

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO  
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**

---



**ISO 9001 : 2008**

# **KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP**

**NGÀNH NGOẠI NGỮ**

**HẢI PHÒNG - 2010**

**HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVESITY  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

-----

**GRADUATION PAPER**

**A STUDY ON AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY**

**By:**

**NGUYỄN THANH HÀ**

**Class:**

**NA1004**

**Supervisor:**

**MAI THÚY PHƯƠNG, M.A**

**HAI PHONG - 2010**

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO  
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**

---

**Nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp**

Sinh viên: .....Mã số: .....

Lớp: .....Ngành:.....

Tên đề tài: .....

.....  
.....  
.....

## Nhiệm vụ đề tài

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp (về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

.....

.....

.....

## CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI

### Người hướng dẫn thứ nhất:

Họ và tên: .....

Học hàm, học vị: .....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

### Người hướng dẫn thứ hai:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 12 tháng 04 năm 2010

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 10 tháng 07 năm 2010

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

*Sinh viên*

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

*Người hướng dẫn*

*Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010*

**HIỆU TRƯỞNG**

**GS.TS.NGŨT Trần Hữu Nghị**

## PHẦN NHẬN XÉT TÓM TẮT CỦA CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN

**1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp:**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**2. Đánh giá chất lượng của khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...):**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**3. Cho điểm của cán bộ hướng dẫn (ghi bằng cả số và chữ):**

.....  
.....  
.....

*Hải Phòng, ngày ..... tháng ..... năm 2010*

**Cán bộ hướng dẫn**  
*(họ tên và chữ ký)*

**NHẬN XÉT ĐÁNH GIÁ**  
**CỦA NGƯỜI CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP**

1. Đánh giá chất lượng đề tài tốt nghiệp về các mặt thu thập và phân tích tài liệu, số liệu ban đầu, giá trị lí luận và thực tiễn của đề tài.

2. Cho điểm của người chấm phản biện :

*(Điểm ghi bằng số và chữ)*

Ngày..... tháng..... năm 2010

**Người chấm phản biện**

# Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Ms Mai Thuy Phuong for her supervision and guidance during the time I did the study.

I am also grateful to the staff of the Foreign Language Department of Haiphong Private University, who gives me an opportunity and the best conditions to do this study.

Last but not least, my special gratitude is for my family and my friends from whom I have received a lot of spiritual and material support.

*Hai Phong, 2010*

*Nguyen Thanh Ha*



# TABLE OF CONTENT

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

### PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study .....	1
2. Aim of the study .....	1
3. Scope of the study.....	1
4. Method of the study.....	2
5. Design of the study .....	2

### PART TWO: DEVELOPMENT

#### Chapter one. Theoretical background

1. Spoken and written English.....	3
2. An overview of English writing .....	4
2.1. Types of English writing .....	4
2.2. Essay writing.....	4
2.2.1. Characteristics.....	4
2.2.2. Classification .....	6
2.2.2.1. Description.....	6
2.2.2.2. Narration .....	6
2.2.2.3. Exemplification .....	8
2.2.2.4. Definition.....	9
2.2.2.5. Process .....	11
2.2.2.6. Cause and effect .....	12
2.2.2.7. Comparison and contrast .....	13
2.2.2.8. Problem and solution.....	14
2.2.2.9. Argumentation.....	16
2.2.2.10. An overview of an argumentative essay .....	16
2.2.2.11. Definition.....	16
2.2.2.12. Characteristics .....	16

## **Chapter two. An insight into an argumentative essay**

1. Organization .....	17
1.1. Introduction .....	17
1.2. Body .....	18
1.3. Conclusion .....	20
2. Requirements .....	21
2.1. Prewriting.....	21
2.1.1. Choosing a topic .....	21
2.1.2. Taking a stand .....	21
2.1.3. Identifying your audience .....	22
2.1.4. Evidential support .....	23
2.1.5. Dealing with the opposition.....	24
2.2. Cohesion and coherence .....	24
2.3. Steps to write an argumentative essay .....	28
2.3.1. Analyzing the topic and task.....	28
2.3.1.1. Understanding the question .....	28
2.3.1.2. Brainstorming the ideas .....	28
2.3.2. Outlining .....	32
2.3.3. Writing .....	34
2.3.4. Proofreading and checking .....	39

## **Chapter three. The common difficulties and mistakes in writing an argumentative essay and some suggested solutions.**

### **PART THREE. CONCLUSION**

### **APPENDIX**

## **Part one. INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Rationale of the study**

Today, in our everyday communication, there are many ways to express ideas, viewpoints or feeling about people, things or issues that we concern and writing is one of them. However, giving opinion by writing is different from speaking because the writer must write the paper that a variety of people can understand. Besides, writing also has many types in which each of them is used for different purpose and in different situations. Academic writing is the one that are required to do at college or university. In this study, the writer only focus on argumentative writing essay, one kind of an academic writing to help people, especially students, to understand the way how to give opinion by argumentation.

Moreover, we all know that essay writing has many kinds and they do not have the same audience, tone or purpose. This study concentrates on distinguishing one from another and indicates the difficulties the students may encounter while writing argumentative essay.

### **2. Aims of the study**

The study is aimed at helping students in writing an argumentative essay and supporting them to overcome the mistakes they may have.

First, it provides knowledge to distinguish argumentative essay from the others.

Then it provides the organization and requirements in writing argumentation to help student have both overall and specific understanding of writing essay skills.

Finally, it gives some suggestions for students to actively find out their mistakes in their writing paper and correct them immediately.

### **3. Scope of the study**

This study is limited in scope to the way to write argumentative essay and improve writing skill.

#### **4. Methods of the study**

- Observation
- Collecting data and materials on the internet and in the books
- Analysis and research.

#### **5. Design of the study**

*The study is presented in three parts:*

**Part one** is the introduction which includes the rationale, aims, scope, method as well as the design of the study.

**Part two** includes 3 chapters.

- ❖ *Chapter one* presents the theoretical background of spoken and written language, English essay writing and its types.
- ❖ *Chapter two* is an insight into an argumentative essay with its organization and requirements.
- ❖ *Chapter three* indicates some difficulties and mistakes made when writing argumentation as well as other kinds of essay.

**Part three** is the conclusion including the results and some limitations.

## Part two: DEVELOPMENT

### Chapter one: *Theoretical background*

#### 1. Spoken and written English

First of all, before bearing the concepts of spoken and written English in mind, we should understand, in general, what spoken and written languages are.

Spoken language and written language or more simply, speech and writing are different modes for expressing linguistic meanings.

“ Spoken language is a form of communication in which words derived from a large vocabulary (usually at 10,000) together with a diverse variety of names are uttered through or with the mouth. All words are made up from a limited set of vowels and consonants. The spoken words they make are stringed into syntactically organized sentences and phrases. The vocabulary and syntax together with the speech sounds it uses define its identity as a particular natural language.”

“A written language is the representation of a language by means of a writing system. Written language is an invention in that it must be taught to children, who will instinctively learn or create spoken or gestural languages.”

“Speech and writing serve different specific functions and it may be reasonable to suggest that the former is primarily concerned with the interactional use (the establishment and maintenance of human relationships) and the latter with the transactional use (the working out of and transference of information).”

*(<http://www.wikipedia.com>)*

Spoken language and written language are both language and both are alternative outputs in the sense of alternative realizations of the meaning potential of language.

All languages have different levels of informality and formality. The level of formality depends on the audience, the purpose, and the situation. In general, academic written English is more formal than spoken English. First, as the

writer does not know the readers personally, the writer must write words and sentences that are clear for a variety of readers. Second, because the audience of written English usually is not immediately present, the writer is unable to “see” what the reader does not understand (i.e., by looking at the facial expressions or by having the listener interrupt with a question). Therefore, the writer must explain ideas and opinions in more detail. Third, because the writer cannot guess the audience’s attitude toward the ideas or opinions in the written material, the writer must choose a more formal voice.

*(Trần Thị Ngọc Liên, 2003:5)*

## **2. An overview of English writing**

### **2.1. Types of English writing**

Writing is the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols (known as a writing system). It is distinguished from illustration, such as cave drawing and painting, and non-symbolic preservation of language via non-textual media, such as magnetic tape audio.

English writing is also the way of using English words, phrases, sentences, etc. to communicate to express your ideas, explain things, analyze or discuss the problems, etc. English writing is classified in various types basing on the different aspects. In general, we normally see the most common types such as: academic writing, business writing, personal writing, literary writing, journalistic writing, etc. This study is written to introduce academic writing in which essay writing is one kind that is research in the next sections.

*(<http://www.wikipedia.com>)*

### **2.2. Essay writing**

#### **2.2.1. Characteristics**

The essay is a commonly assigned form of writing that every student will encounter. Therefore, it is wise for the student to become capable and comfortable with this type of writing early in her training.

Essays can be a rewarding and challenging type of writing and are often assigned both in class which requires previous planning and practice (and a bit

of creativity) on the part of the student and as homework, which likewise demands a certain amount of preparation. Many poorly crafted essays have been produced on account of a lack of preparation and confidence. However, students can avoid the discomfort often associated with essay writing by understanding some common genres within essay writing.

