**ACADEMIC WRITING WORKSHOP**

**(Argumentative Essay)**

**Stage 1 Planning**

© An effective argument essay must contain elements that will persuade the audience to see things from your perspective.

© For this reason, you must take a few minutes to plan and prepare before [writing an argument](http://grammar.about.com/od/developingessays/a/topicargumt07.htm) essay.

1. **Find a Good Topic**

© To find [good topic for an argument essay](http://grammar.about.com/od/arguingeffectively/a/both_sides.htm) you should consider several issues at first, and choose a few that spark two solid, conflicting points of view or very different conclusions.

© As you look over a [list of topics](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/essaywriting/a/argumenttopics.htm) you should find one that really piques your interest.

© While a strong interest in a topic is important, it's not enough to make it good material for an argument. You have to consider what position you can back up with reasoning and evidence.

© It's one thing to have a strong belief, but when shaping an argument you'll have to explain why your belief is reasonable and logical.

© As you explore the topics, make a mental list of points you could use as evidence for or against an issue.

1. **Consider Both Sides of Your Topic and Take a Position**

© Once you have selected a topic, make a list of points for both sides of the argument and [pick a side](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/satwritingsection/a/stance.htm).

© One of your first objectives is to present both sides of your issue with an assessment of each. You will then conclude that one side (your side) is the [best conclusion](http://grammar.about.com/od/c/g/Conclusion-Argument.htm).

© In the planning stage you will need to consider strong arguments for the "other" side. Then you'll shoot them down!

1. **Gather Evidence**

© When we think of arguments we might picture two red-faced people speaking quite loudly and making dramatic gestures. But that's because face-to-face arguments often become emotional.

© In fact, the act of arguing involves providing proof to support your claim.

© Provide evidence without providing too much drama.

© Explore two sides of a topic (briefly) and provide proof as to why one side or position is the best one.

**Stage 2 Writing**

© Once you've given yourself a solid foundation to work with, begin to craft your essay containing three parts: the [introduction](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/paperassignments/a/introsentence.htm), the body, and the conclusion.

© The length of these parts will vary, depending on the length of your essay assignment.

1. **Introduce your topic and assert your opinion**

© The [first paragraph](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/paperassignments/a/introsentence.htm) of your argument essay should contain a brief explanation of your topic, some background information, and a [thesis statement](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/thesissentence/a/fuss.htm). In this case, your thesis will be a statement of [your position](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/satwritingsection/a/stance.htm) on a particular controversial topic.

© Example introductory paragraph with [thesis statement](http://grammar.about.com/od/tz/g/Thesis-Statement.htm):

Since the turn of the new century, a theory has emerged concerning the end of the world, or at least the end of life as we know it. This new theory centers around the year 2012, a date that many claim has mysterious origins in ancient manuscripts from many different cultures. The most noted characteristic of this date is that it appears to mark the end of the Mayan calendar. But there is no evidence to suggest that the Maya saw any great relevance to this date. In fact, none of the claims surrounding a 2012 doomsday event hold up to scientific inquiry. *The year 2012 will pass without a major, life-altering catastrophe*.

1. **Present both sides of the controversy**

© The body of your essay will contain the meat of your argument.

© Go into more detail about the two sides of your controversy and state the strongest points of the counter-side of your issue.

© After describing the "other" side, present your own viewpoint and then provide evidence to show why your position is the correct one.

© Select your strongest evidence and present your points one by one. Use a mix of evidence types, from statistics, to other studies and anecdotal stories. This part of your paper could be any length, from two paragraphs to two hundred pages.

© Re-state your position as the most sensible one in your summary paragraphs.

**Tips for Your Essay:**

* Avoid emotional language. Overly emotional arguments sound irrational.
* Know the difference between a logical conclusion and an emotional point of view.
* Don't make up evidence, and don't use [bad sources](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/paperassignments/a/badsources.htm) for evidence.
* Cite your sources
* Make an outline
* Be prepared to defend your side by knowing the strongest arguments for the other side. You might be challenged by the teacher or by another student.

**Essay Structure**

**Argument** essays make a claim or take a position on a controversial topic. The structure is somewhat flexible, but it must contain certain elements.

© Provide introductory information to set the stage for your thesis.

© Make the claim in a thesis statement.

© Provide background information.

