

Argument Notes

Notes About Taking a Stand and Proposing a Solution

These two types of writing are often called argumentation or persuasion. In order to be successful at this type of writing, there are several things you need to consider. These include:

- Knowing why you believe what you believe
- Knowing enough about your topic that you are completely comfortable with it
- Knowing what the opposition to your topic is and having the ability to counter its arguments
- Knowing your audience and what its beliefs and/or convictions may already be concerning your topic

Many times when people think of argumentative writing, they think that their topic must be something of HUGE importance. Actually, this is not true. One of the best argumentative papers I ever read was a paper which argued for a real traffic light at the intersection of Highway 62 and Highway 105. The student had been involved in an accident at that intersection, and she believed very strongly that something more than a four-way stop or flashing light was needed at the intersection. No one outside of Orange, TX, could possibly care about her topic, but she felt strongly about the subject, and as a consequence, her readers did, too.

First, you need to find an issue and then make sure you know enough about it to write convincingly. Your prewriting stage is important with an argumentative paper. If you don't do enough brainstorming and inventing of ideas, you will have a paper which is slim on content and unconvincing to your reader.

Organization in an argumentation paper is important. One of the things your book remarks on is refuting your opposition. **THIS IS AN IMPORTANT POINT!** Always acknowledge the fact that you do have an opposition. If you write a paper without acknowledging the opposition and refuting at least one point of argument, your reader will wonder what you have to hide. To acknowledge and refute your opposition shows that you have thought your argument through well and that you have considered all aspects of your topic.

Many students find it strange how easily they can write the opposition's argument as opposed to their own. In fact, we can often argue the other side of the argument better than our own because we have to spend more time anticipating the opposition's arguments and our reaction to them.

If you wish to propose a solution to a problem, you must first take a stand on the topic. Once your reader knows how you stand on an issue, then you can put forth your solution. If you decide to propose a solution, make sure that you have thoroughly analyzed your proposition.