

Persuasion Essay Notes



General Tips

- It's almost always preferable to choose the qualified response. It will make your response seem more nuanced and sophisticated. If you can't, it's especially critical to use effective naysayers in the course of the essay.
- Make sure that you clearly address the author/quote (if present) from the prompt. Make it clear that you understand/define the position that the speaker is taking.

The Intro and Thesis

- Your introduction should not a) be a generalized statement about human nature/society, b) just fill the page with no purpose, c) be obviously false, d) offer a weak question or quotation, or e) open with a generalized truism.
- Instead, it should be STAMPY:
 - a) **S**hock your audience with a statistic
 - b) **T**ell a story or establish a scenario
 - c) **A**nalogize with an effective comparison
 - d) **M**ake a good question that does not have an easy answer
 - e) **P**ersonalize with an effective anecdote
- Effective introductions lead with powerful adjective and verbs.
OKAY: When you drink a glass of milk, you're getting more than wholesome calories...
- **BETTER:** Pus. Hormones. Mucous. Hardly what we imagine each time we take a drink from a glass of milk ...
- Thesis statement needs to be an argument that raises a controversial point and clearly articulates the reasons you will argue in your piece. It will have a strong tension word.
- Your thesis statement should be parallel.
- With extra time at the end of the test, review your intro and thesis for grammar and spelling.

SIMPLE THREE PART INTRO

- Anecdote
- Bridge to Thesis
- Thesis

AN EFFECTIVE THESIS STATEMENT

While Pogreba's assertion that young Americans have limited knowledge about current events is certainly correct, returning the voting age to 21 would undermine lifelong civic participation and violate the rights of young Americans.

Naysayers

Naysayers are an effective strategy to add depth to paragraphs by engaging with and responding to an alternative point of view in your piece. Remember to always raise a fair objection (not a strawperson) and answer it fully.

- **GENERAL NAYSAYER:** Some may challenge the assertion that _____.
- **NAMED NAYSAYER:** Many feminists would probably object that _____ or Social Darwinists would certainly take issue with the argument that _____.

Topic Sentences

- Strong topic sentences are:
 - Clear, sub-arguments that prove the thesis.
 - Claims (arguments).
- Weak topic sentences are
 - Facts, quotations or questions.
 - Too narrow, limiting the focus of the paragraph.
 - Too broad, failing to define the focus of the paragraph.

STRONG TOPIC SENTENCE

While more votes are cast in countries that employ compulsory voting the integrity of those votes is often compromised.