The Introduction

The introduction opens the essay. It is a short paragraph – usually about THREE sentences. In an argument essay, it usually describes or summarizes both sides of the present situation and says what you are going to do in your essay.

One easy way to write the introduction for an argument or opinion essay is to write THREE sentences:

* **two**about the topic
* **one**thesis sentence

You can write either Situation or Opinion introductions. There’s not much difference between them.

* [Situation Introductions](http://writefix.com/?page_id=1715#situation)
* [Opinion Introductions](http://writefix.com/?page_id=1715#opinion)

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## Situation Introductions

Write two sentences to describe the **two sides of the present situation**. The third sentence – the Thesis sentence – will describe what you are going do in your essay.

* Sentence 1: One side of the present situation
* Sentence 2: The other side of the present situation
* Sentence 3: Thesis: What you are going to do in your essay

## Who should take care of our old people?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sentence 1 | In my country, most old people live happily with their children |
| Sentence 2 | Increasingly, however, many families cannot take care of their parents |
| Sentence 3 (Thesis) | This essay will describe some of the problems involved with taking care of old people, and discuss who should be responsible. |

## Does Aid to Poor Countries Work?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sentence 1 | For the last fifty years, poor countries have been receiving huge sums of money from rich donor countries. |
| Sentence 2 | Some of this money has improved lives, while much of it has disappeared or made no difference. |
| Sentence 3 (Thesis) | In this essay, I will discuss some arguments for and against foreign aid. |

## Should dangerous sports be banned?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sentence 1 | Every year, thousands of people are injured or killed in sports such as boxing or motor-racing. |
| Sentence 2 | Because of this, many people are opposed to such sports, and want them to be stopped or controlled. |
| Sentence 3 (Thesis) | This essay will look at some of the arguments for and against banning dangerous sports. |

## Opinion Introductions

In this kind you give two opposite opinions in the first two sentences. The third sentence says what you are going to do.

## Does space exploration benefit mankind? (1)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sentence For | Many people are excited about space exploration. |
| Sentence Against | However, others feel it is a massive waste of money |
| Sentence 3 (Thesis) | This essay will look at some of the arguments for and against space exploration. |

## Does space exploration benefit mankind? (2)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sentence For | Space, for many people, really is the final frontier. They are excited by the exploration and potential of space. |
| Sentence Against | However, not everyone agrees that this money is well-spent. Many people feel that we should solve problems here on earth before beginning our journey to space |
| Sentence 3 (Thesis) | This essay will look at some of the arguments for and against space exploration. |

## Do Athletes Deserve Their High Salaries?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sentence 1 | Everyday, we read about new record contracts and salaries earned by sportsmen and women. Some people do not agree with these huge payments |
| Sentence 2 | Others believe that our sports heroes deserve every penny. |
| Sentence 3 (Thesis) | This essay will look at some of the arguments for and against the high salaries of athletes. |

As well as situation or opinion introductions, you can use the following variations:

* Past and Present: One sentence about the situation in the past, one about the situation today.
* Here and Elsewhere: One sentence about the situation in one place, one sentence about the situation or problem in another place.
* You and Other People: One sentence about what most people do or think, one sentence about what you believe, or do, or feel.

Finally, if you are having problem thinking about an introduction, leave some space (enough for three or four sentences) and write or type it later – AFTER you write the body or conclusion.

The Body

The Body is the main part of the essay. In an argument essay, it is divided into two or three paragraphs, giving your opinion and reasons.

Each paragraph in the body is between FIVE and SEVEN sentences long.

What makes a body look good? Paragraphs, that’s the answer! If your paragraph is in good shape, your body will look good and feel good.

Here’s what you need to have in a body paragraph.

* Topic Sentence
* Argument or Reason 1
* Example, Explanation, or supporting detail
* Argument or Reason 2
* Example, Explanation, or supporting detail
* Argument or Reason 3 ***(Three is a magic number. Always aim to have 3 ideas.)***
* Example, Explanation, or supporting detail
* Paragraph summary (*optional*)

Let’s look at an example.

**Is Education Being Devalued?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Topic Sentence | People have several arguments against the need for degrees. |
| Argument or Reason 1 | They say that having so many graduates devalues a degree. |
| *Example, Explanation, or supporting detail* | People lose respect for the degree holder. |
| Argument or Reason 2 | It is also claimed that education has become a rat race,… |
| *Example, Explanation, or supporting detail* | …since graduates have to compete for jobs even after years of studying. |
| Argument or Reason 3 | Another point is that studying for such a long time leads to learners becoming inflexible. |
| *Example, Explanation, or supporting detail* | By that I mean that they know a lot about one narrow subject, but are unable to apply their skills. |
| *Even more supporting details…* | Employers, on the other hand, prefer more flexible and adaptable workers. |

*People have several arguments against the need for degrees. They say that having so many graduates devalues a degree. People lose respect for the degree holder. It is also claimed that education has become a rat race, since graduates have to compete for jobs even after years of studying. Another point is that studying for such a long time leads to learners becoming inflexible. By that I mean that they know a lot about one narrow subject, but are unable to apply their skills. Employers, on the other hand, prefer more flexible and adaptable workers.*

Conclusion

The Conclusion is the end of the essay. It is a short paragraph – about THREE sentences. It often has the same idea as the Introduction, only in different words.

Some people think of the essay as a sandwich. The Introduction and Conclusion are the bread, and the Body is the filling in the center. If the introduction looks good, people will carry on to the body. Hopefully, the conclusion will leave them with a nice taste in their mouth…

Here are some examples of conclusions. A good conclusion will:

* rephrase the question
* summarize the main ideas
* give your opinion, if you haven’t given it already
* look to the future (say what will happen if the situation continues or changes)

but will NEVER add new information.

Should we test products on animals?

*I agree that we need to make sure that animals who are used for testing new products have the minimum of suffering. However, I am convinced that animal testing is necessary, and that it will continue to benefit humans in new and wonderful ways.*

Should we beat children?

*In conclusion, physical punishment can be a useful method of discipline. However it should be the last choice for parents. If we want to build a world with less violence we must begin at home, and we must teach our children to be responsible.*

Who are the better parents – men or women?

*I think this is not an either/or question. Both men and women have strengths and skills that are important for children’s psychological growth. We need to ensure that both parents play an important role in the family in order to give children a good start in life.*

Who learns quicker – adults or children?

*Finally, I feel that we cannot generalize about children or adults being better learners. It depends on the situation and the motivation of the person, and the level of enthusiasm he or she has for learning.*

Should dangerous sports be banned?

*In summary, our society would be healthier if more people took part in sports of all kinds. We should continue to try to prevent accidents and injuries. However, we should also ensure that sports are challenging, exciting, and, above all, fun.*