

Argumentative Research Paper

The Argumentative research paper is the last major writing assignment of the class. This assignment must:

- State a clear opinion about a controversial topic. The topic:
 - Can be related to your Informative Research Paper (but does not have to be).
 - Can be from your major.
 - Should be something that you agree with.
- Back up that opinion with evidence from logic and research.
 - Come up with several reasons why your side of the controversy is correct and back up those reasons with evidence from your sources.
- Be organized in a logical way, including using a thesis and topic sentences.
- Use at least 5 sources from books, magazines, the Internet or elsewhere. These sources must:
 - Be quoted, paraphrased, or summarized correctly.
 - Be cited.
 - Be from respectable, scholarly publications.
- Should follow English written format, including paragraph structure.
- Must be at least 5 pages. These must be typed on a computer and double spaced (In MS Word, change 줄 간격 from 1 줄 to 2 줄. In Hangul, change 줄 간격 from 160% to 300%). The font can be no larger than 12 pt. (If you do this correctly, your paper should look like the sample paragraph on the Fiction Assignment).

Unlike the fiction and Informative Research assignments, this assignment will be turned in only once (for a grade). You will, however, bring a first draft to class in order to be peer reviewed, and you can ask any questions you have about your paper or the assignment individually on that day. When you turn in your final draft, you should include your first draft as well, noting any changes you made due to peer review or instructor advice.

- Bring three copies on the day of peer review. The peer review will be held on:
 - Wednesday, December 5th and Monday, December 10th for the Monday/Wednesday class.
 - Thursday, December 6th and Tuesday, December 11th for the Tuesday/Thursday class.
- The final draft of the assignment is due in my office no later than the end of class time on:
 - Monday, December 17th for the Monday/Wednesday class.
 - Tuesday, December 18th for the Tuesday/Thursday class.

Argumentative Research Organization

When writing an essay in English, your paper has three major parts:

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion

These parts are slightly different in an argumentative essay than in an informative essay.

Introduction

In an argumentative essay, your introduction must include:

- An eyecatcher: This is a sentence or group of sentences that is meant to get your readers' attention so that they want to continue reading. This can be (among other things):
 - A personal story.
 - The story of another person.
 - A surprising fact or statistic.
- Background: Like the informative essay, this just provides any information your reader needs to know before starting your paper, for example, history, laws, etc.
- A Thesis: The thesis in an argumentative paper is again usually the last sentence of the first paragraph. It clearly does three things:
 - Tells the reader what your topic is.
 - Tells the reader which side of the topic you are on.
 - Tells the reader your major arguments (basically your topic sentences).

Body

Like the informative essay, your body will be the longest part of your paper, usually several paragraphs long. Each body paragraph will include:

- A topic sentence: Again, this will be the first sentence of the paragraph. Remember that it explains the whole paragraph. The topic sentences must:
 - Mention everything that is discussed in that paragraph.
 - Not mention anything that is not discussed in that paragraph.
- Several explanatory sentences: Each explanatory sentence helps to explain the main argument put forth in this paragraph. It further explains your topic sentence with extra information, including quotes, paraphrases, and summaries.

- A transition: Every body paragraph except the last one should include a transition. This introduces what the next paragraph will be about and somehow connects it to the current paragraph.

Conclusion

In an argumentative essay, the conclusion basically reviews your argument and gives your reader something to think about or do. A conclusion should include:

- A restatement of thesis: Basically, this says your thesis again, using different words.
- A summary of main points: Basically, this restates your main points (topic sentences) again in a short way. This may be the same sentence as your restatement of thesis or might be a new one.
- A draw out: A draw out gives your reader something to do or something to think about. This might include:
 - A call to action: such as writing a letter, talking to a politician, or participating in a protest.
 - A call to research: suggesting more material to read about the topic.
 - A look to the future: a consideration about future events if your argument does or does not happen.

Topic Selection

When selecting a topic for the argumentative paper, you need to consider two things:

- Is the topic controversial?
- Is the topic a good size?

Controversial

When deciding if a topic is controversial, you need to ask yourself if a reasonable person might agree or disagree with the topic. If everyone agrees or everyone disagrees, it is not controversial. This means that facts are not open for topics. The following are some bad examples of topics:

- The Korean War was bad (very few reasonable people would argue that this is not true).
- Pollution harms the environment (this is a fact).
- Smoking causes diseases (this is overwhelmingly accepted as true).

Instead of these topics, we could use something that is controversial. The following are acceptable topics:

- North and South Korea should make a plan to reunify within 10 years.
- The government should make laws limiting the amount of pollution that Korean cars can emit.
- Smoking should be banned in public places in Korea.

Size

The next thing to consider is the size of the argument. You should be able to cover all the main points in the 5 pages of the assignment. Don't choose a topic that can't be explained well in that space. Try to narrow your topics so that you can explain as much as possible. The above examples are narrow enough for that paper. Try to add limiters to your topic to make them more reasonable to cover, such as "in Korea," "in high school (middle school or college)," "in public places," "within 10 years (or any time limit)," and so on. You can also limit your topic by making it about law and not personal beliefs.

Topics

When considering a topic, anything is okay as long as you consider the two questions above. If you are having a hard time thinking of topics, consider some of the following:

- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Abortion
- Capital punishment
- Tuition at schools
- School uniforms
- Korean education
- Sex education
- Women's rights
- Minority rights
- Smoking
- Public transportation
- Health care
- Military service
- Birth Control
- Wars
- Screen quota
- Homosexuality
- Pornography
- Free trade agreements
- Violence and/or sex in media (tv, movies, comic books, etc.)
- Prison sentences
- Traditional values
- Age discrimination