

Organizing Your Argument

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How to Develop an Argument?

- An argument involves the process of establishing a claim and then proving it with evidence (facts and inferences).
- Determining your claim simply involves moving from a working thesis to a final thesis statement.

Organizing your Argument

- Title
- Introduction
 - Thesis statement
- Body Paragraphs
 - Constructing Topic Sentences
 - Building Main Points
 - Countering the Opposition
- Conclusion

Title: What is its function?

- Introduces the topic of discussion to the audience
- Generates reader interest in the argument

Creating a Title

- Try to grab attention by
 - offering a provocative image
 - picking up on words or examples offered in the body or conclusion of the paper
 - asking a question
- Avoid titles that are too general or lack character

Creating a Title

- Name a general subject, followed by a colon, and followed by a phrase that renames the subject.
 - *Learning to Learn: the Impact of strategy Training*
- Name a general subject and narrow it down with prepositional phrases.
 - *Cultural Knowledge in Translation*

Creating a Title

- Name a general subject and cite a specific work that will illuminate the topic.
 - *Religious Imagery in Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury*
- Name a general subject, followed by a colon, and followed by a phrase that describes the type of study.
 - *Consciousness-raising Tasks: a Learner Perspective*

Creating Title

- Name a general subject, followed by a colon, and followed by a question.
 - One-Month Teacher Training Courses: Time for Change?
- Establish a specific comparison.
 - Religious Imagery in Mamaday's *the Names* and Storm's *Seven Arrows*)

What is an introduction?

- Acquaints the reader with the topic and purpose of the paper
- Provides background for the thesis
- Introduces the thesis statement
- Offers a plan for the ensuing argument

How to develop a thesis statement?

- Decide which claim you want to make
- Bring that claim into sharp focus
- Express your thesis in one sentence
- An assertion made in the main clause followed by a number of qualifying clauses

How to develop a thesis statement?

- An example thesis statement
 - *When men and women in our society talk to each other, they can fail to communicate because research indicates that men and women have different concepts of what 'communication' means.*

Body Paragraphs

- Body paragraphs build upon the thesis made in the introduction
- Organize with the use of topic sentences that illustrate the main idea of each paragraph.
- Offering a brief explanation of the history or recent developments in your topic within the early body paragraphs can help the audience to become familiarized with your topic and the complexity of the issue.

Body Paragraphs

- Paragraphs may be ordered in several ways, depending upon the topic and purpose of your argument:
 - General to specific information
 - Most important point to least important point
 - Weakest claim to strongest claim

Body Paragraphs

- Addressing the claims of the opposition is an important component in building a convincing argument.
- It demonstrates your credibility as a writer-you have researched multiple sides of the argument and have come to an informed decision.

Body Paragraphs

- Counterarguments may be located at various locations within your body paragraphs.
- You may choose to
 - build each of your main points as a contrast to oppositional claims.
 - offer a counterargument after you have articulated your main claims

Body Paragraphs

- Consider your audience when you offer your counterargument.
- Conceding to some of your opposition's concerns can demonstrate respect for their opinions.
- Remain tactful yet firm.
 - Using rude or deprecating language can cause your audience to reject your position without carefully considering your claims.

Body Paragraphs

- More attention should be paid to the food and beverage choices available to elementary school children.
- Make an assertion
- vague

Thesis Statement

- Because half of the elementary school children consume nine times the recommended daily allowance of sugar school should be required to replace the beverages in soda machines with healthy alternatives.
- Specific
- Answer the questions: who and what

Thesis Statement

- My family is an extended family.
- While most American families would view consanguineal marriage as a threat to nuclear family structure, many Iranian families, like my own, believe that these marriages help reinforce kinship ties in an extended family.

Thesis Statement

- Companies need to exploit the marketing potential of the internet and web pages can provide both advertising and customer support.
- A weak thesis due to confusion about the central idea.

Thesis Statement

- Because the internet is filled with tremendous marketing potential companies should exploit this potential by using web-pages that offer both advertising and customer support.
- Strong thesis because it shows the relationship between the two ideas.

Thesis Statement

- Hunger is a problem across the world.
- Hunger persists in Angola because jobs are scarce and farming in the infertile soil is rarely profitable.
- More specific and it identifies the reasons for hunger.

