your claim? *If you don't follow this paragraph with a background information paragraph, please insert necessary background information here (summary of the issue, details about topic, etc.).*

-REQUIRED ELEMENTS

o If arguing about a literary work—state author + title
o If arguing about a film—state director, year + title
o If arguing about an issue or theory – provide brief explanation of issue/theory.
o **STATE your CLAIM at the end of your introductory paragraph**

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION (if necessary)

o **PURPOSE:** Lays the foundation for the argument.

o 1-2 paragraphs: Optional (can omit if the background information is in intro. paragraph):

Includes: Summary of works discussed/Definition of key terms/Explanation of key theories

III. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE (may be more than 1 PARAGRAPH)

o **PURPOSE:** Prove your argument. Usually one paragraph but can be longer.

Minimum of 1 paragraph: Includes:

o **Topic Sentence: Introduce your DATA:** What is one item, fact, detail, or example you can tell your readers that will help them better understand your claim? Your answer should be the topic sentence for this paragraph. This probably won't be a quote or summary from another source, but rather, will state the main idea of what the upcoming quote or summary is about.

o **State Evidence:** What supporting evidence (reasons, examples, facts, statistics, and/or quotations) can you include to prove/support/explain your topic sentence? **Cite all sources!**

o **Be sure to Introduce Evidence:** Introduce your evidence either in a few words (As Dr. Brown states —...!) or in a full sentence (—To understand this issue we first need to look at statistics).

o **Explain Evidence (Provide your warrant):** How should we read or interpret the evidence you are providing? How does this evidence prove the point you are trying to make in this paragraph? This can be opinion based and is often at least 1-3 sentences.

o **Concluding Sentence:** End your paragraph with a concluding sentence that reasserts how the topic sentence of this paragraph proves your paper's overall claim.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE #2, #3, #4 etc.

- o Repeat format for supporting paragraphs (Data, Warrant, Commentary, Conclusion)

COUNTERARGUMENT/COUNTERCLAIM

- o **PURPOSE: Anticipate your reader's objections; make you sound more objective**
1-2 paragraphs
- o What possible argument(s) might your reader pose against your argument and/or some aspect of your reasoning? Insert one or more of those arguments here and **refute** them (prove them wrong).
- o End paragraph with a concluding sentence that reasserts your paper's claim as a whole.

CONCLUSION

- o **PURPOSE: Remind readers of argument and evidence & answers SO WHAT?!**
- o Restates your paper's overall claim and supporting evidence.
- o Your conclusion should tell us why we should care about your paper. What is the significance of your claim? Why is it important to you as the writer or to me as the reader? What information should you or I take away from this?

Basic Argumentative Essay Outline:

Title (centered)

- Introduction:** claim & summary of support
- Background:** clarification of subject/issue (dates, names, etc)
- Support for Claim:** transition + data, warrant, commentary
- Support for Claim:** transition + data, warrant, commentary
- Support for Claim:** transition + data, warrant, commentary
- Counterclaim & Rebuttal:** summarize counterclaim & refute it
- Conclusion:** Transition + summarize support + reassert claim + answer "So what?"

CLASSWORK/HOMEWORK

(DUE 3/27: send to mrsglentzer@gmail.com + CAN EDIT)

The paragraph you have already developed contains all of the components of an argumentative essay (Claim, Data, Warrant, Counterclaim, Rebuttal, Conclusion)! Today, working together, take your argumentative paragraphs and EXPAND them into argumentative Essays. This will mean that you:

- 1) Add more background, in which you clearly summarize the issue (use your summaries that you did on 3/13 as a ‘rough draft’ to pull from). This background can be interwoven into the introductory paragraph, or can be a 2nd paragraph.
- 2) Each of the three **supporting sentences** from the paragraph will become the **main ideas** for **three supporting paragraphs**. You will simply expand them into a minimum of 5 sentences:
 - I: Include a transition & summarize the main idea of the data you will introduce
 - II: Introduce the data & clarify where the data comes from (cite any sources)
 - III: Explain what the data means
 - IV: Explain why the data is relevant (how the reader should interpret its significance)
 - V: Conclude by reasserting how/why this clearly proves your claim to be accurate
- 3) Expand on the counterclaim (use your pro/con persuasive paragraphs from 3/17 as a rough draft to pull from). You can quote from sources for both the counterclaim and your rebuttal to refute the counterclaim. Reassert your claim.
- 4) Your conclusion should:
 - 1: have a strong transition (“Clearly,” “It is evident that...” etc.),
 - 2: summarize your three main points,
 - 3: reassert your claim using confident language
 - 4: Answer the question “SO WHAT?” What should your reader be left thinking?!
- 5) You must have a Works Cited page with at least three sources listed in MLA format.

6) Save the Essay in googledocs (if you haven’t already):

section_LastNameLastName_ARGUMENT