**Argument Writing Checklist**

**Introduction:** What’s the problem? **Yes Almost No**

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| **Context**: Describe the situation. Who? What? When? Where? What is the problem in this situation? What decisions will have to be made? (If your persuasive is related to a text, this is the time you’ll need to summarize it.) |  |  |  |
| **Thesis**: State your position ***clearly*** in the last sentence of the introduction and ***maintain*** this position throughout the essay. What are you trying to persuade the reader to think? |  |  |  |

**Body Paragraph 1:** Why should I believe you? h rgument nragraph **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic Sentence:** Each body paragraph begins with a topic sentence that states an argument to support your thesis. All sentences in the paragraph relate to this main idea. |  |  |  |
| **Context:** If you quote a text, you need togive a bit of background information so that someone who hasn’t read it can still follow. What was happening in the book right before your evidence? Who was speaking? What had just happened? (Who, when, where, what) |  |  |  |
| **Evidence:** Provides *strong*, evidence to support the argument you’re making in this paragraph (anecdote, fact, statistic, expert opinion, **quotes from text**). |  |  |  |
| **Elaboration: Explain** how the evidence proves your point and supports your focus/thesis statement. Why is the evidence important? Provides thoughtful and insightful analysis. (Make sure you also explain how your topic sentence supports your *thesis.)* |  |  |  |

**Body Paragraph 2:** Why should I believe you? h rgument nragraph **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic Sentence:** Each body paragraph begins with a topic sentence that states an argument to support your thesis. All sentences in the paragraph relate to this main idea. |  |  |  |
| **Context:** If you quote a text, you need togive a bit of background information so that someone who hasn’t read it can still follow. What was happening in the book right before your evidence? Who was speaking? What had just happened? (Who, when, where, what) |  |  |  |
| **Evidence:** Provides *strong*, evidence to support the argument you’re making in this paragraph (anecdote, fact, statistic, expert opinion, **quotes from text**). |  |  |  |
| **Elaboration: Explain** how the evidence proves your point and supports your focus/thesis statement. Why is the evidence important? Provides thoughtful and insightful analysis. (Make sure you also explain how your topic sentence supports your *thesis.)* |  |  |  |

**Body Paragraph 3:** Why should I believe you? h rgument nragraph **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic Sentence:** Each body paragraph begins with a topic sentence that states an argument to support your thesis. All sentences in the paragraph relate to this main idea. |  |  |  |
| **Context:** If you quote a text, you need togive a bit of background information so that someone who hasn’t read it can still follow. What was happening in the book right before your evidence? Who was speaking? What had just happened? (Who, when, where, what) |  |  |  |
| **Evidence:** Provides *strong*, evidence to support the argument you’re making in this paragraph (anecdote, fact, statistic, expert opinion, **quotes from text**). |  |  |  |
| **Elaboration: Explain** how the evidence proves your point and supports your focus/thesis statement. Why is the evidence important? Provides thoughtful and insightful analysis. (Make sure you also explain how your topic sentence supports your *thesis.)* |  |  |  |

**Counter argument:** Change their minds! **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Counter argument and rebuttal:**  Present an argument that someone might use **against** you—don’t stop there though! Then rebut their argument. In other words explain why this argument is wrong and shouldn’t be used against you! Prove you’re still right! |  |  |  |

**Conclusion:** How are you going to wrap it up?  **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Restate and summarize:** Summarize your arguments and restate your thesis. |  |  |  |
| **Big Picture:** Make a call to action. What should the reader DO after reading your essay? Vividly describe what will happen if what you suggest doesn’t happen. |  |  |  |

**Organization:** Where does everything go? **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The order of the body paragraphs** show a clear progression of ideas. The order makes sense and end the essay with a strong point. The counter argument is placed effectively. |  |  |  |
| **Each paragraph has a clear focus**. Each argument should have its own paragraph. Don’t try to discuss different arguments in the same paragraph. |  |  |  |
| **The order of details in each paragraph** makes sense. The paragraph has a beginning, middle and end. It is logical and easy to follow. |  |  |  |

**Voice:** What does it sound like? **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Uses strong, persuasive words** (i.e. *horrendous* is stronger than *bad*) Word choice is also appropriate for the audience. Don’t use “I think” or “I believe” when writing a persuasive essay. |  |  |  |
| **Uses transition** words (*After, one day, since, etc*.) to help the writing flow. It’s especially helpful to begin topic sentences with transitions like “One reason,” or “On the other hand” |  |  |  |
| Uses a **variety of sentence structures** (simple, complex, compound etc.) Don’t start every sentence the same way! Try to avoid starting any sentence with “This shows.” |  |  |  |

**Conventions:** Did you remember to proofread?  **Yes Almost No**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Uses capital letters where needed (at the beginning of a sentence, proper nouns) |  |  |  |
| Every sentence has correct punctuation. |  |  |  |
| Every sentence is complete and makes sense. (no run-ons or fragments or subject verb agreement errors!) |  |  |  |
| Spelling is correct. Watch out for (their, there, they’re; know, no; your, you’re) |  |  |  |