

# The Argumentative Essay

# What is an Argumentative Essay?

- The purpose of an argumentative essay is to persuade the reader to accept—or seriously consider—your opinion on a controversial issue
- Has five parts: Thesis (Claim), Reasons, Evidence, Counterclaim, Rebuttal

# Consider your Audience

- Whom are you trying to reach?
- What do they already know about your topic?
- What is your relationship with your audience and how does it impact your word choice and tone?

# THESIS/CLAIM

- Your opinion or position on an issue
- Must be supported with reasons and evidence
- Evidence can include quotes, facts, and data
- Evidence **MUST** be explained

# REASONS

- Your reasons support the thesis and form argument with your evidence.
- Typical supporting paragraph structure goes like this: topic sentence (A reason why your thesis is correct), then evidence/support of that reason. Finally, include an explanation of the evidence.
- Be sure to repeat a similar structure with every body paragraph

# COUNTER CLAIM

- Consider the opposite side
- Argues **against** your claim
- Turn against your argument to challenge it
- Then turn back to reaffirm your position

# REBUTTAL

- Turn back to your original position
- Responds to and refutes\* issues presented by the counterclaim
- \*Refute-prove (a statement or theory) to be wrong or false; disprove.

# The Opposing Side

- Ask these questions:
  - 1. Who might disagree with my position?  
Why?
  - 2. What reasons do people have for disagreeing with me?
  - 3. What evidence would support an opposing argument?



# Counter Claim

- ▣ **Key phrases to use:**
- ▣ One might object that...
- ▣ It might seem that...
- ▣ It's true that...
- ▣ Admittedly...
- ▣ Of course...

# EXAMPLE

- CLAIM: “More Americans are choosing low-carb diets because the media promotes low-carb diets as the new way to a skinnier body.”
- COUNTER CLAIM: “Some Americans don't watch television commercials because they own a DVR or Tivo, but most Americans are exposed to other forms of advertisement in magazines, newspapers, and highway billboards.

# Where to put it?

- Introduction w/Thesis
  - Reason 1 w/Evidence
  - Reason 2 w/Evidence
  - Counter Claim/Rebuttal
  - Conclusion w/Restated Thesis
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- Each of these will be one paragraph!