



How to Write an Argumentative Essay

Argumentative Essays: Structure

I. Introduction

II. Body

A.2 paragraphs supporting your argument

B.1 paragraph for a counter argument

III. Conclusion



Argumentative Essays: Brainstorming

1. What do you think about the topic?
2. What are your main points?(Write down as many things as you can think of)
3. Turn each point into topic sentences for the paragraphs
4. Develop a thesis statement based on your points



Brainstorm: What do you think about the topic?

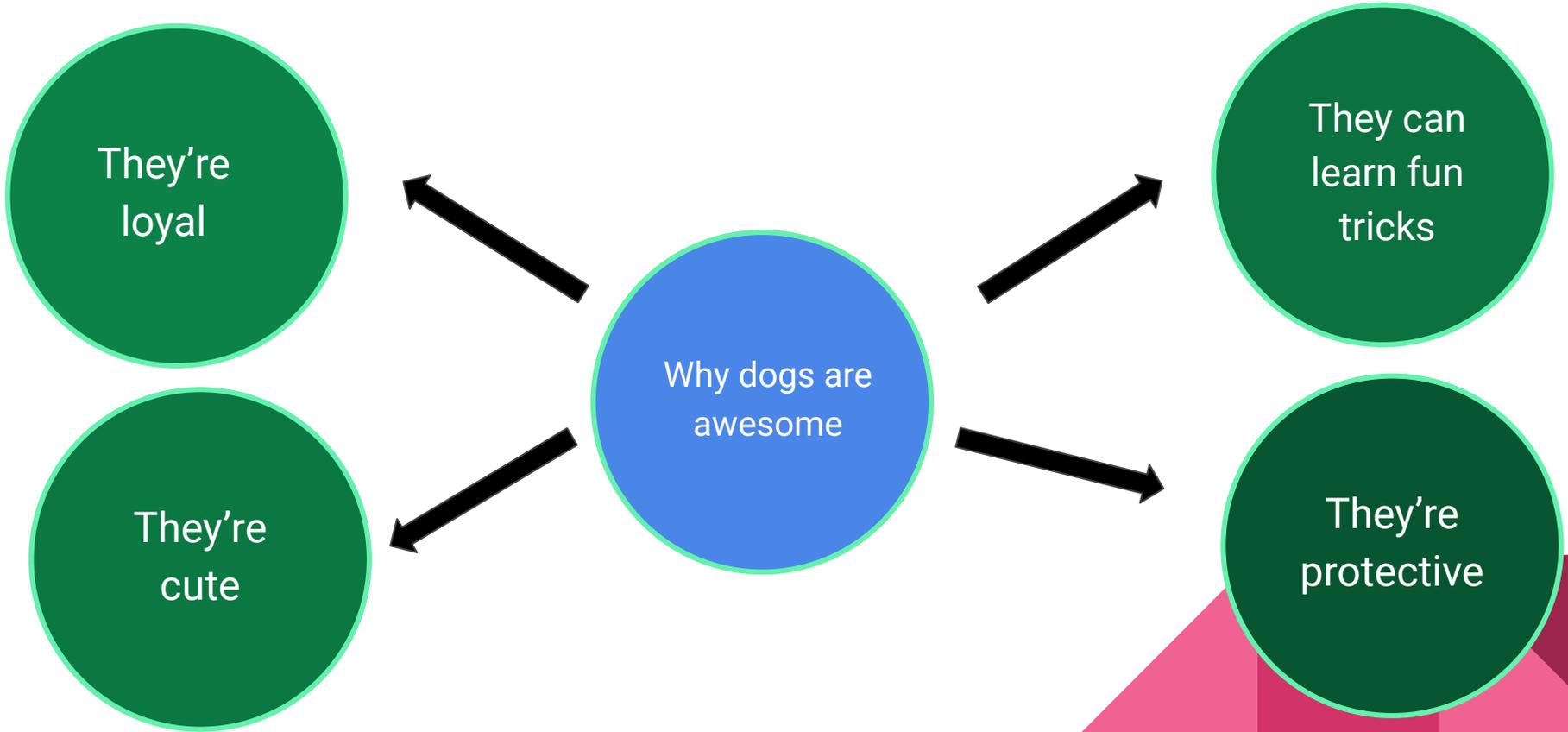
Example: Do cats or dogs make better pets?