Though the word ‘essay’ has come to be understood as a type of writing in Modern English, its origins provide us with some useful insights. The word comes into the English language through the French influence on Middle English; tracing it back further, we find that the French form of the word comes from the Latin verb *exigere*, which means ‘to examine, test, or (literally) to drive out’. Through the excavation of this ancient word, we are able to unearth the essence of the academic essay: to encourage students to test or examine their ideas concerning a particular topic.

Essays are shorter pieces of writing that often require the student to hone a number of skills such as close reading, analysis, comparison and contrast, persuasion, conciseness, clarity, and exposition. As evidenced by this list of attributes, there is much to be gained by the student who strives to succeed in essay writing.

*(<http://www.essaysinfo.com>)*

The purpose of an essay is to encourage students to develop ideas and concepts in their writing with the direction of little more than their own thoughts (it may be helpful to view the essay as the converse of a research paper). Therefore, essays are (by nature) concise, and require clarity in purpose and direction. This means that there is no room for the student’s thoughts to wander or stray from her purpose; she must be deliberate and interesting.

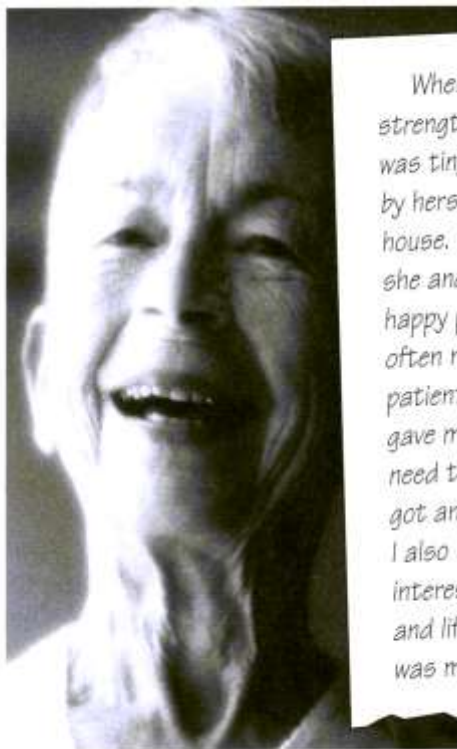
It is the purpose of this handout to help students become familiar and comfortable with the process of essay composition through the introduction of some common essay genres.

## 2.2.2. Classification:

### 2.2.2.1. Description

When the writer are writing a description essay, he is “painting a picture” with words. The purpose of this work is to provide a vivid picture of a person, location, object, event, or debate. It will offer details that will enable the reader to imagine the item described. Descriptive essays are essays which contain detailed descriptions about something. When the writer needs to describe a thing, a picture or an emotion, it would help to list the way he sees, thinks and feels about the subject or topic. Description relies on the fives senses: sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell.

*The following paragraph is an example for description:*



When I was young, I admired my grandmother for her strength and kindness. She was not very big. In fact, she was tiny and very thin. She was strong, though. She lived by herself and still did a lot of the chores around her house. When I was a child, I saw her almost every day, and she and I would talk about everything. She was a very happy person and was always smiling and joking, and she often made me laugh. My grandmother was also very patient, and she would listen to all of my problems. She gave me very good advice whenever I needed it. I didn't need to be afraid to tell her anything, because she never got annoyed with me. She just listened and tried to help. I also liked to spend time with her because she had interesting stories to tell me about her own childhood and life experiences. When I was young, my grandmother was my best friend.

### 2.2.2.2. Narration

Writing a narration is like telling a story. Narrative essays are told from a defined point of view, often the author's, so there is feeling as well as specific and often sensory details provided to make the reader involved in the elements and sequence of the story. The verbs are vivid and precise. Since a narrative relies on personal experience, it often is in the form of a story. When the writer uses this technique, he or she must be sure to include all the conventions of



storytelling: plot, character, setting, climax, and ending. It is usually filled with details that are carefully selected to explain, support the story. All of the details relate to the main point the writer is attempting to make.

The following essay is an example for writing narration:

*It was a hot sunny day, when I finally took my kids to the Disney Land. My son Matthew and my daughter Audra endlessly asked me to show them the dream land of many children with Mickey Mouse and Snow-white walking by and arousing a huge portion of emotions. Somehow these fairy tale creatures can make children happy without such “small” presents as \$100 Lego or a Barby’s house in 6 rooms and garden furniture. Therefore, I thought that Disney Land was a good invention for loving parents.*

*However, I can ensure anybody that Disney can turn out to be a remarkable place for adults too. Two years have already passed, but I still can not forget my experience at the roller coaster with a mysterious name “Space Mountain”. Tired of the smell of sweet popcorn and heroically washing the ice-cream off Audra’s pink dress, I decided to change the settings. Along with Audra, Mathew pleaded to go to the roller coaster, and, having no other better idea, I finally had to give up. I thought that my wife would be proud of me. Besides, I have never had such an experience before, and thought of having such a ride was quite intriguing.*

*However, when I saw this big “Mountain”, the first signs of doubt started to appear in my confused conscience. A man at the age of 30, I felt terrified by the thought that we have to ride down. It is inhuman, suicidal experience... I would have felt much better if we set down in the café and ate ice-cream. I thought about my children and looked at Mat. To my surprise, he was too preoccupied with “Space Mountain” to be worried about life safety. I also took a moment to appreciate the courage of Audra, who light-heartedly followed Mat. Finally, I rejected all doubt and climbed into this “killing machine”, where well qualified Disney personnel checked the safety belts, encouraged the suicides, I mean all who wanted to increase their adrenaline*

*level, and wished a pleasant ride.*

*At that moment, the only person that looked exited was Matthew. As for Audra, her eyes were full of fear, and once again I could not decide for myself whether I did right or not. The only thing that I new for sure was that my blood turned cold and I could not stop thinking that this entire mechanism could break in a second. So, there was nothing a man could do but close his eyes and quickly leave the place of torture. I heard other people scream and even laugh, but could not make a sound myself. When I opened my eyes, I understood that Audra fully shared my feelings. And unfortunately even more. In several minutes, looking at my poor daughter, I thought that pop corn and ice cream was far not the worst thing. Especially, if kept inside...*

*I was somehow no longer proud of myself as I could not get rid of the thought that I did something wrong again.*

### **2.2.2.3. Exemplification**

An exemplification essay uses examples to show, explain, or prove a point or argument .The key to a good exemplification essay is to use enough detailed and specific examples to get the point across. Examples should be carefully chosen so that they will appeal to readers and help them understand the main point of the essay. Effective examples should enhance the writing, giving the essay vitality and intensity. The writer may want to review the general essay writing section on essay research before beginning the essay.

Exemplification essays may contain both brief and comprehensive examples. Brief examples may occur relatively frequently within the essay, with just enough concise details to illustrate clear-cut ideas. It is important that the writing is succinct. Comprehensive examples are used to illustrate complex ideas that can't be adequately explained using brief examples.

(Trần Thị Ngọc Liên, 2003:95)

The paragraph below is an example for exemplification:



*World Peace is something that will never happen. Too many countries have too much military power and don't want to give in to any other country. War is something that the world is going to have to deal with because there has been very few years over the history of the world that have been war free. Like one quote by an unknown author says, "Peace is rare: less than 8% of the time since the beginning of recorded time has the world been entirely at peace. In a total of 3530 years, 286 have been warless. Eight thousand treaties have been broken in this time."*

*Albert Einstein, born on March 14, 1879 is one of the most influential people of the modern era. (Einstein) As a physicist he changed our understanding of the universe. He was very outspoken about the significant political and social issues of his time. As a Jew he advocated a moral role for the Jewish people. Over his scientific career, he was on a mission for the universal and indisputable laws that govern the physical world. Science was Albert Einstein's love, but he always found time to devote many of his efforts to political causes that were close to his heart. He strived for peace, freedom, and social justice. He became an active leader of the international anti-war movement.*

...

#### **2.2.2.4. Definition**

A definition tells what a term means how it is different from other terms in its class. Whenever we take an exam, we are likely to encounter questions that require definitions. We might, for example, be asked to define *behaviorism*; tell

what a cell is; explain the meaning of the literary term *naturalism*; include a comprehensive definition of *mitosis* in your answer; or define an *authority*. Such exam questions cannot always be answered in one or two sentences. In fact, the definitions they call for often require several paragraphs.

Most people think of definition in terms of dictionaries, which give brief, succinct explanations of what words mean. But definition also includes explaining what something, or even someone, is—that is, its essential nature. Sometimes a definition requires a paragraph, an essay, or even a whole book. These longer, more complex definitions are called extended definitions.

Extended definitions are useful for many academic assignments besides exams. A thoughtful definition can clarify a precise term or a general concept. Definitions can explain abstractions like freedom or controversial terms like right to life or slang terms, informal expressions whose meanings may vary from locale to locale to locale or change as time passes.

