



This is a brief overview of how you construct an argument.

Decide on your argument

An argument involves providing proof to support your position, which is based on fact and supported by academic references. In academia, there is no reference to personal feelings, and emotive language is avoided.

To do this, you should **write a list of points on both sides of an argument**, then choose which position you will take. **Brainstorm a range of supporting ideas** for your topic.

Initially this can be very wide ranging. **This listing can be in various formats** such as concept minds (Mind Maps), linear planning, under headers and so forth. After you have collated a range of ideas, **select the three strongest points** in one line of reasoning for a five-paragraph essay, these will form the basis for your three body paragraphs and are your topic sentences. More points (topic sentences) might be needed if the assessment length is longer e.g., 3000 words.

Gather Evidence

Then, you will need to find sources that will provide strong support for each of these, ideally from primary sources. These latter two steps may be reversed as your initial ideas may be augmented by credible sources, where you then choose your strongest points. However, these sources should have **academic credibility** e.g., peer-reviewed journals and **currency** (published in the last 5 to 10 years).

Paragraph Structure

To write a paragraph, follow the basic structure as below.

Topic Sentence: The main idea or purpose of the paragraph. Each paragraph has only one.

Supporting Sentence/s: A more specific support to the Topic Sentence. Elaborates on the meaning.

Example Sentence/s: Evidence or data (may be included in the Supporting Sentence).

Concluding/linking sentence: A summary of your argument.

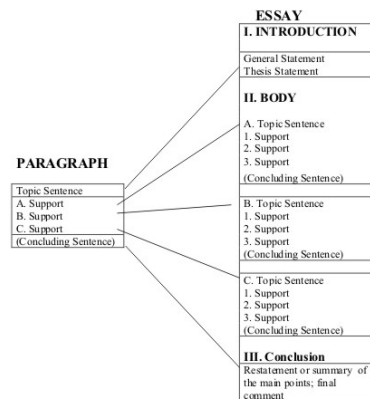
For Example:

Topic Sentence:

Food intake has a significant effect on the mental health of individuals and can create behavioural changes.

Supporting Sentence:

Individuals eating a high carbohydrate diet are more likely to experience mood





swings, often quickly varying between extreme bursts of energy and extreme lows. Sometimes, these have been shown to create socially inappropriate behaviours.

Example Sentences: According to statistics released by the China Health Board, 99% of convicted criminals had consumed carbohydrates, often in the form of rice, in the 24 hours prior to committing a crime (Hong & Wang, 2015). This is in accordance with Tcherni-Buzzeo (2017), who contends that the link between aggression and nutrition is proven by biosocial criminology.

Concluding/linking Sentence:

The evidence makes clear that mental health issues, including criminal behaviour, is highly correlated with the consumption of carbohydrate-laden foods.

Remember that good writers do not stick to this structure 100%, and in fact will modify and adapt this to create a varied and interesting piece of work. However, as an initial template, it is very helpful to develop a line of reasoning. Also be aware that you do not need to agree with the argument you are writing, rather it is the force of your reasoning and use of evidence which is being evaluated.

Writing your argument

After completing a draft plan, including ideas and evidence, begin the writing phase. An essay consists of three main sections. These are:

Introduction: where the **overview for the argument** and the **thesis** is situated and may use a reference to provide a definition

Body: where your **three points are stated** with one point per paragraph and elaborated upon with **several references** to support the argument

Conclusion: *summates all three points to re-iterate thesis as proven* with no new subject matter or evidence introduced here.

Each of these sections will vary in length depending on the type and length of the essay required.

Tips for Your Essay:

- Avoid emotional language. Overly emotional arguments sound irrational.
- Make a plan of your argument before you write.
- State what your position is in relation to the argument. This is your thesis.
- Collect your evidence before you write.
- Evidence from primary, academic sources is most valuable. Cite these correctly.
- Avoid the use of informal language such as contractions.
- Ensure that each paragraph has only one main idea.
- Ensure that each paragraph has a supporting statement with evidence.
- Ensure that your conclusion is based on evidence and no new information.