

Argumentative Writing

- Includes EVIDENCE for each major reason
- Proves to the reader that a given claim is true
- Is objective and calm

Parts of an Argumentative Theme

Title

Introduction -

Introductory Paragraph

Body –

Reasons Paragraphs

Conclusion –

Concluding Paragraph

Example Introductory Paragraph

Asteroids: The New Frontier?

Are asteroids a new frontier that humans should settle? Some people think that they are. Most people think of asteroids as big rocks floating randomly around in space such as those in the asteroid field encountered by Han Solo, Princess Leia, and Chewbacca in the movie “The Empire Strikes Back” (Lucas, 1980). Nevertheless, asteroids are much more than big rocks. They are actually called “minor planets” because they orbit around the sun (“Asteroids” 1). With regard to size, some of the smallest asteroids are a little less than a mile across. The largest is about a quarter of the size of the Earth’s moon (“Asteroids” 1). With regard to location, many of them are located in the asteroid belt. This is a region between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter (“Asteroids: Overview” 1). Because of their natural resources, opportunities for jobs and investments, and potential as way stations to other planets, asteroids offer great potential as places to live and work and should be settled.

Example Introductory Paragraph

A Third Eye

A recent controversy has focused on whether all police should wear body cameras. This issue has been discussed in the press because citizens have taken photos and video clips showing police harming people during arrests. Because almost everyone has a cell phone capable of taking photos and making video clips, this type of event has happened more and more frequently. Indeed, because of their usefulness, people have recommended that the creation of these visual records should not be left to random witnesses but should be part of every-day police practice. They have suggested that body cameras should be a standard part of the police equipment and should be attached to their uniforms. Fortunately, such “body cameras” are small, light weight, and relatively inexpensive. They can cost as little as \$129 per officer (Battery Distributors 1). Because their use may protect citizens, protect the police, and result in more convictions, police departments should invest in buying body cameras and should require every officer to wear them.

Reasons Paragraphs

- **Topic/Transition Sentence**
 - **Names the claim**
 - **Names the major reason**
 - **Includes a transition**

- **Detail Sentences**
 - **Lead-off Sentences**
(Introduce a type of evidence)
 - **Follow-up Sentences**
(Provide the evidence with facts, examples, quotes, info from your resources)

Example Reasons Paragraph

Most importantly, asteroids should be settled because they contain valuable natural resources. For example, metals might be mined on asteroids that can be used back on Earth or in space. Very pure iron and nickel plus other byproducts like platinum and germanium can be used to produce steel and electronic equipment. John Lewis (1997) has calculated that the "...iron and nickel in Amun [an asteroid] have a market value of \$8,000 billion, the cobalt content adds another \$6,000 billion, and the platinum-group metals add another \$6,000 billion" (25). For another example, volatiles can also be found on asteroids. These are chemical elements and compounds with low boiling points, like sulfur, chlorine, and nitrogen. On some asteroids, volatiles like oxygen, carbon, and water might also be found. Such substances are critical to sustaining life and will aid the settlement of asteroids and the larger planets.

Example Reasons Paragraph

One reason why all police should wear body cameras is that there is evidence that some police treat citizens poorly and can even kill them needlessly. In fact, police killed more than 120 unarmed people in 2015 (“People killed” 1). Between 2014 and 2015, police killed a total of 1083 citizens (Fields 1). Examples of unarmed people who have been killed by police include Michael Brown in Missouri (“Shooting” 1) and Eric Garner in New York City (Sanburn 1). These people’s deaths were filmed by citizens, and the need for deadly force in their cases has been questioned. Not surprisingly, the actual number of people harmed needlessly is unclear because police departments often neglect to submit information. Only about 200 police departments reported fatal shootings by police out of a total of 18,000 departments in the nation (Swaine & Laughland 1). Some of the well-known cases of people being killed by police did not appear in those reports.

