

## **THE PERSUASIVE ESSAY FORMAT**

### **THE FIRST PARAGRAPH: THE INTRODUCTION SHOULD HAVE A HOOK TO CATCH THE READER'S ATTENTION.**

1) Begins with a topic sentence that introduces a general theme.

- Strong statement
- A statistic
- An anecdote
- A question
- An unusual detail
- A quotation
- An outrageous statement

2) Follows the topic sentence with sentences that narrow the focus of the theme, so that it is less general.

3) Introduces the author of the text you are writing about.

4) Introduces the title of that text.

5) Narrows the discussion of the topic by identifying an issue or problem.

6) Finishes by making a debatable claim, a **THESIS STATEMENT**, which is defined as a debatable point/claim. Always locate the thesis statement as the final sentence of the introductory paragraph, for students will be graded on this.

#### ***Your thesis should ALWAYS:***

- **STATE THE TOPIC OF YOUR ESSAY**
- **PLACE PRATICAL LIMITS ON THE CHOSEN TOPIC**
- **SUGGEST THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PAPER**

### **BODY PARAGRAPHS: THE FUNCTION OF THE BODY OF YOUR PAPER IS TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE WHICH SUPPORTS THE OPINION THAT YOU STATED IN YOU THESIS**

1) Begin with topic sentences that clearly relate to the topic, or issue, or problem, that was identified in the introductory paragraph.

2) Sentences that elaborate on the issue, or problem discussed in the introductory paragraph, and also demonstrates a clear connection to the thesis statement.

3) A sentence or sentences that make a claim about the topic, issue, problem.

4) A quote from the text you are analyzing that supports your claim.

5) Your interpretation of that quote, which explains how you arrived at your conclusion, and also demonstrates a clear connection to the thesis statement.

\* \* 6) Provide counter argument to anticipated opposition in one of the three required paragraphs

Body paragraphs employ the One, Two, Three Rule, which is:

**1. Make a debatable claim.**

**2. Support the claim with a quote.**

**3. Explain the connection between your claim and the prompt/quote, which means you make an intellectual conclusion.**

### **CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH: FINISH YOUR ESSAY BY SUMMARIZING THE MOST IMPORTANT DETAILS AND RESTATE WHAT IT IS YOU WANT THE READ TO DO OR BELIEVE.**

1) Begins with a topic sentence that clearly relates to the topic, or issue, or problem, that was identified in the introductory paragraph.

2) Sentences that make connections with, or revisit, points from your introductory paragraph and your body paragraphs. These points now serve to close your argument.

3) A synthesis of these points that clearly demonstrates the focus of your thesis statement.

4) A final comment, or intellectual conclusion of sorts that points out the larger significance of your argument.

## **THINGS TO AVOID:**

- *Do not use contractions.*
- *Do not use first person pronouns such as "I" "me" "my."*
- *Do not use second person pronouns such as "you" "your" "yours."*
- *Do not engage in personal stories, meaning stories of your own life experiences, or the experiences of friends, family, and so on.*
- *Do not begin sentences with conjunctions: but, and, or, nor, for, so, yet.*
- *Do not pose any questions in any assignments. This means, quite literally, not to use questions. Make statements instead.*
- *Do not quote the bible or allude to religion in any way.*
- *Avoid any form of direct address to the reader, such as "think about the fact that . . ."*
- *Avoid too casual of a prose style, such as sentences that begin with words like "well, sure, now, yes, no."*