

Argumentative Essay Outline/Graphic Organizer

Purpose of an Argumentative Essay:

- The broad purpose of an argumentative essay is to logically lead the reader through your perspective or belief.
- The ending goal of an argumentative essay is to have the reader agree with your perspective or belief.
- An argumentative essay is different from an Expository essay because it has:
 - A Counter-Argument
 - A Rebuttal

How to outline an Argumentative Essay:

- The easiest way to outline and organize an argumentative essay is to create a graphic organizer. The following steps are the steps that I took my students through to organize their beginning aspects of an argumentative essay.
 1. Grab a blank sheet of paper.
 2. Fold the sheet of paper from top to bottom.
 3. Fold again left to right.
 4. Fold again top to bottom.
 5. Press hard to make the creases evident.
 6. Open the paper back up.
 7. You should have 8 boxes created by the creases. However, we are going to pretend there is not crease separating the top and bottom two boxes because we only need 6 boxes to represent the 6 paragraphs.
 8. Take a marker, pen, or pencil and outline the middle 4 boxes.
 9. Starting in the top left corner, write numbers 1-6 in each of the 6 boxes.
 10. Below is a table that represents what your paper should look like.

1 (Introduction)	
2 (Reason1/Body paragraph1)	3 (Reason2/Body paragraph2)
4 (Reason3/Body paragraph3)	5 (Counter-argument & Rebuttal)
6 (Conclusion)	

**What is written in the parentheses is the paragraph that each box represents. You do not write these.

Box-by-Box Breakdown:

Argument: A puppy for Christmas

Box 1: Introduction

- The introduction is written the same as an Expository essay. It contains **3 sentences**. The **first** sentence is the **Hook**. (For further information on a Hook, please see the attached PowerPoint on Unit 2, Week 1, Day 1 on my Weebly, sarabjones.weebly.com). The **second** sentence is a basic transition to lead to you **Thesis Statement**, which is your **third** sentence.
- Thesis Statement:
 - The thesis statement for an essay is written just like a topic sentence for a paragraph. It answers questions that are asked in the prompt or, in this instance, the argument.
 - The argument we used in class is to argue to your parents* that you want a puppy for Christmas.
 - *Remember this is not a letter to your parents. You are not addressing your parents directly. Anyone should be able to pick up your essay and feel as if you are arguing with him or her.
- In box 1, write your thesis statement.

1.

Thesis: All I want for Christmas is a puppy.

Box 2: Reason #1 why you want a puppy

- Box #2 begins your first body paragraph.
- Just like in an expository essay, the Body paragraphs follow the basic SBJ Method. (See my Weebly page for notes on the SBJ Method).
- For the sake of organizing, we are going to only write the **Topic Sentence**.
 - Topic Sentence:
 - Unlike in a simple paragraph, the topic sentence for an argumentative essay provides support (reasons) for the argument given in the **Thesis Statement**.
 - The topic sentence should begin with **First of all**,
 - We use transition words and phrases, like “first of all,” to logically bring the reader through the paper and through your argument.
- In box 2, write your topic sentence for your first body paragraph.

2.

First of all, I need a puppy for Christmas because it helps to teach responsibility.

Box 3: Reason #2 why you want a puppy

- Box 3 is another body paragraph that follows the same formatting as Box 2.
- The **Topic Sentence** for Box 3 should begin “**Second of all,**”.
- In Box 3, write your topic sentence for your second body paragraph.

3.
Second of all, I want a puppy to keep me company when I'm lonely.

Box 4: Reason #3 why you want a puppy

- Box 4 is another body paragraph that follows the same formatting as Box 2.
- The **Topic Sentence** for Box 4 should begin “**Third of all,**”.
- In Box 4, write your topic sentence for your second body paragraph.

4.
Third of all, I want a puppy to help protect me.

Box 5: Counter-Argument and Rebuttal

- The **Counter-Argument** presents the one reason from the opposing side (the side that says you shouldn't have a puppy).
- The **Counter-Argument** is structured the same way as the body paragraphs in that they both use the SBJ Method.
- The **Counter-Argument** begins with the transitional phrase “**You may argue that** (insert reason why you shouldn't have a puppy)”
- In Box 5, write your **Counter-Argument**.

5.
You may argue that a puppy is too much responsibility.

- The **Counter-Argument** is in the **Topic Sentence** position of the SBJ Method.
- You complete the **Supporting Detail, Textual Evidence, and Explanation** as if you are arguing for the opposing side.
- In the **Counter-Argument**, the **Conclusion Sentence** becomes your **Rebuttal**.
 - **Rebuttal:**
 - ... is essentially the counter argument to the counter argument.
 - It moves the shoots the down the counter-argument so it is no longer usable.
 - The **Rebuttal** begins with the transitional phrase, “**While this argument is valid,**”.
- Write out your *entire* Counter-Argument paragraph with the **Rebuttal** as the conclusion sentence.

5.

T.S. *You may argue that* a puppy is too much responsibility.

S.D. A dog requires someone to feed, potty train, and take for a walk.

T.E. For example, my responsibilities include my chores and cleaning my room.

Ex. It is a lot to take care of a new puppy and do everything else.

C.S. *While this argument is valid,* I have shown I am responsible by doing my chores and taking care of my room.

Box 6: Conclusion

- The conclusion paragraph is written just like the Conclusion sentence in the SBJ method, except the conclusion paragraph is longer (3 sentences).
- In the conclusion paragraph, you bring the reader back to your main argument (wanting a puppy for Christmas) and why you deserve that puppy.
- Remember to not cram all of this information into one sentence; you have 3 sentences to complete your thought.