Writing an Argumentative Essay

English 101  Monday, April 6, 2015  Spring 2015

The writer's role: ADVOCATE

Main Goals
- To Make an effective argument: to make a well-supported and well-considered claim about an issue
- To convince your audience: gaining readers' agreement
- To persuade your audience: getting readers to take action
- To contribute to a growing and developing body of knowledge on your topic

Readers
- Want thoughtful consideration of an issue that is important to them
- Look for a clearly stated claim supported by ample reasons and reliable evidence
- Expect a fair and reasonable presentation of information, ideas, and competing arguments

Structure: Based on the combination

Counter-Argument
In this component, you will be asked to discuss what is currently considered to be the opposing point of view. A counter-argument should not be simply the opposite of your position. Instead, it should provide an argument that is a direct response to your claim. This will help you to anticipate and address potential counterarguments in your essay.

Sources that you can use
- The Longman Writing, 8th edition
- The Purdue OWL Writing Lab: http://owl.purdue.edu
- The Writer’s Digest Writing Center: http://writersdigest.com
- The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition

Structure: Based on the combination

Tone & Style

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Tone & Style
- How the tone of this academic essay is kept consistent throughout. This is done by keeping an argument centered on an issue and remaining either clear or along its progression.
- The writer will be seeking to make your reader think through the points of your argument.

Counter-Argument
- In your essay, you will be called to consider what is called a counter-argument or what someone would argue against your position.
- First of all: identifying a claim. It can be against another's argument or finding weakness in the argument itself.
- Then, making your own reasoning to counter the counter-argument.

Two Sub-Genres of Academic Writing

Analytical Essay

Starting the argumentative essay

Academic essays are an organized form of writing that you learn to master during your time in college. It is a form of writing that requires the writer to analyze the topic, ideas, and arguments made in the sources you have access to. The essay will be an analysis of a concept or topic, and it will be structured in a way that allows the reader to follow the logic of your argument.

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Sources that you can use
- Historical, literary, or philosophical
- Social, political, or economic
- Psychological, sociological, or anthropological
- Empirical, statistical, or experimental
- Artistic, musical, or cultural
- A published work, an interview, or a personal experience

Prezi

Wholistic whole is a good place to start. But it

narrowing a topic

Revise with emphasis on turning points.

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The writer's role: ADVOCATE

Main Goals
To Make an effective argument = to make a well-supported and well-reasoned claim.

Readers
• Want thoughtful consideration of an issue.

Sources that you can use
- Rhetorical Skills: Logos, pathos, and ethos
- Numerical data, writer's personal observation, field research, scholarly articles, magazine/newspaper articles
- Visual forms: illustrations, images, video and audio clips, tables and charts
- In this assignment, you have to use 2 sources to back up your claim; your sources should be either academic articles or longer magazine journals. It's also recommended to use one of the class readings. (Don’t use an encyclopedia article, a shorter newspaper article, or a website)

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Two Sub-Genres of Academic Writing: Analysis and Argumentative Essays

The Argumentative Essay

Centers around an argument well supported by outside sources. This argument is built around the position that a writer takes on an issue.

What is crucial is that for the purposes of the academic essay, personal experience is rarely to be used.

A thoroughly objective tone must be taken up.

The Analysis Essay

Specifically, **textual, rhetorical and contextual analysis** will be crucial to writing your paper.

The elements of the Analytic sub-genre will allow you to break down the evidence for your position and properly use it to support your argument.
Starting the argumentative essay

Academic essays take up an **objective** tone. In turn, you want to use a strategy that reflects that:

- A shocking statistic (better if recent)
- Quote
- Compare with a widely understood problem

Some scholarly pieces begin with a personal story or a narrative; but in this assignment, you will be practicing writing the most conventional style of academic essays. Thus, avoid using any type of story or narrative to begin your essay.
Compare to Another Problem:
The fast pace of contemporary society is almost impossible to escape. Most citizens experience this through the inescapable devices of internet technology. Rarely, can we go a day without communicating through some digital device. The speed of our society has affected another area of our lives however: our diets. We live in a world where we do not have the time to prepare healthy food and the prevalence of fast foods dominates through convenience. No where is this more prominent then in our schools. The school lunch is a fast food lunch; a meal for kids in a fast paced society.
Not having the time to prepare healthy food and the prevalence of fast foods dominates through convenience. Nowhere is this more prominent than in our schools. The school lunch is a fast food lunch; a meal for kids in a fast-paced society.