© Provide evidence to back up your claim.

© Address opposing arguments and refute them.

The number and order of your points can vary, so you should use your assignment instructions as a guideline.

**A model argumentative essay**

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| **Should Marine Mammals be Kept in Captivity in Marine Parks?** |
| The issue of whether we should allow marine parks to stay open has been widely debated in our community recently. It is an important issue because it concerns fundamental moral and economic questions about the way we use our native wildlife. A variety of different arguments have been put forward about this issue. This essay will consider arguments for having marine parks and point to some of the problems with these views. It will then put forward reasons for the introduction of laws which prohibit these unnecessary and cruel institutions.  *It has been argued that* dolphin parks provide the only opportunity for much of the public to see marine mammals (Smith, 1992). Most Australians, *so this argument goes*, live in cities and never get to see these animals. *It is claimed that* marine parks allow the average Australian to appreciate our marine wildlife. *However, as*Smith *states,*dolphins, whales and seals can be viewed in the wild at a number of places on the Australian coast. *In fact*, there are more places where they can be seen in the wild than places where they can be seen in captivity. *Moreover*, most Australians would have to travel less to get to these locations than they would to get to the marine parks on the Gold Coast. *In addition*, places where there are wild marine mammals do not charge an exorbitant entry fee - they are free.  Dr Alison Lane, the director of the Cairns Marine Science Institute, *contends that* we need marine parks for scientific research (The Age, 19.2.93). She *argues that* much of our knowledge of marine mammals comes from studies which were undertaken at marine parks. The knowledge which is obtained at marine parks, *so this argument goes*, can be useful for planning for the conservation of marine mammal species. *However, as*Jones (1991) *explains*, park research is only useful for understanding captive animals and is not useful for learning about animals in the wild. Dolphin and whale biology changes in marine park conditions. Their diets are different, they have significantly lower life spans and they are more prone to disease. *In addition*, marine mammals in dolphin parks are trained and this means that their patterns of social behaviour are changed. Therefore, research undertaken at marine parks is generally not reliable.  *It is the contention of* the Marine Park Owners Association *that*marine parks attract a lot of foreign tourists (The Sun-Herald 12.4.93). *This position goes on to assert that* these tourists spend a lot of money, increasing our foreign exchange earnings and assisting our national balance of payments. *However,* foreign tourists would still come to Australia if the parks were closed down. *Indeed*, surveys of overseas tourists show that they come here for a variety of other reasons and not to visit places like Seaworld (The Age, Good Weekend 16.8.93). Tourists come here to see our native wildlife in its natural environment and not to see it in cages and cement pools. They can see animals in those condition in their own countries. *Furthermore*, we should be promoting our beautiful natural environment to tourists and not the ugly concrete marine park venues.  Dolphin parks are unnecessary and cruel. The dolphins and whales in these parks are kept in very small, cramped ponds, whereas in the wild they are used to roaming long distances across the seas. *Furthermore*, the concrete walls of the pools interfere with the animals' sonar systems of communication. *In addition*, keeping them in pools is a terrible restriction of the freedom of fellow creatures who may have very high levels of intelligence and a sophisticated language ability. *Moreover*, there are many documented cases of marine mammals helping humans who are in danger at sea or helping fisherman with their work.  *In conclusion*, these parks should be closed, or at the very least, no new animals should be captured for marine parks in the future. Our society is no longer prepared to tolerate unnecessary cruelty to animals for science and entertainment. If we continue with our past crimes against these creatures we will be remembered as cruel and inhuman by the generations of the future.  <http://www.custom-essays.org/essay_types/Argumentative_Essay.html>   |  | | --- | |  |   Write an **argumentative essay** of no more than **350 words** on ***one*** of the following topics:   1. Cigarette Production should not be legalized. 2. Abortion should not be prohibited. 3. Innovations are making us lazier. 4. Machines are taking away jobs from human. 5. Dangerous sports like wrestling, martial arts or rugby should be banned. 6. Technology is disconnecting people more than before. 7. Are humans becoming too dependent on technology? 8. Does homework really help students learn or does it just cause unnecessary stress on students? 9. Is a college degree necessary to success?   Argue for or against your chosen topic. The essay must have: an introductory paragraph; two body paragraphs in support of your arguments; a body paragraph with counterargument and refutation; and a concluding paragraph. |