

Argumentative Essay

Definition of Argumentative Essay

An argumentative [essay](#) is a type of essay that presents arguments about both sides of an issue. It could be that both sides are presented equally balanced, or it could be that one side is presented more forcefully than the other. It all depends on the writer, and what side he supports the most. The general structure of an argumentative essay follows this format:

Introduction: Attention Grabber / hook, [Background Information](#), [Thesis](#) Statement

Body: Three body paragraphs (three major arguments)

Counterargument: An [argument](#) to refute earlier arguments and give weight to the actual position

Conclusion: Rephrasing the [thesis statement](#), major points, call to attention, or [concluding remarks](#).

Models for Argumentative Essays

There are two major models besides this structure given above, which is called a classical model. Two other models are the Toulmin and Rogerian models.

Toulmin model is comprised of an introduction with a [claim](#) or thesis, followed by presentation of data to support the claim. Warrants are then listed for the reasons to support the claim with backing and rebuttals. However, the Rogerian model asks to weigh two options, lists strengths and weaknesses of both options, and gives a recommendation after an analysis.

Examples of Argumentative Essay in Literature

Example #1: *Put a Little Science in Your Life* (by Brian Greene)

“When we consider the ubiquity of cellphones, iPods, personal computers and the Internet, it’s easy to see how science (and the technology to which it leads) is woven into the fabric of our day-to-day [activities](#). When we benefit from CT scanners, M.R.I. devices, pacemakers and arterial stents, we can immediately appreciate how science affects the quality of our lives. When we assess the state of the world, and identify looming challenges like climate change, global pandemics, security threats and diminishing resources, we don’t hesitate in turning to science to gauge the problems and find solutions.

And when we look at the wealth of opportunities hovering on the horizon—stem cells, genomic sequencing, personalized medicine, longevity research, nanoscience, brain-machine interface, quantum computers, space technology—we realize how crucial it is to cultivate a general public that can engage with scientific issues; there’s simply no other way that as a society we will be prepared to make informed decisions on a range of issues that will shape the future.”

These two paragraphs present an argument about two scientific fields — digital products and biotechnology. It has also given full supporting details with names.

Example #2: *Boys Here, Girls There: Sure, If Equality’s the Goal* (by Karen Stabiner)

“The first objections last week came from the National Organization for Women and the New York Civil Liberties Union, both of which opposed the opening of TYWLS in the fall of 1996. The two groups continue to insist—as though it were 1896 and they were arguing Plessy v. Ferguson—that separate can never be equal. I appreciate NOW’s wariness of the Bush administration’s endorsement of single-sex public schools, since I am of the generation that still considers the label “feminist” to be a compliment—and many feminists still fear that any public

acknowledgment of differences between the sexes will hinder their fight for equality.”

This paragraph by Karen Stabiner presents an objection to the argument of separation between public schools. It has been fully supported with evidences of the court case.

Example #3: *The Flight from Conversation* (by Sherry Turkle)

“We’ve become accustomed to a new way of being “alone together.” Technology-enabled, we are able to be with one another, and also elsewhere, connected to wherever we want to be. We want to customize our lives. We want to move in and out of where we are because the thing we value most is control over where we focus our attention. We have gotten used to the idea of being in a tribe of one, loyal to our own party.”

This is an argument by Sherry Turkle, beautifully presented it in the first person plural dialogues. However, it is clear that this is part of a greater argument instead of the essay.

Function of Argumentative Essay

An argumentative essay presents both sides of an issue. However, it presents one side more positively or meticulously than the other one, so that readers could be swayed to the one the author intends. The major function of this type of essays is to present a case before the readers in a convincing manner, showing them the complete picture.