**Quote:**

Nutritionist Mary Park recently published a study on the quality of public school lunches, she states, "The quality of public school lunches is something we all need to be concerned about. There is very little nutritional value in what is served in schools today" (Park 2).

**Statistics:**

According to noted economic adviser Jane Bryant Quinn, [insert statistic here].
quality of public school lunches, she states, "The quality of public school lunches is something we all need to be concerned about. There is very little nutritional value in what is served in schools today" (Park 2).

Statistics:
According to noted economic adviser Jane Bryant Quinn, over the past decade, tuition at two-year colleges has increased by 53% and at four-year colleges by 85%, more than double the rate of inflation.
What are some different effects of these different ways of starting?

Do you have any other ways that you want to start your essay?
Structure

Two levels to the structure of the academic essay

1) The Argument/Conceptual Level

This is the level of your thesis and the argument supporting it. This is the wider all encompassing level.

- Thesis and Conceptualized Reasons
- Paragraph Order
- Conclusion

2) The Evidence/Analysis Level

This is the level of how to support your argument with evidence.

- Body Paragraphs - analysis of evidence supporting reasons
- Sentence Order Within Paragraphs
- Quotes & Commentary
Counter-Argument

In this assignment, you will be asked to discuss what is called a counter-argument or what someone would argue against your own thesis claim.

Part of developing a thesis that can be argued against is thinking about what arguments can be articulated against your claim.

One way of imbuing your research with a proper ethos is to take into account how others might critique your position and respectfully show how your argument actually does take these criticisms into account.
Structure: based on the combination

"Intro: An opening that gives your paper authority. The best route to take is a quote or statistics. This will be the starting point that gives context. From this you will move into a thesis that is set off by a Transition Word (Thus, In turn, etc.) Your thesis statement will clearly take up a position that can be argued against. You will then want to offer reasons or conceptual supports for your thesis claim. The final component of your introduction should be the blueprint of your essay.

Body: The body will consist of the supports for your argument. These are points that will explain why your position is valid. The supports will consist of your conceptualized reasons that are then backed up by your analysis of different texts and contexts, which allow for your readers to understand what underlies your argument.

After you provide your argument, you will want to go into a counter-argument paragraph. This paragraph is where you will take into account how others might argue against your thesis and then show how your argument takes their points into consideration.

Conclusion: Your conclusion should restate your thesis and then move into a discussion about the larger context of the issue. This is a speculation about the future. The conclusion is where you can make a small break with the formal style and objective tone and engage in a call to action, as well."
Tone & Style

**Tone:** The tone of the academic essay is formal and objective. This means that language use is centered around words and phrases that will not show bias through emotional connotations.

**Style:** The style will be based on moving your reader through the points of your argument in order to show why your position is the most developed. In turn, you will want to be clearly bringing the structure of your paper to the surface through language use that reflects the moves your paper makes.
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Sources that you can use
- Historical, statistical, and anecdotal evidence
- Empirical data from scientific research, laboratory experiments, and case studies
- Research conducted by scholars, experts, and other professionals
- Personal experiences and insights
- Testimonies and interviews

Two Sub-Genres of Academic Writing: Analysis and Argumentation Essay

Starting the argumentative essay

Academic essays have an organisational form that you must learn to master in order to construct effective arguments.

A thesis statement
- A claim that states what you are arguing. It usually appears in the first paragraph, but it can be anywhere in the paper.
- A claim that can be proven through logical reasoning.
- A claim that can be supported by evidence.
- A claim that can be debated.

Counter-Argument
- A claim that is directly opposed to your thesis statement.
- A claim that can be used to strengthen your argument.
- A claim that can be used to refute your counter-argument.
- A claim that can be used to support your counter-argument.

Structure: based on the combination

Tone & Style
- The tone of the argumentative essay is typically serious, formal, and objective.
- The style of the argumentative essay is typically clear, concise, and logical.
- The voice of the argumentative essay is typically authoritative and persuasive.
- The emphasis of the argumentative essay is typically placed on the strength of evidence.

Structure
- The structure of the argumentative essay is typically organised into an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- The introduction begins with a claim statement and ends with a thesis statement.
- The body of the argumentative essay contains body paragraphs, each of which begins with a topic sentence and ends with a conclusion.
- The conclusion restates the claim and provides a final perspective on the issue.

Counter-Argument
- A claim that is directly opposed to your thesis statement.
- A claim that can be used to strengthen your argument.
- A claim that can be used to refute your counter-argument.
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