Many extended-definition essays include shorter formal definitions like those in dictionaries. Moreover, essays in which patterns of development are dominant often incorporate brief definitions to clarify points or explain basic information for the readers. Whether it appears in another kind of essay or acts as a focus for an extended definition, the brief formal definition (often called a dictionary definition) establishes the basic meaning of a term.

(Trần Thị Ngọc Liên, 2003:129)

The paragraph below is an example for writing definition:

*Do you know someone rich and famous? Is he confident, popular, and joyful all of the time—the epitome of mainstream success? Or, on the other hand, is he stressed, having second thoughts about his life choices, and unsure about the meaning of his life? I am willing to be that it is the second one. Mainstream marketing and media have effectively brainwashed our society into accepting a false, even potentially dangerous definition of success. Marketers want us to believe that having lots of money, living in a big house, and owning all of the latest cars, fashions, and technology is the key to happiness, and hence, success.*

*This overstated, falsely advertised myth is hardly ever the case in real life. True success requires respect, appreciation, integrity, and patience—all of which are traits that by human nature are genuinely difficult to attain—especially in the face of modern marketers who relentlessly deceive us, control our thoughts, and usurp our independence in order to increase their bottom line.*

#### **2.2.2.5. Process**

When writing a process essay, the writer main goal is to write a paper that describes how something is done or how to do something. Therefore, the first thing we need to do when writing one of these papers is determine what the process is that we will be trying to explain. In addition, we need to determine why this process would be important to our target audience, including what and who the process affects.

Since we will be explaining how a process works when we write a process essay, we will obviously need to gain a clear understanding of the steps within the process. In addition to understanding one method of completing the process, however, we also need to consider other possible methods of completion. When we write the paper, we should choose the method that is the clearest and the most likely to be understood by the target audience.

If we are writing about a process that may be confusing to the reader or that requires an understanding of certain information or processes, we might need to provide a bit of background information in our paper as well. Similarly, we will need to discuss any equipment that might be necessary to complete the process.

The following paragraph is an example for writing process:

### Ingredients

two cups of brown rice  
one tablespoon of cooking  
oil  
three tablespoons of chilli  
sauce  
three cloves of garlic  
one green pepper  
one red pepper  
one onion  
two tomatoes  
two spring onions  
salt  
pepper

### Mike's Brown Rice and Vegetables

Brown rice and vegetables is a simple and delicious meal to make. First, cook the rice, following the directions on the packet. Then, cut the vegetables into one-inch pieces. Next, heat the oil, chilli sauce, and garlic in a frying pan. After that, add the vegetables and fry them until they are soft, but still a little bit crunchy. Now it's time to stir in the cooked rice. After stirring the rice and vegetables together, add salt and pepper to your own taste. Finally, put the rice and vegetables into a large bowl and serve it with freshly chopped tomatoes and spring onions on top. Now you are ready to enjoy your delicious brown rice and vegetables!

#### **2.2.2.6. Cause and effect**

Cause and effect analyzes why something happen. Cause and effect essays examine causes, describes effects, or do both.

Cause-and- effect, like narration, links situations and events together in time, with causes preceding effects. But causality involves more than a sequence: cause and effect analysis explains why something happened or is happening and it predicts what probably will happen. Sometimes many different causes can be responsible for one effect.

*(Trần Thị Ngọc Liên, 2003:113)*

The paragraphs below are the example for writing cause and effect:

*The first effect of cigarette smoking, and probably the one that the non-smokers hate the most, is that it permeates everything around it. Smokers usually have smelly hair, breath, clothes, and, if they smoke indoors, a smelly room. The stench of cigarette smoke is very penetrating and hard to remove. Even if the person quits smoking the odor remains for a long time.*

*The second effect of cigarette smoking is one that most people don't even take into consideration. It stains the teeth yellow or sometimes even brown. Since this effect is long term, most people are not aware of it when they begin smoking. The truth is that a cigarette stain is very hard to eliminate from the teeth, and it will probably end up costing a considerable amount of money. Yellow teeth are disgusting because they give an unhygienic image and make people look older.*

To evaluate the effectiveness of a cause and effect essay, ask the following questions:

- ✓ What are the causes?
- ✓ What are the effects?
- ✓ Which should be emphasized?
- ✓ Are there single or multiple causes?
- ✓ Single or multiple effects?
- ✓ Is a chain reaction involved?

#### **2.2.2.7. Comparison and contrast**

A Comparison or Contrast essay is an essay in which the writer either compares something or contrasts something. A comparison essay is an essay which emphasizes the similarities, and a contrast essay is an essay which emphasizes the differences. We use comparison and contrast thinking when deciding which university to attend, which car to buy, or whether to drive a car

or take a bus or an airplane to a vacation site.

In most writing situation, we use two related processes of comparison and contrast to consider both similarities and differences.

The paragraphs below are the example for writing comparison and contrast:

*The traditional family of yesterday and the modern family of today have several similarities. The traditional family was a nuclear family, and the modern family is, too. The role of the father in the traditional family was to provide for his family. Similarly, the father in the modern family is expected to do so, also. The mother in the traditional family took care of the children's physical and emotional needs just as the modern mother does.*

*On the other hand, there are some great differences between the traditional family and the modern family. The first important difference is in the man's role. The traditional husband was the head of the household because he was the only one who worked outside the home. If the wife worked for pay, then the husband was not considered a good provider. In many families today, both husband and wife work for pay. Therefore, they share the role of head of household. In addition, the traditional husband usually made the big decision about spending money. However, the modern husband shares these decisions with his working wife. Also, the traditional husband did not help his wife with the housework or meal preparation. Dinner was ready when he came home. In contrast, the modern husband helps in working wife at home. He may do some of the household jobs, and it is not unusual for him to cook.*

To write a comparison or contrast essay that is easy to follow, first decide what the similarities or differences are by writing lists on scrap paper. Which are more significant, the similarities or the differences? Plan to discuss the less significant first, followed by the more significant. It is much easier to discuss only the similarities or only the differences, but we can also do both.

#### **2.2.2.8. Problem – solution essay**

A problem solution essay is a typical assignment for many grade levels and courses of study. The purpose of problem solution essays is to help students to



perform research and analyze a situation from all sides so that they can come up with a solution to the issue. Many students in all classes will have to write problem solution essays before they complete their academic careers.

In order to write an effective problem solution essay, students need to first be sure that they understand the nature of the question that a professor is posing. In many cases, professors will pose a specific question and lets students decide which side they want to argue in their own problem solution essays. However, some professors will simply state a topic and ask students to define their own problems and solutions.

The following paragraphs are the example for writing problem-and-solution essay:

*Deforestation is a serious problem because forests and trees are not just pretty to look at, they do an important job making the earth's environment suitable for life. They clean the air, store water, preserve soil, and provide homes for animals. They also supply food, fuel, wood products, and paper products for humans. In the past fifty years, more than half of the world's rainforests have been destroyed. Today, the forests of the world are being cut down at a rate of fifty acres every minute! Scientists say that if deforestation continues, the world's climate may change, floods may become more common, and animals will die.*

*One solution to the problem of deforestation is to use less paper. If you use less paper, fewer trees will be cut for paper making. How can you use less paper? One answer is to reuse old paper when you can, rather than using a new sheet of paper. The backs of old envelopes are perfect for shopping lists or phone messages, and when you write a rough draft of an essay, write it on the back of something else. A final answer is to recycle used paper products instead of throwing them away. Most schools, offices, and districts have some kind of recycling center. If you follow the three Rs – reduce, reuse, and recycle – you can help save the world's forests.*

### **2.2.2.9. *Argumentation***

This kind of essay will be research in the next chapter because it is the focus of the study. We will understand what an argumentative is, how it is structured and what requirements for writing a good essay are introduced.

## **2.3. *An overview of argumentative essay***

### **2.3.2. *Definition***

Argumentation is a reasoned, logical way of asserting the soundness of a position, belief, or conclusion. Argumentation takes a stand-supported by evidence and urges people to share the writer's perspective and insights. Argumentative writing is the act of forming reasons, making inductions, drawing conclusions, and applying them to the case in discussion; the operation of inferring propositions, not known or admitted as true, from facts or principles known, admitted, or proved to be true.

### **2.3.3. *Characteristics***

The function of an argumentative essay is to show that your assertion (opinion, theory, and hypothesis) about some phenomenon or phenomena is correct or more truthful than others'.

Since an argumentative essay is an attempt to change the way people think, it should focus on a debatable topic – one over which reasonable people disagree. Factual statement that reasonable people do not disagree over is not suitable for argument. We will discuss how to choose topic in the next chapter.

Although the terms argumentation and persuasion are frequently used interchangeably, they do not mean the same thing. While trying to prove their point, a person uses emotional language and dramatic appeals to beliefs and values, they are using persuasion. Persuasion is used to motivate a person to adopt an opinion and then take action. Argumentation is different from persuasion. It does not try to move an audience to action; its primary purpose is simply to demonstrate that certain ideas are valid and others are not. Unlike persuasion, argumentation has a formal structure: an argument makes points, supplies evidence, establishes a logical chain of reasoning, refutes opposing arguments, and accommodates the views of an audience.

