

# Teaching argumentative essay writing step-by-step

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to develop the writing skills of young students with the help of visual aids and different methods. Writing plays an important role in expressing students' thoughts and ideas, as well as influencing their overall academic success. Visual aids (posters, diagrams, video materials and other visual aids) help to make the information presented in the educational process more understandable and interesting. The research analyzes how to improve students' written work by using visual aids through mutual discussion, group work and creative tasks, students learn to express their thoughts in writing. Also, with the help of visual materials, they can deepen their understanding of the topic and develop a creative approach. This article not only introduces the young generation to modern educational methods, but also offers important recommendations aimed at stimulating their creativity.

**Keywords:** visual aids, communication and creativity, argumentative essay, mutual discussion, group work, academic sense, creative tasks, recommendations, posters, diagrams, graphics and interactive presentations

## INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are important in every student's learning process. They are the main factor in the development of expression, communication and creativity. Innovative methods, including visual aids, can be effective in helping young students develop their writing skills, increase their creativity, and express themselves clearly.

Visual aids are tools that allow students to use visual materials. These include a variety of materials such as books, posters, diagrams, graphics and interactive presentations. These techniques capture the attention of young learners and engage them in writing activities.

There are a number of advantages of using visual aids in the development of writing skills of young children:

Argumentative essay writing is one of the most valuable skills students can master. It not only strengthens their writing and critical thinking abilities but also empowers them to form, defend, and communicate their opinions logically. However, teaching this skill effectively requires a clear, structured approach. Below is a step-by-step guide to teaching argumentative essay writing that works across grade levels.

### Step 1: Introduce the Concept of Argumentation

Before students can write an argumentative essay, they must understand what “argument” means in an academic sense.

Explain the difference between an argument, an opinion, and persuasion.

Use examples:

Opinion: “I like cats better than dogs.”

Persuasive statement: “You should get a cat because they’re cute.”

Argumentative claim: “Cats make better pets than dogs because they require less maintenance and adapt better to apartment living.”

Discuss how arguments are based on evidence and reasoning, not emotion or personal preference.

Step 2: Explore the Structure of an Argumentative Essay

Students need a clear blueprint to follow. Introduce the five-paragraph structure as a starting point:

Introduction - Hook, background, and thesis statement

Body Paragraph 1 - First reason with supporting evidence

Body Paragraph 2 - Second reason with evidence

Body Paragraph 3 - Counterargument and rebuttal

Conclusion - Summary and restatement of the thesis

Provide mentor texts (sample essays) and have students identify each component in pairs or small groups.

Step 3: Teach the Thesis Statement

The thesis is the backbone of an argumentative essay.

Explain that a strong thesis must be clear, specific, and debatable.

Example:

Weak: “Homework is bad.”

Strong: “Schools should limit homework to one hour per night because excessive homework causes stress and reduces family time.”

Practice writing and refining thesis statements together as a class.

Step 4: Gather and Evaluate Evidence

Argumentative writing relies on credible support. Teach students how to:

Research using reliable sources (books, academic journals, reputable websites).

Take notes and organize evidence under specific claims.

Evaluate the credibility and bias of sources.

Introduce the concept of logos (logic), ethos (credibility), and pathos (emotion) to help them balance their evidence.

Step 5: Build Paragraphs Logically

Each body paragraph should focus on a single reason or piece of evidence. Teach the TEER structure:

T - Topic Sentence: Introduces the reason

E - Evidence: Supports the reason

E - Explanation: Explains how the evidence proves the point

R - Restate/Relate: Connects back to the thesis

Model writing one paragraph together, then let students practice independently.

Step 6: Address Counterarguments

Strong essays acknowledge opposing viewpoints.

Teach students to identify common counterarguments to their position.

Show how to refute them respectfully and logically.

Example: "Some argue that homework builds discipline; however, research shows that excessive homework leads to burnout and disengagement."

Step 7: Craft the Introduction and Conclusion

The introduction should:

Hook the reader (quote, question, or surprising fact)

Provide background on the topic

End with a clear thesis

The conclusion should:

Restate the thesis in new words

Summarize key points

End with a thought-provoking statement or call to action

Encourage students to avoid simply repeating the introduction.

Step 8: Revise, Edit, and Reflect

Teach students that writing is rewriting.

Use peer reviews and self-assessment checklists.

Focus on clarity, organization, transitions, and tone.

Check grammar and punctuation last.

Reflection activities (e.g., "What was hardest about defending your argument?") deepen learning.

Step 9: Practice and Publish

Repetition builds confidence. Assign varied topics and allow for different formats - debates, blog posts, editorials, or formal essays.

Publishing student work (in class blogs, displays, or competitions) motivates them to take pride in their arguments.

Struggling writers: provide sentence starters, graphic organizers, or fill-in outlines. Let them produce a short 3-paragraph essay first.

Advanced students: require stronger sources, counterarguments with nuance, or a requirement to include opposing scholarly views.

ELLs: pre-teach key vocabulary (claim, thesis, evidence, rebuttal, transition). Use visual organizers.

Assessment: grade both process (homework, peer review participation) and product (final draft).

Prompt: Should cell phones be allowed in middle school classrooms?

Model thesis: Cell phones should not be allowed in middle school classrooms because they distract students from learning, enable cheating, and reduce face-to-face social skills.

Final Thoughts

Teaching argumentative essay writing is more than teaching structure-it's about teaching critical thinking and informed citizenship. By guiding students step-by-step-from understanding arguments to refining their voice-you empower them to engage thoughtfully with the world around them.

Claim swap: give each student a claim; they must find a classmate who disagrees and write a one-sentence rebuttal.

Evidence match: cards with evidence and claims - students match best fits and explain why.

Thesis speed drills: 3 prompts, 5 minutes to write a thesis for each.

Students submit final draft. Optionally have a short in-class sharing or gallery walk.

Reflection prompt: What improved most in your essay? What will you do differently next time?

Peer review checklist (quick):

Does the intro hook and give clear context?

Is the thesis clear and specific?

Each paragraph has a clear topic sentence, evidence, and explanation?

Is there a counterargument? Is it addressed?

Do transitions connect ideas?

Spelling, grammar, formatting issues?

Students exchange drafts and give constructive comments (focus on big picture first). Teacher collects rubric scores.

Counterargument & Conclusion

Teach why counterarguments strengthen essays (shows you considered complexity).

Model: state opposing view fairly, then refute with evidence/reasoning or concede and limit scope.

Phrases: "Opponents may argue...", "While it's true that..., this is limited because..."

Students practice writing a 6-8 sentence counterargument/refutation paragraph.

Teach conclusions: avoid copy-paste thesis; synthesize main ideas and end with significance or call to action.

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