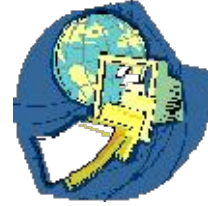


Metro Writing Center



THE ART OF ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

Argumentative writing seeks to persuade the reader to accept the writer's point of view.

1. Write a thesis statement that expresses a clear **stance** (or position) on the issue.
Example: Advertisements for cigarettes should be banned.
2. Include sufficient **support**.
 - a. Recognize the difference between *fact* and *opinion*
 1. *Fact* is a verifiable truth
 2. *Opinion* is a belief based on impressions, experiences, or a person's base of knowledge.
 - b. Make a list of points that support and a list of those that refute your position
* Be prepared on **both** sides of the issue to properly support your stance
3. Maintain an effective **tone**.
 - a. If your tone is sarcastic, superior, or patronizing, you may alienate your readers
Example: A person *would have to be stupid not to know* that handguns are . . .
 - b. Avoid absolute terms such as *all*, *always*, *every*, and *never*. Instead use more moderate language to persuade: *most*, *frequently*, *many*, and *rarely*.
4. Keep your presentation **logical**.
 - a. Use an *inductive* or *deductive* line of reasoning.
 1. *Inductive* reasoning moves from a series of specific instances or pieces of evidence to a general conclusion.
 2. *Deductive* reasoning moves from a general statement to a specific conclusion.
 - b. Avoid logical fallacies by using *sound logic* to strengthen your argument.
Achieve success through relevant, objective, compelling, documented, qualified authorities and research to support your ideas.
5. Consider emphatic **order** to arrange supporting material.
*Arrange your details and examples so that each one has an impact that matches its relative importance. Cultivate acceptance of your point of view through order.

Kelly, William J. and Deborah L. Lawton. *Odyssey: A Guide to Better Writing*. 2nd Ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000.