

### Creating a Working Outline for an Argumentative Source Paper

*Most of you will be familiar with the process of writing an outline for a paper. However, for those of you who are a bit out of practice, or slightly unfamiliar with the process, I have laid out some suggestions for approaching this specific task.*

The first thing to remember is that the structure you create here is not set in stone. The purpose of an outline or diagram is to put your ideas about the topic on paper, in a moderately organized format. Using an outline can help you organize your material and can also help you discover connections between pieces of information that you weren't aware of when you first conceived the plan of your paper. It can also make you aware of material that is not really relevant to the purposes of your paper or material that you have covered before and should therefore be removed. Try to bring related material together under general headings and arrange sections so they relate logically to each other. An effective introduction will map out the journey your reader is about to take, and a satisfactory conclusion will wrap up the sequence of ideas in a nice package.

**A Working Outline (which is what we are asking for here)** is an informal list of topics and subtopics which you are thinking of covering in your paper. It is a way that I can help suggest ways in which the work needs to be further developed or cut back. I might see that you're trying to accomplish too much or too little for the scope of the assignment. The working outline can be revised as you discover new material and get new ideas that ought to go into your paper.

### **Outline of an Argumentative Essay – Classical Pattern**

#### **Introduction**

- A. Background Information:** basic information about the issue and the position being argued.
- B. Thesis Statement:** states the position to be argued in the essay

#### **Reasons that Support the Thesis Statement**

##### **A. Reason/Argument 1 (main point #1)**

- 1. Supporting evidence
- 2. Supporting evidence

##### **B. Reason/Argument 2 (main point #2)**

- 1. Supporting evidence
- 2. Supporting evidence

##### **C. Reason/Argument 2 (main point #3)**

- 1. Supporting evidence
- 2. Supporting evidence

#### **Counter Arguments and Responses to Them**

- A. Mention the arguments from the other side of the issue if there could be an opposing interpretation.**
- B. Briefly refute the other side's arguments**

#### **Conclusion**