ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

Argumentative essay aims to persuade our readers to accept our opinion in a given topic.

There are two types of argumentative essays:

1 When you either **agree** or **disagree** completely with the topic.

2 When you are expected to present both sides, state the pros and cons of the topic before finally stating your own stand.

This type of writing requires you to be critical, to give mature opinions and present facts to validate your opinions.

ANALYSIS OF PAST YEAR'S ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY QUESTIONS

2013	Is tuition necessary?
2014	There is a lack of freedom given to teenagers today. Do you agree?
2015	Social networking has caused a lot of problems. Do you agree?
2016	Some people believe that all students in Malaysia should learn at least three languages. What do you think?
2017	The Malaysian tradition of having open houses is important and should be practiced more. Do you agree? Give reasons to support your view.

STEP BY STEP GUIDE

PLANNING

1. Ask yourself if you have sufficient knowledge on the topic you are going to write. If you do not, do not attempt the question.
2. List down your opinion to and against the topic. For example, given the topic, *social networking has caused a lot of problems. Do you agree?* (SPM 2015).

Agree completely. Why?	Disagree completely. Why?
Idolising extravagant lifestyle	*Reaching out friends and family*
Causes depression	*Faster communication*
Cyber bullying	*Independent learning*
Damaging family ties	

3. Make sure you have at least 3 – 4 points to elaborate whether you agree or disagree. Choose the side where you have more points.

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION

1. Before writing the introduction, make sure you know which side you are choosing.
2. Think of something interesting to start your essay with. It can be in the form of questions, startling facts, or even a short recount of your personal experience. This is called 'HOOKS'.

Some examples of writing hooks:

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS	• Do you know anyone without a Facebook, Twitter or Instagram account? • When was the last time you logged into your social media account? • How many friends do you have in real life compared to your friends in social media? • Are you the type who posts everything picture-worthy in Instagram? • Do you know any people who take every picture of their food and post it in Instagram?

STARTLING FACTS/ INTERESTING GENERAL STATEMENTS	• By 2021, it is estimated there will be up to 2.77 billion users of social network across the globe. • 23% of Facebook users check their account at least 5 times a day. • It is more common that teenagers nowadays keep in touch with their grandparents through Facebook than telephones. • It is not uncommon nowadays for a 60-year-old grandfather to have lesser number of friends than his 15-year-old grandchild in Facebook.
PERSONAL RECOUNT ***Tips:*** ***Be observant to little things.***	• This morning, I checked my Instagram account and received no new notification. I realised I did not post anything before I went to sleep last night so, I immediately posted a picture from last week to get some likes from my friends. • I know a person who makes it a point to capture the photos of his food every time we go eating out. He has an impressive collection of the restaurants he visited in his Instagram and one time he got 500 likes for a picture of a mango cheesecake he did not finish. • I had a housemate who stopped talking with me because one day, I posted an annoyed emoji as my Facebook status. She thought I was annoyed with her for not doing the dishes that morning.

INTRODUCTION IN SHORT

WRITING BODY PARAGRAPHS

1. Try forming a topic sentence for each point. Remember, a topic sentence is a complete sentence. So it should contain at least a subject and a predicate.

   For example:

(Subject) (Predicate)

Topic sentence 1: The users of social networking often idolise extravagant lifestyle.

Topic sentence 2: Social networking causes the users to be depressed.

Topic sentence 3: _____ increases the cases of cyber bullying.

Topic sentence 4: _____

2. Do not write long-winded topic sentences. They should be short and precise. If you have a lot of idea, write them as the supporting details.

3. For every topic sentence, write 3 – 4 supporting details.

4. Supporting details are the elaboration of your topic sentence. To help you think of a good supporting detail, for every sentence that you write, ask yourself, "Why?" and "So what?"

   For example:

Topic sentence 1: The users of social networking often idolise extravagant lifestyle.

Supporting details

1) (Why?) The users of social media will display everything picture-worthy in the social media.
2) (So what?) Most of the time, these people will showcase travelling overseas, eating in expensive restaurants and their lavish valuables.
3) (So what?) This will invoke the feeling of admiration among their followers to the type of lifestyle they are living.
4) (So what?) As a result, their followers will idolise their extravagant lifestyle and they will do anything to live like their idols even though they can barely afford it.

5. Finally, end every body paragraph with a mini conclusion. Your mini conclusion should explain why you think your topic sentence is good/bad. You can write about a popular opposing opinion versus your opinion.

   For example:

Mini conclusion
Even though for some people it can be motivating, in my opinion, idolising extravagant lifestyle will only lead to a materialistic society that only cares about wealth.

This starter can be used to help you exercise giving opposing opinion for your mini conclusion.

Opposing opinion	**My opinion**
Many people feel that …,	but I think,…
Although some people believe …,	in my opinion, …
I used to think that …,	yet,…
Even though some people think that …,	I still believe…
Although for some people …,	in my opinion,…

BODY PARAGRAPH IN SHORT

WRITING A CONCLUSION

1. You can use these starters to start your conclusion.

    - In conclusion, it is safe to say that …
    - To conclude, it is clear that …
    - In summary, it is obvious that …
    - To sum up, it cannot be denied that …

2. Give some advice on how things can be improve in the future or how the negative impacts can be reduced.
    - Therefore, we should not be influenced by …
    - Thus, we should always be careful and wise in …
    - So, we have to be critical in choosing the content we feed ourselves with so that …
    - All and all, it is up to us to judge whether something is good or bad for us. It is important to be wise in order not to be easily influenced by …

PRACTICE

Choose **ONE** from these topics and write an argumentative essay on the outline provided for you. ☺

1 ‘The media is an educational tool’. Discuss.
2 Do you think that schoolchildren should not be allowed to bring mobile phones to school?
3 ‘Money is the root of all evil.’ Do you agree?
4 Teachers should not assign homework to students. Do you agree?
5 Batman is better than Superman. What is your opinion?
6 Secondary school students should be allowed to drive to school. Do you agree?
7 Cigarette should be banned in the country altogether. Do you agree?
8 Is having a lot of friends better than having only a few?
9 Women make better teachers. Do you agree?
10 People nowadays are materialistic. What is your opinion?

TOPIC : _____		
YOUR OPINION (CIRCLE ONE) **:** AGREE – DISAGREE – PARTIALLY AGREE – PARTIALLY DISAGREE		
INTRODUCTION	**HOOK**	
	GENERAL STATEMENTS	
	THESIS STATEMENT	

BODY 1	**TOPIC SENTENCE 1**	
	SUPPORTING DETAILS	1) 2) 3) 4)
	MINI CONCLUSION	

BODY 2	**TOPIC SENTENCE 2**	
	SUPPORTING DETAILS	1) 2) 3) 4)
	MINI CONCLUSION	

BODY 3	**TOPIC SENTENCE 3**	
	SUPPORTING DETAILS	1) 2) 3) 4)
	MINI CONCLUSION	

CONCLUSION	**CONCLUSION STARTER**	
	ADVICE ON ACTIONS IN THE FUTURE	