## Chapter two: An insight into an argumentative essay

### ***1. Organization:***

An argumentative essay, like other kinds of essays, also has three parts: introduction, body and conclusion. Moreover, the argumentative essay has its own special structure that can be distinguish from others and make it logical and convincing.

A common method for writing an argumentative essay is the five-paragraph approach. This is, however, by no means the only formula for writing such essays. If it sounds straightforward, that is because it is; in fact, the method consists of an introductory paragraph, three evidentiary body paragraphs that may include discussion of opposing views and a conclusion.

The structure of the argumentative essay is held together by the following:

### ***1.1. Introduction***

In the first paragraph of an argument essay, students should set the context by reviewing the topic in a general way.

Next the author should explain why the topic is important or why readers should care about the issue.

Lastly, students should present the thesis statement. It is essential that this thesis statement be appropriately narrowed to follow the guidelines set forth in the assignment. If the student does not master this portion of the essay, it will be quite difficult to compose an effective or persuasive essay.

The following paragraph is an example for the introduction:

*Individualism is a fundamental value in the United States. All Americans believe in the right to express their own opinion without fear of punishment. This value, however, is coming under fire in an unlikely place – the public school classroom.*

***Thesis statement***

*The issue is about school uniform. Should public school students be allowed to make individual decisions about clothing, or should all students be required to wear a uniform?*

*School uniforms are the better choice for three reasons.*

**1.2. Body:**

Body paragraphs include evidential support. Each paragraph should be limited to the discussion of one general idea called topic sentence. This will allow for clarity and direction throughout the essay. In addition, such conciseness creates an ease of readability for one's audience. It is important to note that each paragraph in the body of the essay must have some logical connection to the thesis statement in the opening paragraph. Some paragraphs will directly support the thesis statement with evidence collected during research. It is also important to explain how and why the evidence supports the thesis (warrant).

However, argumentative essays should also consider and explain differing points of view regarding the topic. Depending on the length of the assignment, students should dedicate one or two paragraphs of an argumentative essay to discussing conflicting opinions on the topic. Rather than explaining how these differing opinions are wrong outright, students should note how opinions that do not align with their thesis might not be well informed or how they might be out of date.

The paragraphs below are the example for the body:

Topic  
sentence

*First, **wearing school uniforms would help make students lives simpler.** They would no longer have to decide what to wear every morning, sometimes trying on outfit after outfit in an effort to choose. Uniforms would not only save time but also would eliminate the stress often associated with this chore.*

*Second, **school uniforms influence students to act responsibly in groups and as individuals.** Uniforms give students the message that school is a special place for learning. In addition, uniforms create a feeling of unity among students.*

*For example, when students do something as a group, such as attend meetings in the auditorium or eat lunch in the cafeteria, the fact that they all wear the same uniform would create a sense of community. Even more important, statistics show the possible effects that school uniforms have on violence and truancy. According to a recent survey in Hillsborough County, Florida, incidents of school violence dropped by 50 percent, attendance and test scores improved, and student suspensions declined approximately 30 percent after school uniforms were introduced.*

*Finally, **school uniforms would help make all the students feel equal.** People's standards of living differ greatly, and some people are well-off while others are not. People sometimes forget that school is a place to get an education, not to promote a "fashion show". Implementing mandatory school uniforms would make all the students look the same regardless of their financial status. School uniforms would promote pride and help to raise the self-esteem of students who cannot afford to wear stylish clothing.*

Refutation

*Opponents of mandatory uniforms say that students who wear school uniforms cannot express their individuality. This point has some merit on the surface. However, as stated previously, school is a place to learn, not to flaunt wealth and fashion. Society must decide if individual expression through clothing is more valuable than improved educational performance. It's important to remember that school uniforms would be worn only during school hours. Students can express their individuality in the way they dress outside of the classroom.*

### **1.3. Conclusion:**

A conclusion not only simply restates the thesis, but also readdresses it in light of the evidence provided. It is at this point of the essay that students may begin to struggle. This is the portion of the essay that will leave the most immediate impression on the mind of the reader. Therefore, it must be effective and logical. It is unnecessary to introduce any new information into the conclusion; rather, synthesize the information presented in the body of the essay. Restate why the topic is important, review the main points, and review your thesis. You may also want to include a short discussion of more research that should be completed in light of your work.

The following paragraph is an example for the conclusion:

*In conclusion, there are many well-documented benefits to implementing mandatory school uniforms for students. Studies show that students learn better and act more responsibly when they wear uniforms. **Public schools should require uniforms in order to benefit both the students and society as well.***

*Restate the thesis*

## ***2. Requirements***

In order to write a good argumentative essay, the writer should notice and follow these requirements. They are not only the essential factors that support your argumentation but also help you achieve good understandings to write other essays.

### **2.1. Prewriting**

#### ***2.1.1. Choosing a topic***

In an argumentative essay, as in all writing, choosing the right topic is important. Ideally, the topic should be one in which the writer have an intellectual or emotional state. Still, it is advisable to be open-minded and willing to consider all sides of a question. If the evidence goes against the writer's position, he should be willing to change the thesis. And the writer should be able, from the outset, to consider the topic from other people's viewpoints which will help him to determine how much they know about the topic, what their beliefs are, and how they are likely to react. The writer can then use this knowledge to build his case. If the writer cannot be open-minded, then it is recommended that he should choose another topic that he can deal with more objectively.

Other factors should also influence the selection of a topic. The topic should be well-informed. In addition, the writer should choose an issue narrow enough to be treated effectively in the space available to him, or be willing to confine your discussion to one aspect of a broad issue. It is also important to consider the purpose that the writer expect his argument to accomplish and how he wishes the audience to respond. If the topic is so-far reaching that he cannot identify what he want to convince readers to think, or if the purpose is so idealistic that the expectations of their response are impossible or unreasonable, the essay will suffer.

#### ***2.1.2. Taking a stand***

After choosing a topic, we will need to state the opinion in an argumentative thesis that takes a strong stand about the topic. This thesis will act as the

foundation for the rest of the argument.

A good way to test the suitability of the thesis for an argumentative essay is to formulate an antithesis, a statement that asserts the opposite position. If we can create an antithesis, the thesis statement takes a stand, if not, the statement needs further revision in order to be argumentative.

Example:

*Thesis statement:* Term limits would improve government by bringing people with fresh ideas into office every few years.

*Antithesis:* Term limits would harm government because elected officials would always be inexperienced.

### **2.1.3. Identifying your audience:**

Whenever we write, consider the audience, that is, the people who will read what we have written. Knowing the audience will help us reach the goal of communicating clearly and effectively.

Before writing any essays, we should analyze the characteristics, values, and interests of your audience. In argumentation, it is especially important to consider what beliefs or opinions your readers are likely to have and whether your audience is likely to be friendly, neutral, or hostile to your thesis. It is probably best to assume that some, if not most, of the readers are at least skeptically neutral - that they are open to our ideas but need to be convinced. This assumption will keep us from making claims we cannot support. If the position is controversial, we should assume that an informed and determined opposition is looking for holes in your argument.

In an argumentative essay, we face a dual challenge. We must appeal to readers who are neutral or even hostile to our position, and we must influence those readers so that they are more receptive to our viewpoint. For example, it would be relatively easy to convince college students that tuition should be lowered or instructors that faculty salaries should be raised. We could be reasonably sure, in advance, that each group would be friendly and would agree with our position. But argument requires more than telling people what they



already believe. It would be much harder to convince college students that tuition should be raised to pay for an increase in instructors' salaries or to persuade instructors to forgo raises so that tuition can remain the same. Remember, the audience will not just take our word for the claims we make. We must provide evidence that will support the thesis and reasoning that will lead logically to the conclusion.

#### ***2.1.4. Evidential support***

As we gather evidence and assess its effectiveness, it is very important to remember that evidence in an argumentative essay never proves anything conclusively. The best evidence can do is convince the audience that an assertion is reasonable and worth considering.

Evidence can be the fact or opinion and it needs to meet the following criteria.

- The evidence should be relevant. It should support the thesis and be pertinent to the argument we are making. As we present evidence, be careful not to concentrate so much on a specific example that we lose sight of the point we are supporting. Such digressions may confuse your readers. For example, in arguing for mandatory HN testing for all healthcare workers, one student made the point that AIDS is at epidemic proportions. To illustrate this point, he offered a discussion of the bubonic plague in fourteenth-century in Europe. Although interesting, this example was not relevant. To show its relevance, the student would have to link his discussion to his assertions about AIDS, possibly by comparing the spread of the bubonic plague in the fourteenth-century to the spread of AIDS today.

- The evidence should be representative. It should represent the full range of opinions about your subject, not just one side or another. For example, in an essay in which we argued against the use of animals in medical experimentation, we would not just use information provided by animal rights activists. We would also use information supplied by medical researchers, pharmaceutical companies, and possibly medical ethicists. In addition, the examples and expert

opinions we include should be typical, not aberrant.

