

How to Write an Argument Essay Step by Step

Organizing Your Paper

Argument essays are fairly straightforward in their organization. In your paper, you will need to do the following

- 1 Interest the reader in the situation and make them think it is worth learning more about.
- 2 Explain the controversy or problem clearly.
- 3 Explain the sides of the debate.
- 4 Tell them your side.
- 5 Convince them that your side is the best one to take.
- 6 Refute any objections they may be thinking about as they read.
- 7 Urge the reader to adopt our point of view to do, think or believe something.

I. **Introduction:** Explain the subject, the controversy, and end with your thesis.

Here are some tips:

- Use the title to present your point of view. Often the title can be a question.
- Think about your audience—what aspects of this issue would most interest or convince them?
- Introduce your **subject** in general [Non-violent crime on the rise]. Present the specific **topic** about the subject you will examine [Courts searching alternate ways to punish besides incarceration, such as shaming and instilling feelings of guilt].
- Make sure you have a clear thesis which answers the question. Offer a thesis that makes a strong claim about the subject that you prove in the body of your essay [present your view about shaming or guilt or incarceration as the better approach. Answer the question: “What is the better approach to punishment?”].

III. **Body:** Explains the reasons your audience should agree with your thesis. Your body needs to also refute objections or other points of view.

1 Reasons and support

- Usually, you will have three or more reasons why the reader should accept your position. These will be your topic sentences.
- Support each of these reasons with argument, examples, statistics, authorities or anecdotes
- To make your reasons seem plausible, connect them back to your position by using “if...then” reasoning

2 Anticipate opposing positions and objections

- What objections will your readers have? Answer them with argument or evidence.
- What other positions do people take on this subject? What is your reason for rejecting these positions?

IV. **Conclusion:** Make a final point which tells the reader what to think or do.

- Why should the reader adopt your point of view?
- You might use the anticipating objections in the conclusion.