

Argumentative Essay Structure

- 1. Paragraph 1: Introduce and define your topic.** Never assume that your readers are familiar with the issues surrounding your topic. This is your chance to set up the premise (point of view) you want to use. This is also a good time to present your thesis statement.
- 2. Paragraph 2: Provide background information. Do your research!** The more knowledgeable you are, the more concise an argument you will be able to give. You will now be able to provide your readers with the best information possible. This will allow your audience to read your paper with the same knowledge you possess on the topic. Information is the backbone of a solid argument.
- 3. Paragraph 3 (& 4 & 5): Development.** You have your argument, and you may have even stated your thesis. Now, start developing your ideas. Provide evidence and reasoning. Each paragraph should be limited to one general idea. This allows for clarity and direction throughout the essay. Remember, each paragraph should have some logical connection to the thesis statement!
 - **Be prepared to deal with the opposing viewpoint or “other side.”** There will be those who oppose your argument. Be prepared to answer those opinions or points of view with knowledgeable responses. If you have done your homework and know your material, you will be able to address any opposing arguments with ease and authority.
 - **Debating the opposing viewpoint or “other side.”** Now it’s time to answer those opinions or points with knowledgeable information and responses. You will have researched and read opposing viewpoints, and you know your material. You will address these opposing opinions with authority and information.
- 4. Wrap up and conclusion.** Now is the time to drive your point home. You might include “how to” information, as in how to solve the problem. You will then reemphasize your main arguments and thesis statement.