

The Classical Organization of the Persuasion Essay

- I: Introduction/Narration
- a) Presentation of issue
 - b) Statement of thesis

More specifically:

- a) Attention-getting sentence
- b) Recognize audience and establish your own credibility. Give background explanation of the issue or problem.
- c) Write into the introduction the deductive chain (minor premise).
- d) State your thesis (your proposal)--(major premise).

- II: Confirmation
- a) first argument
 - b) second argument
 - c) third argument
 - d) fourth argument

Each argument given must not only be logical but also pass the test of factual evidence:

1. Is it relevant? Does it truly fit the thesis?
2. Is the evidence current? Have you checked into recent developments or up-to-date facts? Find at least one article on your topic to use for support. Be sure to document any source you use.
3. Is the evidence specific? Have you chosen facts that not only support your thesis but also are clear and concise? What testimony will support you?

Present evidence to prove each minor premise.

- III: Concession/Refutation
- a) Refute opposing views (concede a point).
 - b) Anticipate objections.
 1. What are the most important opposing arguments? Can you concede to any of these, yet not weaken your thesis?
 2. What are the best possible ways to refute the opposition?
 3. Have you considered objections?
 4. Have you dealt with possible misunderstandings in a logical way?
 5. Have you considered unclear terms and possible connotative meanings which the reader may apply to your wording?

- IV: Conclusion
- a) Restate your major premise and summarize the principal arguments.

- b) Create a sense of closure or finality.
- c) If you can, provide a strong clincher sentence at the end (thought-provoking, appeal to sense of duty or morality).

Strategies for the Persuasive Essay

INTRODUCTION:

THESIS PARAGRAPH

- OPEN YOUR ESSAY WITH A SENTENCE THAT ADDRESSES YOUR SPECIFIC AUDIENCE AND GRABS THEIR ATTENTION.
- STATE YOUR CLAIM AND INFORM YOUR AUDIENCE THAT YOU WISH TO PRESENT A PROPOSAL OR ALTERNATIVE POINT OF VIEW.
- DEVELOP ETHICAL APPEAL WITH YOUR AUDIENCE BY INFORMING THEM OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHY THEY SHOULD BE INTERESTED IN YOUR OPINION.

NARRATION OR PRESENTATION OF ISSUES

- IF YOUR AUDIENCE NEEDS BACKGROUND INFORMATION OR DATA, INCLUDE THAT INFORMATION HERE IN THE INTRODUCTION.
- CHECK YOUR TONE TO SEE THAT IT IS MODERATE AND CLEAR. YOU DO NOT WANT TO SOUND HOSTILE OR ANGRY.

BODY:

Confirmation

- Present evidence to prove that each main point of your argument is true.
- Point out the weak areas in the opposition's opinion.

Refutation

- If the opposition has any valid points to his/her point of view, you will need to admit these.

CONCLUSION:

- Summarize in an interesting and forceful manner and restate your major premise.

Persuasive Writing The Argument

Terminology you should know:

- A. Argument is an attempt to persuade through logic.
 - 1. Win respect.
 - 2. Stimulate action.
 - 3. Earn respectful consideration.
- B. A suitable issue is a significant and controversial subject.
- C. Consider all sides of the issue. Make a pro/con list. Research points you do not understand and document.
- D Take a stand by forming an opinion on the issue.

To arrive at an opinion the writer must arrive at the truth. To do so he/she may use inductive or deductive reasoning.

Inductive reasoning is formed by basing a conclusion on a series of observations. For example, if you observed on the first day of classes that all your teachers were wearing jeans, you might conclude that all teachers at JCCC are informal. However, upon a longer observation (for, let's say, several months) you might draw a different conclusion.

Deductive reasoning is a process which proceeds from a general statement or a general law and leads to a specific necessary conclusion.

The classic form of deductive reasoning is the syllogism.

Major premise:	All spiders have eight legs.
Minor premise:	All black widows are spiders.
Conclusion or claim:	<u>Therefore</u> , all black widows have eight legs.

Formula-- A = B (major premise)
 C = A (minor premise)
Therefore, C = B (conclusion)

Deductive reasoning helps you to make logical connections between your statements. Inductive reasoning can help you to observe particular occurrences and come to a general conclusion. Deduction can help make a specific conclusion.

Logical Fallacies

In any kind of reasoning there can be fallacies. Logical fallacies are statements that are sensible in appearance but deceiving in reality.

Hasty generalization--Any generalization made after short observation.

Example: *The strawberries on the top look good, so all the berries in the box must be good.*

Post hoc ergo propter hoc--"After this, therefore because of this."

Example: *After I walked under a ladder, I lost \$25, so walking under the ladder caused my loss.*

False analogy--Comparing things that are somewhat alike but not enough so as to draw certain conclusion. Analogies, to be used effectively, must be carried through.

Example: *Life is like a box of chocolates.*

Faulty use of authority--Quoting sources without documentation, misquoting or quoting out of context.

Non-sequitur--"It does not follow." Using irrelevant proof to buttress a claim.

Example: *It rained because I just washed my car.*

Stereotype--Standardized mental image which looks at group characteristics rather than individual.

Example: *The Japanese are highly skilled in technology.*

Argumentum ad hominem--"Against the man." Attacking the person rather than the argument.

Example: *Bill Clinton has been accused of adultery, so his ideas on how to improve the economy probably won't work.*

Faulty emotional appeal--Appeal to pity.

Example: *I should get a raise in salary because I have two children.*

Clouding the issue (Red Herring)--Bringing another argument in to detract some major argument. Frequently a diversionary tactics of politicians who change the focus of the discussion to avoid answering a question

Example: *Even though I didn't follow the assignment guidelines for this paper, I still deserve at least a A- on it. After all, I didn't misspell any of the words.*

Begging the question--Making a statement which assumes that the issue being argued has already been decided.

Example: *If we are to maintain our lead in space exploration, we must have more money.*

Appeals

1. Ethical--Appealing to one's values or morals.
Examples: abortion issue
 illegal drugs
 family values
2. Emotional--Appealing through prejudice--highly sensitive.
Examples: abortion issue
 driving age
3. Logical--good reasons built on deductive reasoning.

Developing Your Arguments

Arguments are reasoning processes in which a conclusion is inferred from premises.

Premises:

1. Statements of fact are the most reliable premise; however, different conclusions can be inferred from different facts. Therefore, facts must be substantial and used correctly.
2. Judgments are conclusions inferred from facts--syllogism.
3. Expert testimony is a statement made by a person presumed to be an authority on the subject. Usually a statement of fact or a judgment, therefore consider the following inferences.

Inferences:

1. Generalization--Draws a conclusion about a whole class from a study of some of its members (surveys, polls). The risk is in not knowing how many should be polled or observed. Random sampling is a safeguard. Also avoid use of the word *all*.
2. Causal Relation--Development of the argument from cause to effect or effect to cause.
3. Causal Generalization--Combines points 1 and 2 to develop an argument.
4. Analogy--Using a comparison to make an argument.
Example: Silence like a cancer grows (as an argument for what apathy can do).