

The Recipe to a Great Argument

Below are some ingredients (strategies) to developing an argument. For more help, book an appointment with us at the Writing Center! ☺

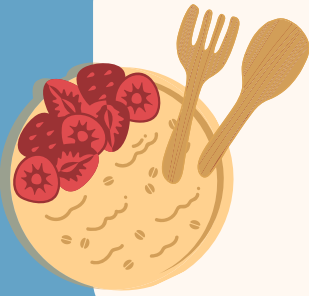
Note: Not every method listed will work for you. Everyone has different writing processes!

Brainstorming:

- Think of a general topic—what are you writing about?
 - Freewrite: Write any and all thoughts you're having about your topic for 2-3 minutes.
 - Clustering/Mapping/Webbing: Write down any words or phrases that come to mind when thinking about your topic. Then, organize them into clusters or a mind map/web.
 - Outline: Make a general outline of your paper and how it will be organized. What's your thesis? What are your topic sentences? What evidence do you have? How will you connect these three components?

Purpose and Audience

- When thinking about purpose, answer these questions:
 - *Why are you writing this argument?*
 - *What are you trying to do?*
 - *Inform? Persuade? Describe?*
- When thinking about audience, answer these questions:
 - *Who are you talking to?*
 - *What do they already know about this topic? Why do you want them to know?*
 - Establishing your purpose and audience makes your argument more focused, as you know why you're writing and who you're writing for.



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Thesis Statements:

- Write about a topic that interests you!
 - What are you writing about? An issue? A piece of literature? A report?
 - What about it interests you/gets you excited to write?
 - Freewrite or Clustering/Mapping/Webbing: Write any and all associations that come to mind with what you are writing about, and see where those associations take you
- If you are assigned a topic, try this!
 - Find an *aspect* of the assigned topic that interests you
 - Freewrite or Clustering/Mapping/Webbing: Write any and all associations that come to mind with what you are writing about, and see where those associations take you
 - Here's an example of this exercise, from *Steps to Better Writing: A Guide to the Process* Lea Lane:
 - The assigned topic is *Boston*.
 - If you are a sports fan...write about *The Boston Red Sox*!
 - If you are a history buff...write about *The Boston Tea Party*!

Counterarguments:

- Consider perspectives against your own: what are some arguments people may make against your claim?
 - In your writing, validate the opposing claims as a legitimate perspective. Argue your claim, but be respectful to others!
- Imagine comparing your argument to someone of the opposing side's. Consider a response that will serve as a rebuttal to their claim and affirm yours as the stronger opinion.

