

Argumentative Essay Outline Template

- I. Broad theme for your catchy hook (avoid “Have you ever . . .”)
 - A. Identify how your specific topic relates to “justice”
 - B. List reasons why this topic is important
 - C. Identify the topic’s place in history
 - D. Identify “general” aspects of the topic; do NOT give specifics
 - E. Identify the various positions (for and against)

THESIS STATEMENT: the only complete sentence in your outline (not a question); this should focus your argument and clearly present your position on the topic
- II. Background about the issue
 - A. What it is
 - B. Beginnings in American “history”
 1. when it first became an issue
 2. how it has evolved as an issue
 3. where “it stands” today
 - C. Why it is a controversial topic
- III. State the position opposite of yours (clear topic sentence – not catchy hook or question)
 - A. 1st Reason people feel this way
 1. Specific evidence or example or statistic
 2. Explain why this may be true BUT . . .
 - B. 2nd reason people feel this way
 1. Specific evidence or example or statistic
 2. Explain why this may be true BUT . . .
 - C. Analysis of the contrary position – transitions to your position
- IV. State your position as fact (needs clear topic sentence – not a catchy hook or question)
 - A. 1st Reason people feel this way
 1. Specific evidence or example or statistic
 2. Explain why this is true
 - B. 2nd reason people feel this way
 1. Specific evidence or example or statistic
 2. Explain why this is true
- V. Your Synthesizing Statement/Conclusion (do not include details in your conclusion)
 - A. Synthesize specific causes of controversy, overview of topic (highlight)
 - B. Transition from specific to “general” – how this specific topic has lasting effects
 - C. Give your opinion about how the general effects impact injustice/justice
 - D. Consider – concluding with your opinion or a “call to action”