- The evidence should be sufficient. It is very essential to include enough evidence to support our claims. The amount of evidence we need depends on the length of our paper, the audience and the thesis. It stands to reason that we would use fewer examples in a two-page paper than in a ten-page research assignment. Similarly, an audience that is favorably disposed to our thesis might need only one or two examples to be convinced, whereas a skeptical audience would need many more. As we develop the thesis, amount of support should be considered to ensure the information we provided is correct and fully worked. We may decide that a narrower, more limited thesis will be easier to support than one that is more inclusive.

#### ***2.1.5. Dealing with the opposition***

When gathering evidence, it is very important to remember that we cannot ignore arguments against the position. In fact, we should specifically address the most obvious and sometimes the not-so-obvious objections to our case. We should try to anticipate the objections that a reasonable person would have to the thesis. By directly addressing these objections in the essay, we will help convince readers that the arguments are sound. This part of an argument, called refutation, is essential to making the strongest case possible.

When planning an argumentative essay, all possible arguments against the thesis that we can identify should be written down. Then, as we marshal the evidence, we can decide which points we will refute. It is recommended to understand that careful readers will expect us to refute the most compelling of the opponent's arguments. It is essential to avoid distorting an opponent's argument by making it seem weaker than it actually is. This technique, called creating a straw man, can backfire and actually turn fair-minded readers against us.

#### ***2.2. Cohesion and coherence***

Cohesion and coherence are both important factors that contribute to the writer's success in any kinds of writing. In an argumentative essay, these factors are even more essential to make the essay logical in both structure and content.

Coherence is product of many different factors, which combine to make every paragraph, every sentence, and every phrase contribute to the meaning of the whole piece. Coherence in writing is much more difficult to sustain than coherent speech simply because writers have no nonverbal clues to inform them if their message is clear or not. Therefore, writers must make their patterns of coherence much more explicit and much more carefully planned. Coherence itself is the product of two factors — paragraph unity and sentence cohesion.

To achieve paragraph unity, a writer must ensure two things only. First, the paragraph must have a single generalization that serves as the focus of attention, that is, a topic sentence. Secondly, the writer must control the content of every other sentence in the paragraph's body such that it contains more specific information than the topic sentence and it maintains the same focus of attention as the topic sentence.

This generalization about paragraph structure holds true for the essay in particular. The two major exceptions to this formula for paragraph unity are found in fiction (where paragraph boundaries serve other functions, such as indicating when a new speaker is talking in a story) and in journalism (where paragraphs are especially short to promote 'visual' ease by creating white space).

To achieve cohesion, the link of one sentence to the next, consider the following techniques:

➤ **Repetition.** In sentence B (the second of any two sentences), repeat a word from sentence A.

➤ **Synonymy.** If direct repetition is too obvious, use a synonym of the word you wish to repeat. This strategy is call 'elegant variation.'

➤ **Antonymy.** Using the 'opposite' word, an antonym, can also create sentence cohesion, since in language antonyms actually share more elements of meaning than you might imagine.

➤ **Pro-forms.** Use a pronoun, pro-verb, or another pro-form to make explicit reference back to a form mentioned earlier.

➤ **Collocation.** Use a commonly paired or expected or highly probable word

to connect one sentence to another.

➤ **Enumeration.** Use overt markers of sequence to highlight the connection between ideas. This system has many advantages: (a) it can link ideas that are otherwise completely unconnected, (b) it looks formal and distinctive, and (c) it promotes a second method of sentence cohesion, discussed in (7) below.

➤ **Parallelism.** Repeat a sentence structure. This technique is the oldest, most overlooked, but probably the most elegant method of creating cohesion.

➤ **Transitions.** Use a conjunction or conjunctive adverb to link sentences with particular logical relationships.

Transition words and phrases are vital to the success of any essay. They are the bread and butter of writing. They are the glue that holds all parts of an essay together. Think of bricks building a house without mortar. Lack of mortar would cause the house to fall apart without it. Transitions hold the same importance. We need these words and phrases to join sentences and thoughts together in a coherent fashion.

Transitions bring ideas together. They are leaving one thought and entering a new one. If you think of these words as ending the old and opening the new, it will help you organize your thoughts and your essays.

As another little tip from the inside, transition words are excellent cues on standardized tests. They often tell you what will be coming next (either positive or negative), and indicate a change. Furthermore, they are great words to stick into essays in high school and college. Teachers look for these words, as they indicate structure within an essay. As they are necessary to the continuity (and coherence) of an essay, they will demonstrate a firm grasp of a topic. If you use these words, then you know you have structured a strong essay, as you are building on an issue or are comparing two different issues well.

Transitions are in used to create cohesion within a written work; however, students must understand that different transitions establish different relationships.

Here are some commonly used transition words and phrases:

- Words indicating a continuity with what has gone before: *and, in addition, moreover, furthermore, also, indeed, besides, secondly, next, similarly, again, equally important, beyond that.*
- Words indicating an example or illustration of a point introducing evidence: *for example, for instance, as an illustration.*
- Words adding emphasis to a point which is reinforcing a previous point: *in fact, in other words, that is, indeed, as a matter of fact.*
- Words indicating a conclusion from or a result of what you have just been discussing: *thus, hence, therefore, consequently, as a result.*
- Words indicating a contrast with what has just been said: *but, however, nevertheless, by contrast, on the other hand, conversely.*
- Words indicating a qualification, doubt, or reservation about what you have just been discussing: *no doubt, of course, to be sure.*
- Words indicating a summary statement is coming up: *in short, all in all, in brief, in conclusion, to conclude, given all this.*
- Pronoun and adjectival links to something which has gone before: *this, that, the above-mentioned, such.*
- Words establishing time relationships (important in narrative paragraphs): *after, afterwards, then, later, before, while, at the same time, immediately, thereupon, next, meanwhile, subsequently, previously, simultaneously.*
- Words indicating spatial relationships (important in physical descriptions): *above, beside, next to, on the other side, facing, parallel, across from, adjacent.*

### ***2.3. Steps to write a successful argumentative essay***

To achieve high marks in writing an argumentative essay (or any essay) it's essential to go through the following distinct steps:

- ❖ Analyzing the topic and task
- ❖ Preparing a plan
- ❖ Writing
- ❖ Proofreading and checking

### ***2.3.1. Analyzing the topic and task***

In other word, this step makes us interpret the question carefully. It not only saves us the wasted time when we try to think about the irrelevant issues or beat about the bush, but gives us a clearer idea of what the question is getting at and a better understanding of what examiner is looking for in our work. Without this our work can seem routine and predictable: at best just the recycling of the ideas that dominate the subject.

In this step, we have to do two things: understanding the question and brainstorming the ideas.

#### **2.3.1.1. Understanding the question**

After reading the topic that we have to discuss, we must read it again and figure out the key words. This sub-step helps us to avoid misunderstanding the task required and going off the point.

Look at the sample question:

***A vegetarian diet is beneficial to our health. Do you agree or disagree?***

→ Topic words: “*a vegetarian diet*”, “*beneficial*”

→ Task words: “*agree or disagree*”

Then define the key words. What is “*vegetarian diet*”? Why is it beneficial? What other diets are beneficial?

#### **2.3.1.2. Brainstorming the ideas**

Brainstorming is an important skill in writing. Brainstorming the ideas can get we started more quickly and save you time in the later stages of writing process.

Brainstorming is a way of gathering ideas about a topic. If we think of a storm, we imagine the state of thousands of drops of rain, all coming down together. Similarly, thousands of ideas “raining” down onto your paper if we concentrate and consider the topic discussed. When we brainstorm, it is advisable to write down every idea that comes to us. It is not necessary to worry about whether the ideas are good or silly, useful or not. We can decide that later. Right now, we are gathering as many ideas as we can.

We will learn three types of brainstorming in this section: *making a list*, *free-writing*, and *mapping*.

### ***Making a list***

Write single words, phrases or sentences that are connected to your topic. Follow this procedure:

- ✓ Writing down the general topic at the top of your paper.
- ✓ Making a list of every word or phrase that comes into our mind about the topic. The free flow of ideas should be kept writing by judging or editing them down. The harder we think, the more ideas will flow. Of course, we should try to stay on the general topic. However, the information that is completely off the topic can be cross out later
- ✓ Using words, phrases or sentences. Spelling or grammar in this step can be ignored.

### ***Free-writing***

When we free-write, we write whatever comes into our head about the topic without stopping. Free-writing helps us practice ***fluency*** (writing quickly and easily). While free-writing, we do not need to worry about ***accuracy*** (having correct grammar and spelling). It is not essential to check dictionary.

Here is an example of a student's free-writing:

*The major reason for ~~why~~ disagreeing with a balanced diet argument, however, is to do with stress. Even though people in the past did not always have a balanced diet, something existing only on ~~potato~~ potatoes and bread, they ~~live~~ lived healthy lives because there was little or no ~~more~~ stress of the kind that afflicts urban residents today. ~~Thirdly~~ Secondly, there is a large percentage of people in developed and developing societies who do their jobs, then relax in front of the ~~television~~ television, quite often eating only junk food, but seem healthy enough. They may be spared illness and disease by their relatively stress-free ~~life~~ lives.*

Notice how the writer's ideas jump around. When she makes a mistake, she just crosses it out and continues writing. We want to get as many ideas on paper

as we can. We can take out unnecessary words and sentences later.

