

Organizing an Argumentative Synthesis

When developing a documented research essay (or argumentative synthesis) which takes a stand on a controversial issue and attempts to persuade your audience to your viewpoint, please consider the following guidelines:

- Introductions and Conclusions are great places to appeal to your reader's emotions—or to use other *rhetorical appeals*, such as logos (an appeal to reason), pathos (an appeal to emotion), or ethos (an appeal to ethics or our sense of morality). Remember that for substantial essays like this one, introductions and conclusions can be about two paragraphs each. Also, when composing your introduction, consider including the elements of an *argumentative introduction* we have discussed in class (common ground, the problem as comprised of a destabilizing condition and consequences or costs, a brief statement of opposing views, and your thesis.)

Argumentative Introduction

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|------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Common Ground | 2. <i>Problem or Issue</i> | 3. Opposing Views | 4. Thesis/Solution |
| | 2a. | 2b. | |
| | <i>Destabilizing Condition + Consequences/Costs</i> | | |

- Background information is important. The history of an organization, a person, a country, etc. could be important to showing your reader that you really know your subject and that your argument is grounded in that knowledge. You will also wish to include any definitions which might be necessary your readers' full understanding of technical terminology used. Academic books and articles (scholarly, peer-reviewed) will be particularly helpful with this element of your paper.
- A Claim Paragraph is one option for preparing your readers for your argument. Within it you may *restate your thesis* and *mention your reasons* for holding the view you will support throughout your argument. This paragraph need not be long; it is meant only to highlight the reasons you will discuss in depth in the remainder of your essay.
- Counterarguments (or opposing views) are important to include. You may include a discussion of your opponents' viewpoint in one or two paragraphs: 1) either directly after your claim paragraph and before you begin to develop your argument, *or* 2) after you offer your fully developed argument so that a portion of your conclusion operates as refutation., *or* 3) you may wish to integrate counterarguments within the body of your argument by infusing them within the discussion of each your supporting reasons—first by offering your opponents' view on this reason and then by offering the strength of your own view in refutation.