Example Concluding Paragraph

In conclusion, living and working on asteroids should be seriously pursued because of the resources, job opportunities, and need for way stations in space. Obviously, resources such as metals and volatiles are going to be needed in space as more and more space travel and space settlement takes place. These resources can be obtained on asteroids. Because many people are unemployed, they need the work opportunities that asteroids would provide. Mine workers, inventors, and pilots will be able to find jobs on asteroids. Because some asteroids are located near the Earth, they can be used as way stations for space travelers to obtain fuel and supplies as they go to other planets. Some scientists have suggested that some asteroids can be “nudged” into orbit around the Earth and hollowed out so that cities can be built within the hollowed-out spaces. Humans are adventurers, and they need new worlds to explore and tame. Thus, asteroids should be a new frontier to be explored, mined, and settled, and people should prepare themselves to be the next space pioneers!

Example Concluding Paragraph

To conclude, all police should wear body cameras for a variety of reasons, including protecting citizens, protecting the police, and producing more evidence that will lead to more convictions. Since body cameras are relatively new to police, the results of their use are not certain, but one study has been done. An experiment in Rialto, California, showed reduced numbers of use-of-force incidents for police wearing body cameras by 58%. Additionally, only three citizen complaints were made about police treatment during the experiment versus 24 per year in previous years (“Body worn cameras” 1). Also, one maker of body cameras claims that body cameras produce a 90% increase in early guilty pleas (Reveal Media 1) because the criminal evidence from the cameras is so clear. Certainly, these types of results save police and justice departments money. If there are fewer use-of-force incidents, there will be fewer injuries to police and citizens and fewer lawsuits for injuries. If there are fewer complaints, fewer investigations have to be conducted. If there are more guilty pleas, trials can be avoided, and attorneys and judges do not have to be paid. In other words, because lives and money can be saved when body cameras are used by police, they seem to be a very good investment for police departments.

Note Cards

Front of the Card

A

5

Raija Ogden, a triathlete, hit in the head by a falling drone. Needed stitches.

Back of the Card

Pg. 1

Forrest, Connor. "Twelve Drone Disasters that Show Why the FAA Hates Drones." *TechRepublic*, 20 Mar. 2015,

<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/12-drone-disasters-that-show-why-the-faa-hates-drones>.

Ref. 3, pg. 1

References (MLA Style)

Book

Wallach, Wendell. *A Dangerous Master: How to Keep Technology from Slipping Beyond Our Control*. Basic Books, 2015.

Online Articles

“Are Drones Illegal in Your State?”
MarketWatch, 25 June 2014,
[blogs.marketwatch.com/capitol
report/2014/06/25/are-drones-illegal-in-your-
state-this-map-can-tell-you](http://blogs.marketwatch.com/capitol-report/2014/06/25/are-drones-illegal-in-your-state-this-map-can-tell-you).

Lowbridge, Caroline. “Are Drones Dangerous or Harmless Fun?” *BBC News*, 5 Oct. 2015,
[http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-
34269585](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-34269585).

References (APA Style)

Book

Wallach, W. (2015). *A dangerous master: How to keep technology from slipping beyond our control*. New York: Basic Books.

Online Articles

Are drones illegal in your state? (2014, June 25). *MarketWatch*. Retrieved from: blogs.marketwatch.com/capitolreport/2014/06/25/are-drones-illegal-in-your-state-this-map-can-tell-you

Lowbridge, C. (2015, October 5). Are drones dangerous or harmless fun? *BBC News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-34269585>

In-Text Citations (MLA Style)

One reason why all police should wear body cameras is that there is evidence that some police treat citizens poorly and can even kill them needlessly. In fact, police killed more than 120 unarmed people in 2015 (“People killed” 1). Between 2014 and 2015, police killed a total of 1083 citizens (Fields 1). Examples of unarmed people who have been killed by police include Michael Brown in Missouri (“Shooting” 1) and Eric Garner in New York City (Sanburn 1). These people’s deaths were filmed by citizens, and the need for deadly force in their cases has been questioned. Not surprisingly, the actual number of people harmed needlessly is unclear because police departments often neglect to submit information. Only about 200 police departments reported fatal shootings by police out of a total of 18,000 departments in the nation (Swaine & Laughland 1). Some of the well-known cases of people being killed by police did not appear in those reports.