What do you think about the topic?

I think dogs make better pets.



Brainstorm: What are your main points?



Brainstorm: Turn each point into a topic sentence

Topic sentences:

1. Dogs are more loyal than cats.
2. Dogs can learn fun tricks that cats can't.
3. Dogs are more protective than cats.
4. Dogs are cuter than cats.

For this example, we'll pick two.

1. Dogs are more loyal than cats.
 2. Dogs can learn fun tricks that cats can't.
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Counter argument

What would the other side say?

Counter argument:

Cats can learn fun tricks too.

Counter-counter:

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



Brainstorm: Develop thesis statement

Use your topic sentences to come up with a thesis statement.

Essay topic: Do cats or dogs make better pets?

Topic sentences:

1. Dogs are more loyal than cats.
2. Dogs can learn fun tricks that cats can't.

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



Argumentative Essay: Introduction

Introduction:

Put everything together...

There are two kinds of people in the world: dog people and cat people. These two animals are very different and many people debate over which one makes a better pet. Some would argue that dogs make better pets because they are more loyal than cats. They would also argue that dogs can learn fun tricks that cats can't. Others argue that cats are better pets because they can do everything dogs can do. However, this paper is going to show that dogs make better pets than cats because they have more desirable qualities.



Argumentative Essay: Introduction

HOOK Introduction:

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TOPIC SENTENCES

Argumentative Essay: Introduction

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TOPIC SENTENCES

COUNTER

Argumentative Essay: Introduction

Introduction:

HOOK

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COUNTER

THESES

TOPIC SENTENCES

Conclusion

Conclusion:

- Repeat the same information from the introduction but reword it.
- Don't include new information that's not in the body of the paper.

Example:

Dogs make better pets than cats. Dogs are loyal and can learn fun tricks. Even though cats can learn some tricks as well, it takes more time and energy than it does with dogs. All in all, these are some reasons why it's better to have a dog than a cat.





Argumentative Essays: What Not to Do

1. Write personal attacks
2. Make sweeping generalizations
3. Use straw man arguments



Argumentative Essays: What Not to Do

1. Make personal attacks

- Deal with what your opponent has written, not what they have or have not done(unless their actions are immediately relevant).
- Tear apart the argument without tearing apart who they are as a person.



Examples:

DON'T:

- Dogs are better than cats because cat people are stupid. I know a cat person who can't even tie their shoes.
- This person said dogs are better than cats. That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard and they're racist for saying it.



Examples:

DO:

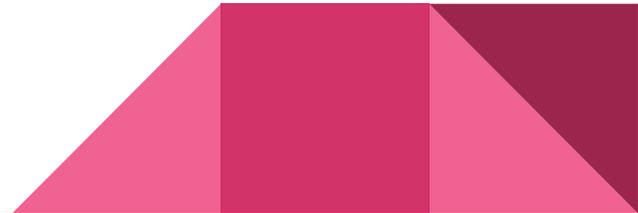
- I think even some cat people believe dogs are better because I know a cat person who sold their cat to get a dog.
- This person claimed dogs are better than cats. I fully disagree with that statement because of my own personal experience with both cats and dogs.



Argumentative Essays: What Not to Do

2. Make generalizations

- Stay away from making sweeping statements you can't prove.
- Don't lump everyone into one group without numbers to back it up or at least acknowledging exceptions.

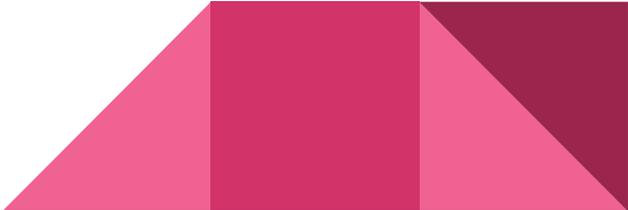


Examples:

DON'T:

- Everyone knows that dogs are better than cats.
- All dogs start off as stray dogs.

DO:

- In a recent poll, 65% of people said they liked dogs better than cats.
 - Many of the dogs who are owned by people in my neighborhood started off as strays. However, there are a few exceptions.
- 

3. Use straw man arguments

Don't go for the weakest argument on your opponent's side.

Go for their strongest argument.



Examples



VS.

