

One type of argumentative essay is that which gives advantages and disadvantages (**For and Against**). It is a formal piece of writing in which a topic is considered from opposing points of view.

A good essay of this type should consist of:

- an introductory paragraph** in which you state the topic. This means that you talk generally about the topic without giving your opinion;
- a main body** in which the points for and the points against, along with your justification, appear in two separate paragraphs; and
- a closing paragraph** in which you give either your opinion or a balanced consideration of the topic.

Note: In this type of essay writing, you must **not** include opinion words (I believe, I think, etc.) in the introduction or the main body. Opinion words can **only** be used in the final paragraph, where you may state your opinion on the topic.

Points to consider

- Make a list of the points for and against a topic before you start writing.
- Write well-developed paragraphs in which the points you present are supported with justification, (i.e. reasons or examples). Make sure each paragraph has more than one sentence. *e.g. One advantage of using a word processor is that it saves time. It is much quicker to make corrections on one than it is to do them by hand.*
- Do not use informal style (e.g. short forms, colloquial language, etc.) or strong language (e.g. *I firmly believe*, etc.)
- Try to include a quotation relevant to the topic you are writing about. For example, if you are writing an essay on space exploration, a quotation you may include is: *"One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."* (Neil Armstrong)
- Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence which summarises what the paragraph is about.

However, there are disadvantages to owning a house.

topic sentence

point & justification

Firstly, it can be rather expensive and tiring to maintain. For example, repairs to the outside of the house can be costly, not to mention the time-consuming task of caring for a backyard or garden.

Introduction

Paragraph 1

state topic (summary of the topic without giving your opinion)

Main Body

Paragraph 2

*arguments for **

Paragraph 3

*arguments against **

Conclusion

Final Paragraph

balanced consideration/opinion

** If you feel that there are more arguments for than against a topic, give them before the final paragraph to lead the reader to this conclusion.*

Linking Words/Phrases

To introduce points: one major advantage/disadvantage of, a further advantage, one point of view in favour of/against

To list points: in the first place, first of all, to start with, secondly, thirdly, finally, last but not least

To add more points to the same topic: what is more, furthermore, also, in addition to this/that, besides, apart from this/that, not to mention the fact that

To make contrasting points: on the other hand, however, in spite of, while, nevertheless, despite, even though, although, it can be argued that

To introduce examples: for example, for instance, like, especially, such as, in particular

To conclude: to sum up, all in all, all things considered, in conclusion, on the whole, taking everything into account, as was previously stated

You can end a "for and against" essay by a) giving a balanced consideration of the points on the topic or b) by giving your opinion, that is, for example, by expressing whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice versa.

Techniques for beginnings and endings

The first paragraph may:

- make reference to a strange scene or situation, **e.g. *Some scientists believe that in the future everyone will be genetically perfect.***
- address the reader directly, **e.g. *Are you aware of any characteristics which you may have inherited from your parents?*** or ask a rhetorical question (question to which no answer is expected), **e.g. *Isn't it amazing how some children look so much like their parents?***
- start with a quotation, **e.g. *"Genetics holds the key to the future"***

The last paragraph may:

- state a personal opinion, **e.g. *In my opinion, I believe, In my view, It seems to me, The way I see it, I think, etc.***
- give the reader something to consider, **e.g. *Perhaps the world would be a safer and more efficient place if everyone was genetically perfect.***
- end with a quotation, **e.g. *"Genetics holds the key to the future"***, or a rhetorical question, **e.g. *What will they think of next?***