This procedure is recommended for the writer to follow:

- ✓ Writing the topic at top of the paper.
- ✓ Writing as much as we can about the topic until we run out of ideas.

Include information, facts, details, examples, etc., that come into our mind about the subject.

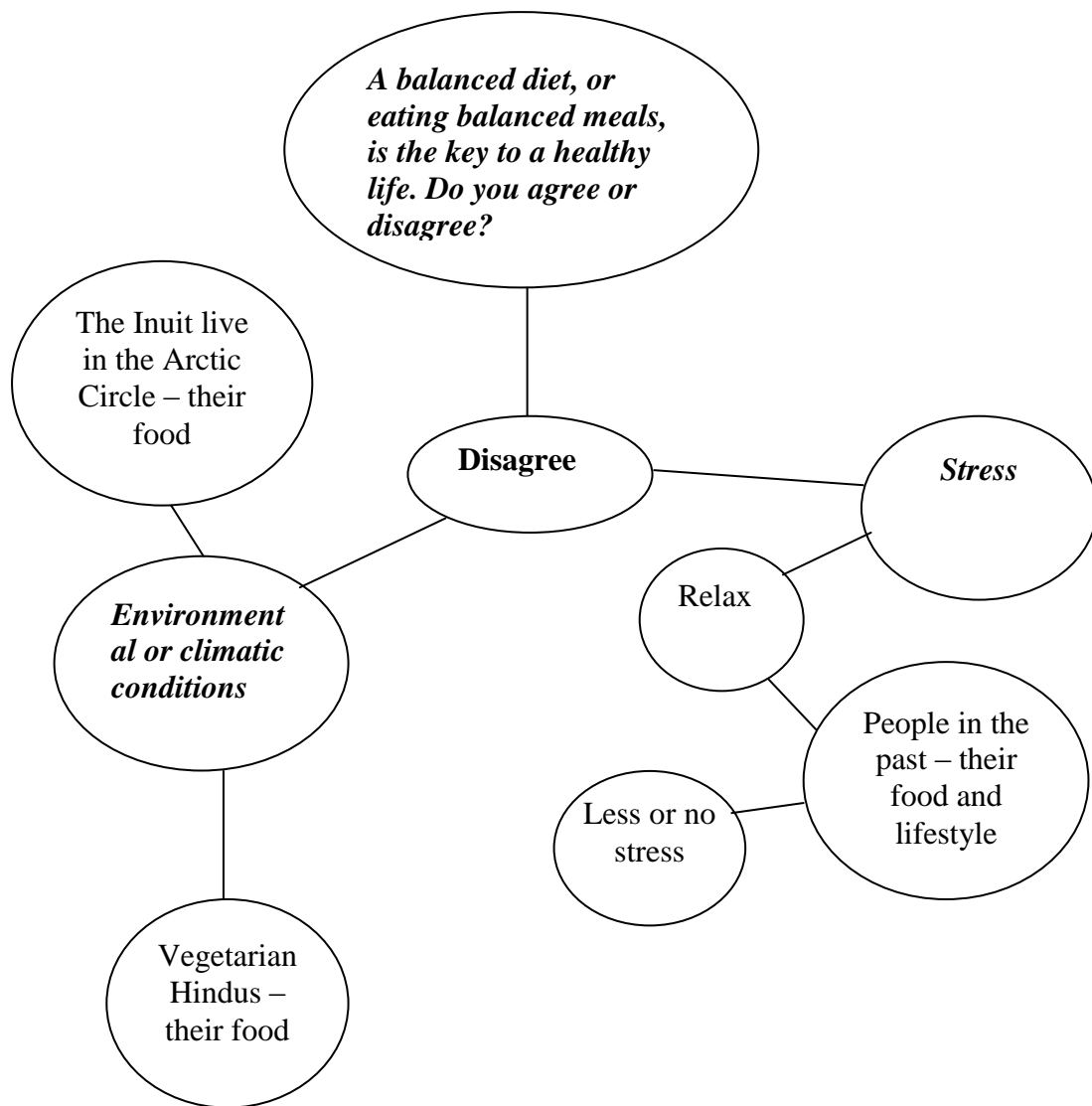
- ✓ After having run out of ideas, rereading the paper and circling the main idea(s) that would be interested in developing.

- ✓ Taking that main idea and free-writing again.

### **Mapping**

To make a map, use the whole sheet of paper and write your topic in the middle, with a circle around it. Then put the next idea in a circle above or below your topic and connect the circles with lines. The lines show that the two ideas are related.





***What is the best way to brainstorm?***

“There is no best method of brainstorming. Some writers like to use lists because they do not have to write complete sentences. Some writers like free-writing because they can write quickly and ideas come easily. Some writers prefer mapping because they can easily see the relationship between ideas. Experiment with all three methods, and then choose the one that works best for you.”

*(Dorothy E. Zemach & Lisa A. Rumisek, 2001:33)*

**2.3.2. Outlining**

In this step, brief outline is sufficient. To show how the ideas work together, number them. To avoid confusion, use several different types of

numbers and letters to show the organization of the ideas. Use Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, VI, etc.) for your essay's main ideas: your introduction and thesis statement, your main body paragraphs, and your conclusion, write all of these first, before going into more detail anywhere.

*I. Introduction*

*II. First main idea*

*III. Second main idea*

*IV. Third main idea*

*V. Conclusion*

Next, fill in more information for the paragraphs in the main body by using capital Roman letters (A, B, C, etc.). Use one letter for each supporting idea in your main body paragraph. Complete this information for each paragraph in the main body before going into more detail.

*I. Introduction*

*II. First main idea*

*A. First supporting point*

*B. Second supporting point*

*... and so on*

Finally, use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) to give details for your supporting points. Not every supporting point will have details, and some points will have several. It is not important to have the same number of details for every supporting point.

*I. Introduction*

*II. First main idea*

*A. First supporting point*

*1. First detail*

*2. Second detail*

*B. Second supporting point*

*1. First detail*

*2. Second detail*

... and so on.

Here is an example for outlining the essay:

**Don't support nuclear energy**

- I. *Nuclear power is not a good energy source for the world.*
- II. *Very expensive*
  - A. *Nuclear fuel is expensive*
  - B. *Nuclear power stations are expensive to build and operate.*
    1. *Cost of construction*
    2. *Cost of training workers*
    3. *Cost of safety features*
- III. *Nuclear materials are not safe*
  - A. *Nuclear fuels are dangerous*
    1. *Mining fuels produces radioactive gas*
    2. *Working with radioactive fuels can harm workers*
  - B. *Nuclear waste products are dangerous*
    1. *Very radioactive*
    2. *Difficult to dispose of or store safely*
- IV. *There is a great possibility of accidents*
  - A. *Nuclear power stations can fail*
    1. *Three Mile Island, USA (1979)*
    2. *Tarapur, India (1992)*
    3. *Darlington, Canada (1992)*
  - B. *Workers can make mistakes*
    1. *Chernobyl, USSR (1986)*
    2. *Kola, Russia (1991)*
    3. *Tokaimura, Japan (1999)*
  - C. *Natural disasters can occur*
    1. *Earthquake: Kozloduy, Bulgaria (1997)*
    2. *Tornado: Mururoa, the Pacific (1981)*

*V. Because of the cost and the danger, the world should develop different types of energy to replace nuclear power.*

### **2.3.3. Writing**

After we have made an outline for the paragraph or essay, we can start writing the first rough draft. This is how to proceed:

- At the top of the paper, writing down the audience and purpose.
- Writing down the topic sentence and underlining it. Doing this will remind us of the focus of your paragraph.

- Skipping one or two line of writing and leave margins of one inch on both sides of the paper. These blank spaces will allow us to add more details, information, examples, etc., in order for us to fully develop your points. Also, you can add comments in the margins for your attention later on.

- Writing the paragraph, one after another, following your outline as closely as possible. We can add ideas which are not in your outline unless we are certain they are relevant.

- It is not necessary to worry about grammar, punctuation or spelling. The first rough draft does not have to be perfect; in fact, it won't be because the main goal is to write down as much information as we can, following the points in the outline.

After you write the first rough draft, the next is to revise it. When we revise, we can change what we have written in order to improve it. During the first revision, be concerned mainly with content and organization.

*(Trần Thị Ngọc Liên, 2003:26)*

The example below will indicate how to write the first draft

Don't support nuclear energy

Can you add some kind of introduction before giving your statement?

*Even though it can provide the world with a source of electricity, nuclear power is not a good energy source because it is too expensive, the materials used in the power stations are not safe, and there is a great possibility of accidents.*



Good thesis statement – very clear

Can you add a topic sentence to this paragraph?



*First of all, nuclear fuel is expensive. It must be taken out of the ground and transported great distances. As fuel are used up, they will become even more **expensive**, just as oil and gas have become more **expensive**. In addition, nuclear power stations are **expensive** to build*



Can you explain this idea a little more?

*and operate. It is **expensive** to train workers.*

You have used 'expensive' 5 times in the paragraph

Needs transition.

