

Writing the Persuasive Essay

What is a persuasive/argument essay?

In persuasive writing, a writer takes a position FOR or AGAINST an issue and writes to convince the reader to believe or do something

Persuasive writing, also known as the argument essay, utilizes logic and reason to show that one idea is more legitimate than another idea. It attempts to persuade a reader to adopt a certain point of view or to take a particular action. The argument must always use sound reasoning and solid evidence by stating facts, giving logical reasons, using examples, and quoting experts.

When planning a persuasive essay, follow these steps

1. Choose your position. Which side of the issue or problem are you going to write about, and what solution will you offer? Know the purpose of your essay.
2. Analyze your audience. Decide if your audience agrees with you, is neutral, or disagrees with your position.
3. Research your topic. A persuasive essay must provide specific and convincing evidence. Often it is necessary to go beyond your own knowledge and experience. You might need to go to the library or interview people who are experts on your topic.
4. Structure your essay. Figure out what evidence you will include and in what order you will present the evidence. Remember to consider your purpose, your audience, and your topic.

The following criteria are essential to produce an effective argument

- Be well informed about your topic. To add to your knowledge of a topic, read thoroughly about it, using legitimate sources. Take notes.
- Test your thesis. Your thesis, i.e., argument, must have two sides. It must be debatable. If you can write down a thesis statement directly opposing your own, you will ensure that your own argument is debatable.
- Disprove the opposing argument. Understand the opposite viewpoint of your position and then counter it by providing contrasting evidence or by finding mistakes and inconsistencies in the logic of the opposing argument.
- Support your position with evidence. Remember that your evidence must appeal to reason.

Persuasive Essay Outline

Introduction:

- A. Get the readers attention by using a "hook."
- B. Give some background information if necessary.
- C. Thesis or focus statement.

I. First argument or reason to support your position:

- A. Topic sentence explaining your point and reason
- B. Possible concession toward opposing argument
- C. Elaboration to back your point.
- D. Clincher

II. Second argument or reason to support your position:

- A. Topic sentence explaining your point and reason
- B. Possible concession toward opposing argument
- C. Elaboration to back your point.
- D. Clincher

III. Third argument or reason to support your position:

- A. Topic sentence explaining your point and reason
- B. Possible concession toward opposing argument
- C. Elaboration to back your point.
- D. Clincher

IV. Opposing Viewpoint: (This is optional, however highly recommended, so that the reader will know you have considered another point of view and have a rebuttal to it.)

- A. Opposing point to your argument.
- B. Your rebuttal to the opposing point.
- C. Elaboration to back your rebuttal.

Conclusion:

- A. Summary of main points or reasons
 - B. Restate thesis statement.
 - C. Personal comment or a call to action.
-

THE RUBRIC

The rubric to be used for the Readiness Assessment Writing prompt follows.

Score Point: 0

The response is completely irrelevant or incorrect, or there is no response.

Score Point: 1

The response provides evidence of an attempt to write an essay that offers an opinion or argument.

- Weakly states or alludes to an opinion or claim
- Has minimal support for opinion or claim
- May be too brief to demonstrate an organizational structure
- Makes no attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claims
- Uses words that are inappropriate, overly simple, or unclear
- Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section
- Has errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning

Score Point: 2

The response is an incomplete or oversimplified essay that develops and supports an opinion or argument.

- Attempts to establish an opinion or claim
- Develops, sometimes unevenly, reasons and/or evidence to support opinion or claim
- Attempts to use an organizational structure
- Makes little, if any, attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claims
- Uses simple language, which sometimes lacks clarity
- Provides a weak concluding statement or section
- May have errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning

Score Point: 3

The response is a complete essay that develops and supports an opinion or argument.

- Clearly introduces an opinion or claim
- Uses reasoning and evidence to support opinion or claim
- Uses an organizational structure to present reasons and relevant evidence
- Attempts to acknowledge and/or counter opposing claims, as appropriate
- Uses clear word choice
- Uses words and/or phrases to connect ideas
- Uses an appropriate tone
- Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the ideas presented
- Has few, if any, errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning

Score Point: 4

The response is a well-developed essay that develops and supports an opinion or argument.

- Effectively introduces an opinion or claim
- Uses logical, credible, and relevant reasoning and evidence to support opinion or claim
- Uses an organizational strategy to present reasons and relevant evidence
- Acknowledges and counters opposing claims, as appropriate
- Uses precise and purposeful word choice
- Uses words, phrases, and/or clauses that effectively connect and show relationships among ideas
- Uses and maintains an appropriate tone
- Provides a strong concluding statement or section that logically follows from the ideas presented
- Has no errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning