# **Argumentative Essay Outline**

I. Introductory Paragraph

* Your introductory paragraph sets the stage or the context for the position you are arguing for.
* This introduction should end with a thesis statement that provides your claim (what you are
* arguing for) and the reasons for your position on an issue.

A. Your thesis:

* states what your position on an issue is
* usually appears at the end of the introduction in a short essay
* should be clearly stated and often contains emphatic language (should, ought, must)

B. Sample Argumentative Thesis

* The production, sale, and possession of assault weapons for private citizens should be

banned in the U.S.

II. Body of your Argument

A. Background Information

* This section of your paper gives the reader the basic information he or she needs to

understand your position. This could be part of the introduction, but may work as its

own section.

B. Reasons or Evidence to Support your Claim

* All evidence you present in this section should support your position. This is the heart of

your essay. Generally, you begin with a general statement that you back up with specific

details or examples. Depending on how long your argument is, you will need to devote

one to two well-developed paragraphs to each reason/claim or type of evidence.

* Types of evidence include:

• first-hand examples and experiential knowledge on your topic (specific examples

help your readers connect to your topic in a way they cannot with abstract ideas)

• Opinions from recognized authorities

• The tip sheet on the three logical appeals covers the types of evidence you can use in

argumentation.

1. Claim

• Evidence:

2. Claim:

* Evidence:

3. Claim:

* Evidence:

III. Addressing the Opposite Side

* Any well-written argument must anticipate and address positions in opposition to the one

being argued.

* Pointing out what your opposition is likely to say in response to your argument shows that
* you have thought critically about your topic. Addressing the opposite side actually makes
* your argument stronger!
* Generally, this takes the form of a paragraph that can be placed either after the introduction

or before the conclusion.

A. 1st Opposing View: Strict gun control laws won't affect crime rate

• Refutation

B. 2nd Opposing View:

• Refutation:

IV. Conclusion

* The conclusion should bring the essay to a logical end. It should explain what the

importance of your issue is in a larger context. Your conclusion should also reiterate why

your topic is worth caring about.

* Some arguments propose solutions or make prediction on the future of the topic.
* Show your reader what would happen if your argument is or is not believed or acted upon as

you believe it should be.