*Nuclear materials are not safe. When uranium is taken out of the ground, radioactive gas is released. This is not safe for the miners.*

Why is uranium not safe

*Uranium itself is also not safe. Being around uranium is not safe for workers.*

Needs transition

*Nuclear waste is also dangerous. It is very radioactive, and it is difficult to dispose of it or even to store it safely. This is very short*

paragraph...

Nice transition

*Most significantly, there is always a possibility of nuclear accidents. The power stations themselves can fail when they get old or if they are not build correctly. The machinery can malfunction, too. In 1979,*

Nice specific example

*problem at the Three Mile Island nuclear power station in the United States resulted in radioactive materials escaping into the nearby*

*community. More recently, equipment failures were responsible for*

Can you explain what happened at these places?

*accidents in power stations in Tarapur, India (1992) and Darlington, Canada (1992).*

Can you add a transition?

↖ Workers at nuclear power plants can make mistakes. Perhaps the most famous of these incidents occurred at Chernobyl (in the former USSR) in 1986.

*Radioactivity from the Chernobyl accident was recorded as far away as*

Good detail

*Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, and even Japan. Human error was*

Are these the only mistakes that have happened?

*responsible for power station accidents in Kola, Russia (1991) and Tokaimura, Japan (1999). There is no way we can guarantee that workers will not make mistakes again in the future.*

Even natural disasters can affect nuclear power plants. An earthquake in Bulgaria in 1977 damaged the nuclear power plant in Kozloduy, and a big storm in Pacific Ocean in 1981 washed nuclear waste out into the ocean. Can you give some comment about this?

*It is true that oil and gas can not supply all of the world's*

Good restatement of thesis

*energy needs much longer. However, we cannot replace them with an energy source that is too expensive and is dangerous from the time the fuels are taken out of the ground and even after the station is running.*

I think you need some kind of concluding sentence. What do you recommend instead of nuclear power?

Good essay! You have a lot of information and specific examples.

The comments on the essay above are written by one of the writer's classmate. After having consultant and revising the essay, the error was corrected and the additional information was supplemented. The writer started to write the second

draft:

*Don't support nuclear energy!*

*These days, it seem like everyone is worried about how the world will meet its energy demands when we have run out of oil and natural gas. Scientists and researchers are investigating such power sources as solar energy, wind energy, and even energy from hot rocks beneath the earth's surface. However, there is one energy source that I believe should not be developed any further. In fact, I believe that we should stop using it as soon as possible. Even though it can provide the world with a source of electricity, nuclear power is not a good energy source because it is too expensive, the material used in the power stations are not safe, and there is a great possibility of accidents.*

*Nuclear power is not an economical energy source. First of all, nuclear fuel is expensive. It must be taken out of the ground and transported great distances. As fuels are used up, they will become even more expensive, just as oil and gas have. In addition, nuclear power stations cost a lot of money to build and to operate because of the great care that must be taken with safety. Because the people who work in nuclear power stations must be highly specialists, salaries for workers are also high.*

*In addition to being expensive, nuclear material are not safe. When uranium is taken out of the ground, radioactive gas is released. This is not safe for the miners. Uranium itself is not safe either because of its high radioactivity. Because of this, people who work with nuclear fuels are at risk of cancer. As nuclear power stations run, they create nuclear waste, which is also dangerous. It is very radioactive, and it is difficult to dispose of or even to store*

*safely. No town wants nuclear waste buried nearby, and for good reason.*

*Most significantly, there is always a possibility of nuclear accidents. The power stations themselves can fail when they get old or if they are not built correctly. The machinery can malfunction, too. In 1979, problems at the Three Mile Island nuclear power station in the United States resulted in radioactive materials escaping into the nearby community. More recently, equipment failures were responsible for accidents in power stations in Tarapur, Indian in 1992, and Darlington, Canada, also in 1992. Both of these accidents led to leaks of radioactive material.*

*It is not just building and equipment which can fail, but people, too. Workers at nuclear power stations can make mistakes. Perhaps the most famous of these incidents occurred at Chernobyl, in the former USSR, 1986. Radioactivity from the Chernobyl accident was recorded as far away as Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, and even Japan. Human error has been responsible for numerous plant accidents. Some recent well-known examples include Kola, Russia, where workers accidentally caused an equipment failure in 1991, and Tokaimura, Japan, in 1999. There is no way we can guarantee that workers will not make mistakes again in the future.*

*Even natural disasters can affect nuclear power plants. An earthquake in Bulgaria in 1977 damaged the nuclear power plant in Kozloduy, and a big storm in the Pacific Ocean in 1981 washed nuclear waste from Moruroa into the ocean. Of course, it is impossible for people to predict or to prevent events like this. Different types of severe weather or natural disasters can strike almost anywhere in the world.*

*It is true that oil and gas cannot supply all of the world's energy needs much longer. However, we cannot replace them with an*



*energy source that is expensive and dangerous, from the time the fuels are taken out of the ground to even after the plant is running. Instead, we must develop cheaper and, most importantly, safer types of energy to power our world*

*(Dorothy E. Zemach & Lisa A. Rumisek, 2001:112)*

#### **2.3.4. Proofreading and checking**

After revision, the writer can incorporate all of the necessary revisions, this is your second draft, the third or the fourth, etc. then proceed to proofread and checking:

- Punctuation – commas, full stops, capital letters.
- Spelling
- Agreement between subject and verb
- Tense
- Word form – adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs
- Article – a/an, the
- Word order
- Sentences – (range of) simple, compound and complex

## **Chapter three:**

### **The common difficulties and mistakes in writing argumentative essay and some suggested solutions**

It is undeniable that writing is the most difficult skill that requires a lot of knowledge and research to write the paper perfectly. In order to do this, the writer must spend much time gathering ideas, arranging and making it complete. However, in the process of writing, especially writing this kind of essay, the writer may encounter many problems. We sometimes cannot understand what these problems are and how to solve it. Therefore, in this chapter, the researcher will introduce some difficulties and mistakes that the students may have while writing the essay. Besides, the solutions to deal with these problems are suggested for reference.

#### **1. Writer's block**

Writer's block is a condition, associated with writing as a profession, in which an author loses the ability to produce new work. The condition varies widely in intensity. It can be trivial, a temporary difficulty in dealing with the task in hand. At the other extreme, some "blocked" writers have been unable to work for years on end, and some have even abandoned their careers. It can manifest as the affected writer viewing their work as inferior or unsuitable, when in fact it could be the opposite.

Writer's block may have many causes. Some are essentially creative problems that originate within an author's work itself. A writer may run out of inspiration. The writer may be greatly distracted and feel they may have something that needs to be done before hand. A project may be fundamentally misconceived, or beyond the author's experience or ability. A fictional example can be found in George Orwell's novel *Keep The Aspidistra Flying*, in which the hero Gordon Comstock struggles in vain to complete an epic poem describing a day in London: "It was too big for him, that was the truth. It had never really progressed, it had simply fallen apart into a series of fragments."

Other blocks, especially the more serious kind, may be produced by

adverse circumstances in a writer's life or career: physical illness, depression, the end of a relationship, financial pressures, a sense of failure. The pressure to produce work may in itself contribute to a writer's block, especially if they are compelled to work in ways that are against their natural inclination, i.e. too fast or in some unsuitable style or genre. In some cases, writer's block may also come from feeling intimidated by a previous big success, the creator putting on themselves a paralyzing pressure to find something to equate that same success again. The writer Elizabeth Gilbert, reflecting on her post-bestseller prospects, proposes that such a pressure might be released by interpreting creative writers as "having" genius rather than "being" a genius. In George Gissing's *New Grub Street*, one of the first novels to take writer's block as a main theme, the novelist Edwin Reardon becomes completely unable to write and is shown as suffering from all those problems.

The items below are only suggestions. It is advisable to remember the ideas:

#### **Writing has no pressure**

In fact, don't be hard on yourself at all while writing. Anna Quindlin wrote, "People have writer's block not because they can't write, but because they despair of writing eloquently." Turn the critical brain off. There is a time and place for criticism: it's called editing.

#### **Writing is a regular job**

Stephen King, a famously prolific author, uses the metaphor of a toolbox to talk about writing in *On Writing*, intentionally linking it to physical work. If we think of ourselves as laborers, as craftsmen, it's easier to sit down and write. We are just putting words on the page, after all, one beside another, as a bricklayer puts down bricks. At the end of the day, we're just creating things -- stories, poems, or plays -- only we use vocabulary and grammar instead of bricks and mortar.

#### **Writing is refreshing**

Writer's block could be a sign that the ideas need time to gestate. Idleness can be a key part of the creative process. We should give ourselves time to gather

new experiences and new ideas, from life, reading, or other forms of art, before starting again.

### **Writing is an unity of groups**

Many writers, understandably, have trouble doing this on their own. We might find a writing partner and agree to hold each other to deadlines in an encouraging, non-critical way. Knowing that someone else is expecting results helps many writers produce material. Writing groups or classes are another good way to jump-start a writing routine.