In-Text Citations (APA Style)

One reason why all police should wear body cameras is that there is evidence that some police treat citizens poorly and can even kill them needlessly. In fact, police killed more than 120 unarmed people in 2015 (“Police killed,” 2016). Between 2014 and 2015, police killed a total of 1083 citizens (Fields, 2015). Examples of unarmed people who have been killed by police include Michael Brown in Missouri (“Shooting of,” 2016) and Eric Garner in New York City (Sanburn, 2016). These people’s deaths were filmed by citizens, and the need for deadly force in their cases has been questioned. Not surprisingly, the actual number of people harmed needlessly is unclear because police departments often neglect to submit information. Only about 200 police departments reported fatal shootings by police out of a total of 18,000 departments in the nation (Swaine & Laughland, 2016). Some of the well-known cases of people being killed by police did not appear in those reports.

Specific Information Requiring In-text Citations

Numbers

Names

Dates

A study or experiment

Book Title or other title

Quotations

Citations for Quotations From Expository Text (MLA Style)

Block Quotation (more than 4 lines of text):

Second, Harper Lee uses stories and rumors to paint Boo Radley as a mysterious villain.

According to Scout, the narrator of the novel,

People said he went out at night when the moon was down, and peeped in windows.

When people's azaleas froze in a cold snap, it was because he had breathed on them.

Any stealthy small crimes committed in Maycomb were his work (Lee 10).

Since the townspeople had not seen Boo for years, they had created rumors about how he looked and acted...

Quotation in text (less than 4 lines of expository text)

As everyone waited for the jury's decision, Scout described the atmosphere in the courtroom as follows: "A steaming summer night was no different from a winter morning" (Lee 281). She felt chilled and shivered...

Citations for Quotations From Expository Work (APA Style)

Block Quotation (more than 40 words of expository text):

Second, Harper Lee uses stories and rumors to paint Boo Radley as a mysterious villain.

Scout reported that

People said he went out at night when the moon was down, and peeped in windows.

When people's azaleas froze in a cold snap, it was because he had breathed on them.

Any stealthy small crimes committed in

Maycomb were his work. (Lee, 1960, p. 10)

Since the townspeople had not seen Boo for years, they had created rumors about how he looked and acted...

Quotation in text (less than 40 expository words)

As everyone waited for the jury's decision, Scout described the atmosphere of the courtroom as follows: "A steaming summer night was no different from a winter morning" (Lee, 1960, p. 281). She felt chilled and shivered...

Citations for Quotations From Dialogue (MLA Style)

Block Quotation (more than 4 lines of dialogue):

Interestingly, after Mrs. Dubose dies, Atticus describes his reasons for insisting that Jem read to her by saying,

“I wanted you to see something about her—I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It’s when you know you’re licked before you begin, but you begin anyway, and you see it through no matter what” (Lee 149).

He wanted the children to understand that life is not always about winning and losing but sticking to a goal and reaching it.

Quotation in text (less than 4 lines):

Later, Atticus says to Jem and Scout, “She was the bravest person I ever knew” (Lee 149). With that statement, he told the children that they needed to understand the lesson that Mrs. Dubose taught them....

Citations for Quotations From Dialogue (APA Style)

Block Quotation (more than 40 words a character says):

Interestingly, after Mrs. Dubose dies, Atticus describes his reasons for insisting that Jem read to her by saying,

“I wanted you to see something about her—I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It’s when you know you’re licked before you begin, but you begin anyway, and you see it through no matter what.” (Lee, 1960, p. 149)

He wanted the children to understand that life is not always about winning and losing but sticking to a goal and reaching it....

Quotation in text (less than 40 words):

Later, Atticus says to Jem and Scout, “She was the bravest person I ever knew” (Lee, 1960, p. 149). With that statement, he told the children that they needed to understand the lesson that Mrs. Dubose had taught them all....

Example Signal Words

Report
Conclude
State
Reply
Say
Tell
Ask
Warn
Implore
Beg
Hold
Summarize
Explain
Teach
Plead
Wish
Cry
Agree
Grumble

Example Use of Signal Words

Within text:

Frederick reported that, “...”

The researchers concluded that, “...”

They determined that, “....”

With dialogue:

When Atticus found out, he said, “.....”

Then Jem replied, “...”

Maybelle explained, “...”