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Argumentative Essays

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What is an Argumentative Essay?

Purpose

- Persuade the reader of an opinion about something.

- The writer argues his or her point, gives reasons to support it, and tries to convince the reader.

Arguing Pros or Cons

Choosing a topic is extremely important.

Some topics can't be argued


You can argue for (pro) or against (con) certain topics.

If the topic does not have two viewpoints, your essay will not be effective.

Statements for Argumentative Essays:

- Marriage under eighteen: People under the age of eighteen should not be allowed to marry.
- Fast-Food restaurants: Communities should decide if fast-food restaurants are right for them.
- Homosexuals and adoption: Homosexuals should have the right to legally adopt children.

Convincing the reader

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- Your job as a writer is to convince the reader that your opinion about the topic is the most valid viewpoints.

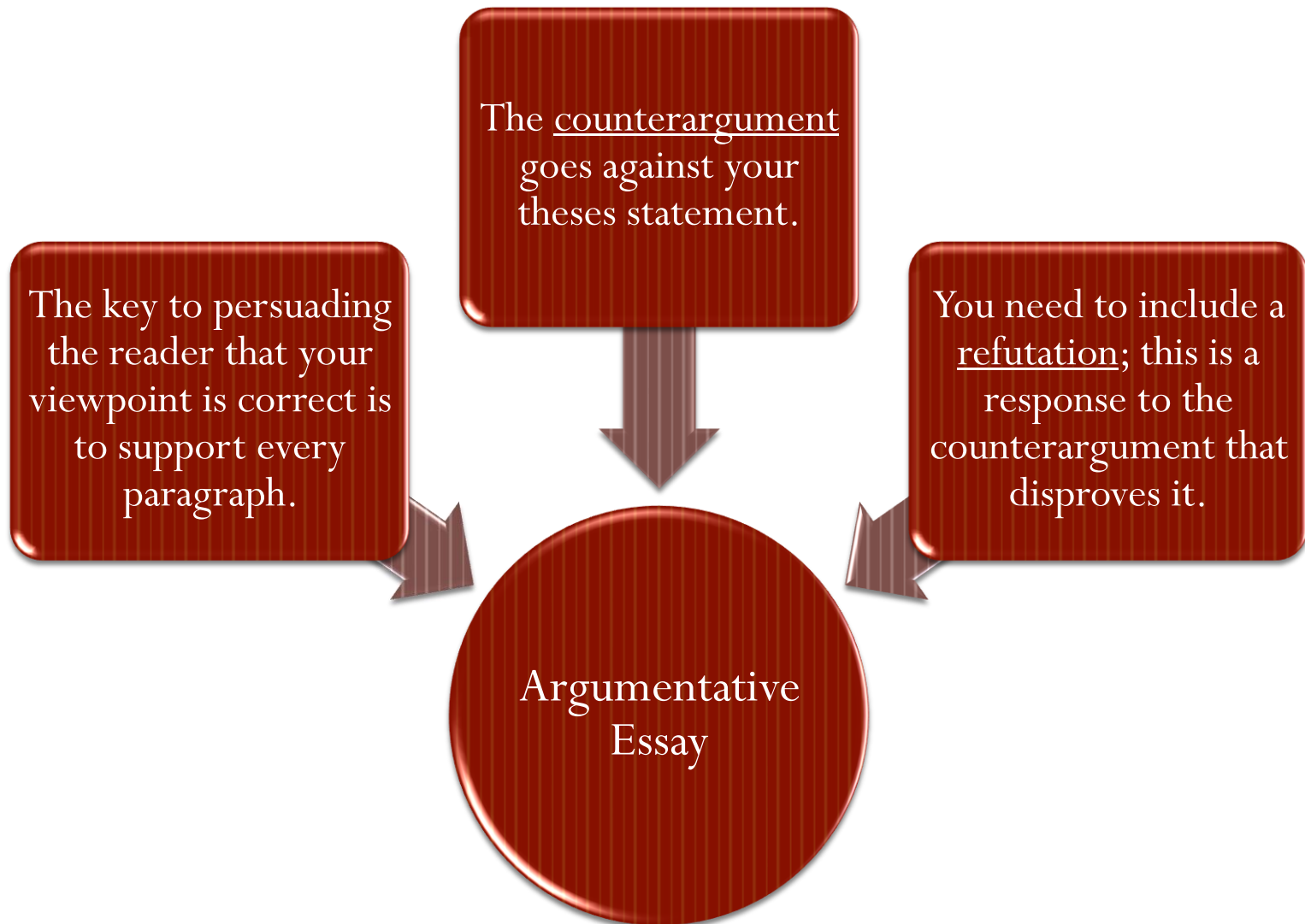
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- Your essay needs to be balanced-it must include a counterargument.

- 
- As soon as you give your opponent's point of view, you must offer a refutation of it.

Example of Argumentative Essays

- Read and study the example argumentative essay *The School Uniform Question* (pg. 113-114). Work with a partner to answer the questions after the essay.

Counterargument and Refutation



Outlining Practice

- The outline (pg. 116-117) was designed for an argumentative essay, it is missing some important information.
- Use your imagination, knowledge of the topic, and understanding of essay organization to complete this outline with your partner.

Supporting Information

- The essay *No More Guns* (pg. 117) is missing the supporting information.
- As you read, work with a partner to write supporting information for each paragraph.

Modals and Tone

Use modals
to soften
your verbs



The President
must change
his policy.



The President
should
change his
policy.

Controlling Tone with Modals

Good writers are always aware of how their arguments sound.

Certain words can help control the tone of the argument.

