



English Department

3rd year students

An Essay

8Lecture

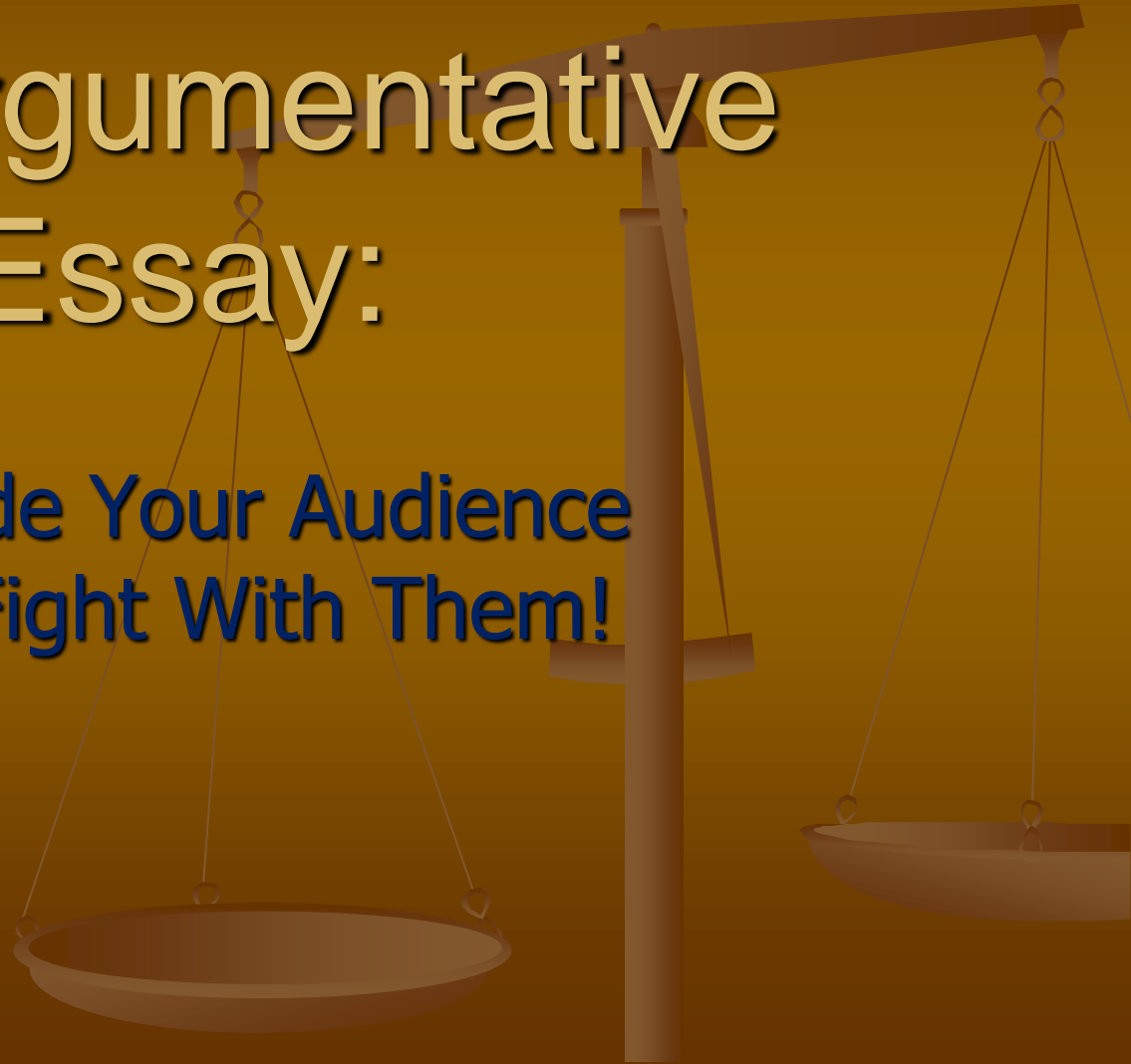
(The Argumentative Essay)

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The Argumentative Essay:

**Persuade Your Audience
Don't Fight With Them!**



What is an Argumentative Essay?

The purpose of an argumentative essay is to organize and present your well-reasoned conclusions in order to persuade the audience to accept—or at least seriously consider—your point of view.

Begin at the End!

A “well-reasoned conclusion” is one that is arrived at step by step, guiding the reader through your logic with illustrations and explanations, until your conclusion seems inevitable.



Think Before You Write



- Make your reasoning clear to yourself **BEFORE** you write your final draft.
- State your ideas step by step before trying to draw the conclusion.
- There has to be evidence for each premise (step) and an explanation of how you arrived at your conclusion.



Strategy Depends on Audience

Which steps you take toward the conclusion of your argument depends on your audience and the goals you have for your writing.



Profile Your Audience

This is not “profiling” with intent to discriminate against anyone.

Instead, you are making sure you reach your audience without offending them!



Five Key Questions

1. Do you have a specific intended audience?
2. Who is your intended audience? What are their personal characteristics?
3. What is their job, profession, or field of expertise?
4. What does your audience know about your topic? What could they NOT know about your topic, considering their personal characteristics?
5. What is their level of need/interest regarding your writing? How will your audience use your writing?

Practice

Invent an argument statement for an audience

- Topic: Electricity in Iraq
- Audiences:
 - All Iraqi people

What might each group care about? Already know?
Need to know? What points could you make about
owning a pet?

Mistakes to Avoid

- “Only idiots believe . . .”
Those believers may be your audience!
Analyze and criticize ideas, not people.
- Failure to reread leads to self-contradiction.
Revise with a critical eye on content before all else.
- “They Say/I Say” conversation-type structure is not the same as conversational tone or style.
Be conscious of the purpose of your argument and your audience’s expectations then choose appropriate words.

In Conclusion

- Have a point to your argument—make *your own* decisions about your topic
- Identify your audience
- Explain what “They” say about your topic
- Respond to what “They” say with *your* argument
- Address potential objections with respect
- Show why your audience should care