ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY OUTLINE

I. Introduction -- (sets the tone for the entire essay -- be serious, formal, convincing)
   A. Lead (hook, attention-getter, motivator)
      • 2-4 well-developed sentences
      • Use an anecdote (a little story), startling facts, surprising statistics, a quotation, a
        contrary opinion, an emotionally charged statement, or any combination of the
        above.
   B. Background information (2-3 sentences to explain the history or background or
      seriousness of the issue)
   C. Thesis statement/Claim (strong, clear statement of your position on the issue)
      Samples:
      • Participation in school athletics builds character.
      • Children up to the age of ten and pregnant women should receive free medical
        care.
      • A class in multicultural literature should be required for graduation.
      (The thesis always includes the topic + position.)
   D. Blueprint (a sentence that offers 2-3 lines of argumentation that will support the
      thesis statement) Sample:
      • Jogging is an overrated form of exercise. (Thesis statement)
      • Few joggers consider that jogging can be hazardous to one’s emotional, financial,
        and physical health. (Blueprint)

II. First body paragraph (use order of importance and start with your weakest
    argument)
   A. Transition + Topic sentence (begins each body paragraph; your first line of
      argumentation in your blueprint)
   B. Support/Evidence
      • facts/statistics
      • examples/observations
      • expert’s/authority’s opinion
   C. Concluding sentence (ties the above together and leads into next paragraph)

III. Second body paragraph (stronger argument—the second line of argumentation in your
    blueprint) Include transitions.
   A. Transition + Topic sentence
B. Support/evidence
C. Concluding sentence

IV. Third body paragraph (the strongest argument—the third line of argumentation in your blueprint.) Include transitions and points A, B, and C above.

V. Counterclaims/Concessions --the opposing point of view (admitting they have a point) and rebuttals/counter arguments/refutations (countering the opposing view). Not necessarily a separate paragraph but may be structured that way. May be included in the intro, the body, or the conclusion.

Sample:
- Some people argue that teenagers are better drivers than older people. It’s true that young people have faster reflexes, but they also have less experience on the road.

VI. Conclusion (should be powerful and leave a lasting impression) A. Reworded thesis statement/claim
B. One or more of the following:
  - call to action (what is the next logical step) Examples:
    - Our responsibility is…
    - Research the subject
  - solution
C. Clincher statement (tie it back to the lead—this rounds everything out for the reader)

VI. Works Cited (a list of sources or references on a separate page at the end of the essay)

Additional Argumentative Essay Helps -- Phrases to Use When Presenting Evidence

1. One piece of evidence that shows this…
2. Proof of this is obvious when…
3. Further proof of… is obvious when…
4. Additional proof of… is shown by…
5. More evidence of… can be seen in…
6. … is also revealed through…
7. … can also be seen when…
8. … is also shown by…
9. It is obvious from… that…
10. It should be clear from what… says that…
11. …’s words reveal that…
12. There can be no doubt that…
13. Undoubtedly… / Without a doubt…
14. There can be no question that…
15. As the evidence correctly shows…
16. One is forced to conclude that…
17. Finally, the most important evidence showing that… is revealed when…
18. Final proof of…
19. The evidence is clear: (add reworded topic sentence)
20. Only one conclusion can be drawn: (add reworded topic sentence)

**DO NOT USE phrases such as the following:**
- as I have said
- in fact
- obviously as I have proved
- clearly certainly as you can see
- truly
- definitely
- surely
- to sum up

**DO USE:**
- as I have proved
- clearly
- certainly
- as you can see
- truly
- definitely
- surely
- to sum up