Controlling Tone with Modals

Asserting a Point

Strong modals help writers to assert their main points.

must, had better, ought to, and should

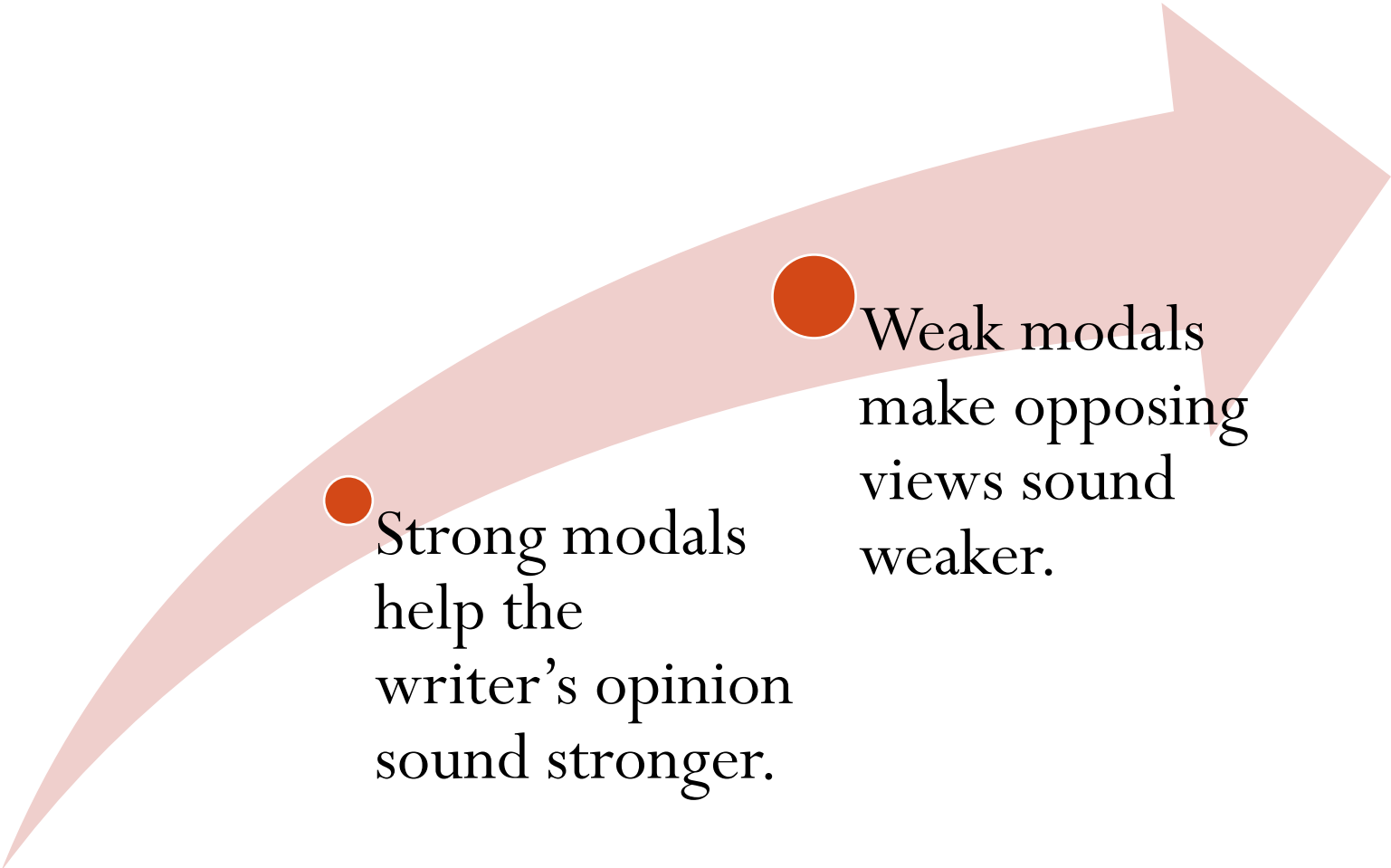


Acknowledging an Opposing Point

Weaker modals help writers make an opposing opinion sound weak.

may, might, could, can, and would

Reasons for using Modals



- Strong modals help the writer's opinion sound stronger.

- Weak modals make opposing views sound weaker.

Choosing Modals

- Read the argumentative *Life Or Death* (pg. 120-121).
- Underline the modal in the parenthesis that you feel is more appropriate.

Activity 5: Writing Pro and Con Thesis Statements

- Read the list of topics for argumentative essays (pg. 121-122). For each topic, write a pro statement and a con statement related to the topic.

Avoiding Faulty Logic

Good writers want readers to agree with their arguments

If your arguments are not logical, readers won't be convinced

Logic helps you prove your point and disprove your opponent's point

When using faulty logic (logic not based on facts) readers will not believe you.

Logical Errors Writers Sometimes Make

1

- Sweeping generalizations: Words such as **all**, **always**, and **never** are too broad and can't be supported.

2

- Events related only by sequence: When one event happens, it doesn't necessarily cause second event to happen, even if one follows the other in time.

3

- Inappropriate authority figure: Using famous names may often help you prove or disprove your point. However,, be sure to use the name logically and in the proper content.

Logical Errors Writers Sometimes Make

4

- Hasty generalizations: Do not make quick judgments based on inadequate information.

5

- Loaded words: Try to avoid positive or negative connotation words when you make an argument.

6

- Either/or arguments: When you argue a point, be careful not to limit the choices to only two or three.

Activity 6: Faulty Logic

- Read the paragraph (pg. 124) and underline all the faulty logic. Write the kind of error above the words.

Activity 7: Write an Argumentative Essay

- Choose a topic
- Brainstorm
- Prepare an outline
- Write your essay

Topics for an Argumentative Essay

Domestic violence

Dependency on Computers

Animal Experimentations

Using Cell phones while driving

Death penalty

Right to Die - Euthanasia

Sex education classes to reduce teenage pregnancy