How to make an argument

5 Tips

1. Acknowledge your bias
2. Acknowledge exceptions
3. Look outside of your bias
4. Look for people who disagree with you
5. Avoid polarization

Acknowledge your bias

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Acknowledge where you've gotten your information from instead of assuming everyone believes this.

Example:

DON'T: "I never understood why college students like Starbucks"

BETTER: "All the college students I've seen at Nyack like Starbucks."

EVEN BETTER: "The 5 students I've spoken to at Nyack like Starbucks."

Acknowledge exceptions

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Acknowledge where information might exist that differs from what you believe.

Example:

"All 5 of the college students I've spoken to at Nyack like Starbucks. However, there might be other students at Nyack who don't like Starbucks. Furthermore, there might be students at other colleges who don't like Starbucks."

Look outside of your bias

Don't limit your focus to the people you've seen. Go out of your way to find information that's outside of your circle.

Example:
Ask 100 students at Nyack if they like Starbucks. If they all say yes, ask 100 students at Dominican. If they say yes too, you might be onto something.

Look for people who disagree with you

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- Go out of your way to find information that disagrees with you.
- Don't do it just to disprove them--do it to learn from them.
- Look until you find things that make you uncomfortable--then look some more.

Meet the Parents: Cats vs Dogs

Look for people who disagree with you

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Example:

"Cats make you work for your affection. They don't sell out that way dogs do."

-*Meet the Parents*

Avoid Polarization

Things are not always black and white

DON'T: People who love dogs buy them as pets and people who hate dogs buy cats instead.

DO: Some people love dogs so they buy them as pets. But some cat owners also own dogs too.

Conclusions

1. Rephrase your thesis
2. Rephrase your main points
3. Final line

Rephrasing your thesis

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Reword your thesis statement differently than in your introduction.

1. Use synonyms for key words
2. Switch out the order of words.

Rephrasing your thesis

Use synonyms

Example:
Thesis in introduction:
Spider-Man is the greatest superhero because of his super strength and his quickness.

In conclusion:
Spider-Man is the best superhero because of his enhanced strength and speed.

Rephrasing your thesis

Switch the word order

Examples:

Thesis in introduction:
Dogs make better pets than cats because they have more desirable qualities.

In conclusion:
These desirable qualities are what make dogs better pets than cats.

Rephrasing your thesis

Using synonyms AND switching the word order

Example:
Thesis in introduction:
Spider-Man is the greatest superhero because of his super strength and his quickness.

In conclusion:
His enhanced strength and speed are some reasons that Spider-Man is the best superhero.

Rephrasing your main points

Main points:

Dogs are more loyal than cats.

Dogs can learn fun tricks that cats can't.

Although cats can learn fun tricks too, it takes more time and energy than it does with dogs.

Rephrased:

As previously stated, the loyalty dogs have far exceeds the loyalty of cats.

In addition, there are many tricks dogs can learn that cats can't.

Furthermore, it takes much less time and energy to teach dogs fun tricks than it does with cats.

OR

In conclusion, two reasons dogs make better pets than cats is their loyalty and ability to learn fun tricks. Even in the case where cats can learn the same fun tricks, dogs learn them with greater ease.

Final Line

Finish strong with a line that seals the deal. Some examples to do so include:

1. Call to action--challenge the reader to do something
2. Quote--end with an interesting phrase about the topic
3. Future prediction--state what you think will happen because of this information

Final Line

Examples

Call to action: Due to all of these reasons, I believe everyone should buy a dog.

Quote: As Josh Billings says, "A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than he loves himself."

Future prediction: I believe that one day everyone will own a dog.

Works Cited Page

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    Walker, Brittany. "Learn to Write a Conclusion in Under Five Minutes!" *YouTube,* uploaded by Brittany Walker, 2 April 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zd0tP2undNo