Outline

- During pre-writing you can make a working outline an outline that helps you in drafting your paper. It helps you answer the question: how am I going to present my information given my thesis statement, my assignment and my audience.

Outline

- An outline supports the thesis
- It establishes the order and relationship of the major ideas.
- It clarifies the relationship of the major and minor points
- Your job as a writer is to find the relationship between your ideas.

Outline

- Approaches to thinking:
- Cause and effect
- Comparison and contrast
- Problem and solution, etc.
- These approaches can help you go through your ideas and organize them into a logical order.

Outline

- Formal outline
 - an outline that serves as a guide to your paper for your readers. It lays out your main points and sub-points for your reader.
 - This will normally produced after you have developed your paper.

Outline

- You need a written plan to help you organize the different parts of your paper. It will enable you to think over your notes from different perspectives and devise a plan appropriate for your thesis, audience and assignment.
- An outline which accompanies a final draft can function as a table of contents for the reader.

Evidence

- Collecting Evidence
 - After you have formulated your thesis you need to collect evidence to strengthen your thesis and any assertion you make in relation to your thesis.

Evidence

- In order to use evidence effectively, you need to integrate it smoothly into your essay by following this pattern:
- State your claim
- Give your evidence remembering to relate it to your claim
- Comment on the evidence to show how it supports your claim

Evidence

- Today, Americans are too self-centred. Even our families don't matter so much anymore as they once did. Other people and activities take precedence. In fact, that evidence shows that most American families no longer eat together, preferring instead to eat on the go while rushing to the next appointment (Gleick 148). Sit-down meals are a time to share and connect with others; however that connection has become less valued, as families begin to prize individual activities over shared time, promoting self-centredness over group identities.

Evidence

- Today, we are too self-centred. “We are consumers-on-the-run ... the very notion of the family meal as a sit-down occasion is vanishing. Adults and children alike eat ... on the way to their next activity” (Gleick 148). Everything is about what we want.

Evidence

- Today, we are too self-centred. Even our families don't matter s much anymore as they once did. Other people and activities take precedence, as James Gleick says in his book *Faster* "we are consumers-on-the-run ... the very notion of the family meal as a sit-down occasion is vanishing. Adults and children alike eat ... on the way to their next activity" (148). Sit-down meals are a time to share and connect with others; however that connection has become less valued, as families begin to prize individual activities over shared time, promoting self-centredness over group identities.

Evidence

- **Quoting:** According to source X, [“direct quotation” ([date or page]).
- **Paraphrasing:** Although source Z argues that [his/her point in your own words], a better way to view the issue is [you own point] ([citation]).
- **Summarizing:** In her book, source P’s main points are Q, R. and S [citation].

Evidence

- Questions to ask when revising your paper:
- Have I offered my reader evidence to substantiate each assertion I make in my paper?
- Do I thoroughly explain why/how my evidence back up my ideas?
- Do I avoid generalising by specifically explaining how my evidence is representative?
- Do I provide evidence that not only confirms but also qualifies my paper's main claims?
- Do I use my evidence to test and evolve my ideas rather than to just confirm them?
- Do I cite my sources thoroughly and correctly?

Analysis

- The process of putting together your argument is called analysis
- Analysis interprets evidence in order to support, test, and/or refine a claim.
- The chief claim in a critical paper is called the thesis.
- The thesis provides the controlling idea of a paper and should be original (not obvious), assertive and arguable.
- A strong thesis also requires evidence to support and develop it because without evidence a claim is merely an unsubstantiated idea or opinion.

Body Paragraphs

- Paragraph structure
- Introduction: topic sentence and any other sentences giving background information or provide transition
- Body: follows the introduction; discusses the controlling idea, using facts, argument, analysis, examples, or other information.
- Conclusion: summarises the connection between the information discussed in the body and the paragraph's controlling idea.

Coherence

- Coherence
- Each sentence relates clearly to the topic sentence.
- Each sentence flows smoothly into the next without obvious shifts or jumps.
- Each sentence highlights the ties between old and new information to make the structure of ideas or arguments clear to the reader.

Coherence

- Create parallel structures.
- Be consistent in point of view, verb tense, and number.
- Use transition words or phrases between sentences and between paragraphs.