

Writing an Argumentative Essay

The purpose of an argument paper is to convince your audience your views are valid.

Don't:	Do:
Do not use vague pronouns, such as: <i>they, them, themselves, it, those, these, this</i>	Qualify all pronouns. Define and detail who these words are discussing.
Do not use the phrase "many people."	Clarify who these people are.
Do not generalize major issues and subjects.	Specify who or what you are discussing in strong detail.
Do not use the pronouns: <i>I, myself, or me.</i>	Only use third person (qualified) pronouns: <i>he, she, it, they, them, themselves, one</i>
Therefore, avoid expressions such as "I believe" or "I think"	Do include evidence.
Likewise, do not insert opinions without supplying facts from authoritative sources.	Cite experts to backup your observations.
Do not limit yourself to only one side of the argument.	Be sure to show a balanced and fair view of both sides of the discussion. The conclusion is used to offer a concession stating that your opponent has a point and a final refutation of your opponent's views.
Avoid overt use of passive verbs: <i>is, am, be, will, can</i>	Use action verbs frequently.

Some example sentences:

Proponents of Earl Grey laws **argue** in favor of banning Starbucks coffee in the United States.

Dr. Carol Johnson **asserts** that Starbucks should be closed down because "the coffee Americans drink at breakfast disturbs their sleep and makes them less productive" (36).

Opponents of the Earl Grey laws **deny** that banning Starbucks would prevent Americans from drinking coffee.

Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson **challenges** the law stating, "Starbucks has a meaningful relationship with people that is not only about the coffee.

Pro-Argument Verbs	Counter Argument Verbs
allege, argue, assert, reason, show, suggest	challenge, deny, dispute
claim, contend, insist, say, state	doubt, question, refute, reject
Nouns showing in Favor	Nouns showing opposition
proponents, advocates, backers, supporters	opponents, challengers, contenders, critics, rivals