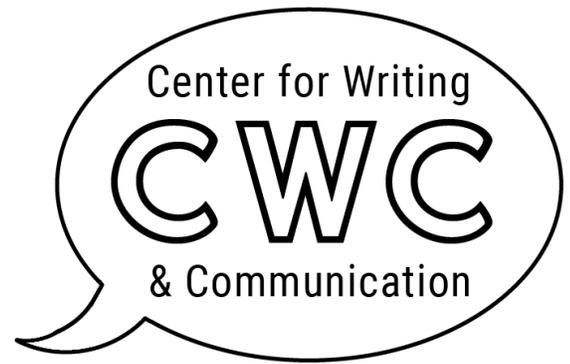


Argument Papers



An argument paper (AKA position or opinion paper) attempts to convince a reader to agree with a certain point of view, to make a particular decision or to follow a certain course of action.

Choose a good subject.

Choosing the right subject is an important first step. Try to choose a subject that allows for the possibility of persuading your reader. Avoid subjects that cannot be addressed logically.

Know who you're writing to.

- Think about your audience. Ask yourself:
- *Who are your readers?*
- *What do they already know about the subject?*
- *How are they likely to feel about it?*
- *How impartial or prejudiced are they going to be?*
- *Can you find a way to present your argument so that they will receive it logically rather than emotionally?*

Outline your main points and organize your thoughts.

Make a list of the main points you will use in your argument. Analyze each piece of evidence to see how effective it will be in proving your thesis. Avoid anything that is distorted, inaccurate, or inflammatory. Argue with solid, reasonable, fair, and relevant evidence.

Consider the opposition.

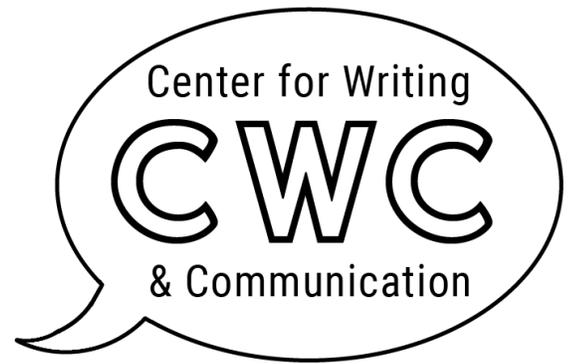
Not everyone is swayed by the same appeals, so you must be aware of your audience's probable objections or counter-arguments. Think about what might be said in rebuttal to your arguments. Make a list of all the possible counter-arguments and think of ways in which you can respond to those objections. You'll have to deal with each of these by either conceding that they exist or trying to undermine their strength.

End forcefully.

Conclusions are what your audience is most likely to remember.

- *Remind your audience of your proposition—in different words.*
- *Drive home the importance of your argument.*
- *And remember, don't wimp out at the end. Try not to use qualifying words like "I think," "In my opinion," "Maybe."*

Argument Papers



Helpful Terms

Proposition – Weighted statement used in an argument. This is the thesis statement.

Premise - Idea or statement used as evidence in an argument. Used as a basis for an argument.

Conclusion – Idea or statement used as the main point in an argument; what you are arguing for.

Argument - A group of propositions of which one is claimed to follow from the others.

Induction - A process through which the premises provide some basis for the conclusion; do not prove the conclusion positively true.

Deduction - A process through which the premises provide conclusive proof for the conclusion.