### **Writing is sharing**

We can talk to a friend, preferably one who is also a writer, what we think or what we want to write. A number of books, such as *The Artist's Way*, are designed to help creative people explore the root causes of their blocks. (Studying the lives of other writers can also provide insight into why we are blocked.) If the writer's block continues, we might seek counseling. Many therapists specialize in helping artists and writers reconnect with their creativity.

### **Writing is practicing**

As much as it may remind we of the high school writing class, writing exercises can loosen up the mind and get us to write things we would never write otherwise. If nothing else, they get words on the page, and if we do enough of that, some of it is bound to be good.

### **Writing is changing space to create**

Are our desk and chair comfortable? Is our space well-lit? Would it help to try writing in a coffee shop for a change? Without being too precious about it -- or turning it into another form of procrastination -- we may consider how we can create or find a space we will look forward to being in.

## **2. Lack of transitional devices**

As mentioned in the section 2.2 of the previous chapter, the transitional words and phrases are very important to link the ideas together and make the paper clearer and more logical. Look the following examples and consider

which is better:

**Example 1:**

*It is important that students study hard. The school day is broken up, students can attend classes in different subjects and learn what areas they are most likely to enjoy and succeed at in later life. It is very important that the schools offer a wide range of subjects to cater to all the students in their care. The school is preparing the students for life and for the workforce.*

*It is also true that students need more than the knowledge of a subject. They need to know how to work in groups to achieve a mutual goal, how to work as a team. Where better to learn those skills than on the sport field? Any of the team sports involve coordination with other players, understanding and adopting a team mentality. These skills are too useful to be ignored*

**Example 2:**

*No sensible person will deny that it is important that students study hard. The school day is broken up **so that** students can attend classes in different subjects **in order to** learn what areas they are most likely to enjoy and succeed at in later life. It is very important that the schools offer a wide range of subjects to cater to all the students in their care. **After all**, the school is preparing the students for life and for the workforce.*

***However**, it is also true that students need more than the knowledge of a subject. They need to know how to work in groups to achieve a mutual goal, how to work as a team. Where better to learn those skills than on the sport field? Any of the team sports involve coordination with other players, understanding and adopting a team mentality. These skills are too useful to be ignored.*

Obviously, in the latter, the paragraphs are written in the way that the reader will see the link or the bridge between the sentences and this way also make us easier to understand the writer's argument.

Here are a few tips on how and when to use transition words and phrases:

- ✓ Always using a transition phrase at the beginning of a new body paragraph
- ✓ Always using a transition word in between thoughts within a paragraph
- ✓ Never using a transition word to begin an essay
- ✓ Never using a transition word to begin a paragraph (but we can sometimes use a transition phrase at the start of a new body paragraph).

### **3. Writing without outlining**

An essay is longer and more complex than a paragraph, it is even more important to organize our thoughts and to plan your essay before you begin to write. The best way to do this is to make an outline.

However, there are many people who ignore this step when they are writing. In an argumentative essay, outlining is even more important because we have to arrange your ideas carefully and logical to state the opinion about the issues and demonstrate that certain idea is valid and others are not. So it is obvious to realize that writing without outlining will lead to the state of losing the way and beating about the bush.

This error also leads to the other mistakes in writing such as lack of the topic sentence and evidences, even lack of time to complete the writing, etc.

The way to over come this is not too difficult. We can think that the skeleton, although we don not see it, it supports our body. In the same way, although the readers will not see the outline, making an outline in advance will support the essay by providing its structure. Outlining does not take much time and is not difficult to do so it is not necessary to worry about time to write it. It even helps us save time and organize the ideas clearly.

### **Part three. CONCLUSION**

Writing is not easy skill to acquire and getting high marks in writing is even more difficult because the errors of grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc. are much easier to recognize. However, writing skill can be the ticket to better college grades and greater academic achievement.

In this study, the argumentative essay writing is introduced with the hope that it can help students to imagine what the argumentation is like and obtain the knowledge of writing and checking their papers. This kind of essay may be the most difficult because it requires the writer to have certain understandings on the issues they want to discuss. Besides, the writers must protect and keep their stand strong to make the readers understand the writer's point and support them. Therefore, it is very important for the writers to study harder to get more experience in writing and have their own viewpoints to confirm their stand.

Although the researcher has tried her best to do the research, this study still has some limitations. If having more time, the author would find and analyze more difficulties in writing to fully support students to overcome and success in writing their paper.

As mentioned above, writing is the most difficult skill so we should always study harder to make it progress. Additionally, speaking, listening, and reading skills should be practiced continually to get more knowledge and to improve writing skill.

To conclude, after completing this study, we partly understand the academic writing and its types, achieve certain knowledge about essays and then have an overview of how to write an argumentative essay.

## Reference

### A. Books

1. Bryan Greetham, (2004), *How to write better essay*, Palgrave Macmillan.
2. Dorothy E. Zemach & Lisa A. Rumisek, (2001), *Academic writing from paragraph to essay*, Macmillan.
3. Tran Thi Ngoc Lien, ( 2003) *Essay writing, A college course book for HPU students of English*, Haiphong Private University, Haiphong.

### B. Web pages:

1. <http://www.wikipedia.com>
2. <http://www.essayinfo.com>
3. <http://www.englishtips.org>
4. <http://www.roanestate.edu>

## Appendix



*This small part includes the topics and essays that are introduced in TOEFL, IELTS tests.*

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People should sometimes do things that they do not enjoy doing. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*I agree that people should sometimes do things that they don't enjoy doing. This is ' a basic part of life. There are many small things we have to do in both our personal and professional lives that we may not enjoy, but that are part of our responsibilities. In addition, sometimes by doing things we don't enjoy, we actually learn to like them.*

*Most people's personal lives are filled with tasks that they don't enjoy doing, but they do them anyway. %0 likes going to the doctor or dentist, for example? But we do this because we know that it is important to take care of our health. I don't know many people who like changing the oil in their cars or mowing the lawn. We do these things, however, because we understand that we need to maintain our personal property.*

*Similarly, our professional lives are filled with tasks that are not fun, but that are necessary parts of our jobs. No one likes to do boring assignments or to work with someone who no one else likes. ff we're in management, we may sometimes have to fire someone. No one likes to do things like these, but if they are part of our professional responsibilities, we have to do them.*

*On the other hand, sometimes doing something we don't enjoy can lead to enjoyment. Simply by trying it again, we may decide we like doing it. For instance, we may think we hate to dance. We agree to go to a club only to please someone else. Yet, for some reason, this time we enjoy dancing. The same can be true of trying new foods or going to a new type of museum.*

*Not everything in life is fun. Unpleasant or boring tasks are a necessary part of life.*

2. Some people believe that the Earth is being harmed by human activity. Others feel that human activity makes the Earth a better place to live. What is

your opinion? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*The quality of human life has improved greatly over the past few centuries, but Earth is being harmed more and more by human activity. As we develop our technology, we use more and more natural resources and cause more and more pollution. As our population grows, we destroy more and more natural areas in order to expand towns and cities. The Earth is being harmed, and this harms people as well.*

*We often act as if we have unlimited natural resources, but this isn't true. If we cut down too many trees to build houses and make paper, not all the trees will grow back. If we catch too many fish, the fish population will get smaller and smaller. If we aren't careful about how we use our natural resources, we will lose many of them. We are already losing some.*

*We don't seem to pay attention to the amount of pollution human activity can cause. Our cars pollute the air. Our factories pollute both the air and the water. We throw our waste into rivers and streams. We act as if the air and water can clean themselves up, but they can't.*

*As urban populations grow, the cities grow too, taking over more and more land. New houses, stores, and office buildings are built all the time. Land that was once forest or farms is now parking lots and apartment buildings. We seem to act as if we have unlimited land, but we don't. We need to plan more carefully so that we use our limited land in the best way possible.*

*People need to respect the Earth and try to preserve it. If we don't, we will lose all the natural resources that we depend on for life. Then what will happen?*

3. It is better to enjoy your money when you earn it, or is it better to save your money for some time in the future? Use specific reason and examples to support your opinion.

*When I have a choice between spending money or putting it in my savings account at the bank, I always put it in the bank. I will have a lot of expenses in the future, like my education, travel, and unforeseen emergencies. I need to set*

*money aside for these expenses.*

*Education is expensive. I can't depend on my parents to pay all my bills. I have tuition, room and board, books, and incidental expenses to pay for. My parents help me, but I have to pay part of it. If I spend my money now, I won't be able to pay for my education.*

*Travel is also very expensive. I don't mean vacation travel. I mean travel to and from school, because my school is far from home. First I have to get to school, then, of course, I want to return to my family for important festivals and family occasions. I need to save money for these trips.*

*Emergencies could arrive at any moment. I might have an unexpected illness while I am at school. One of my family members may need help and I will have to send them money. You can't predict emergencies like these, but you can be prepared. I need to save money for these emergencies.*

*When you are not rich, you cannot spend your money carelessly. You must plan ahead. I know I will have expenses for my schooling and for traveling to and from home. I know that I will also have unexpected expenses from time to time. I must be prepared. I need to save money for these events.*

4. Businesses should hire employees for their entire lives. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*In some business cultures, it is the practice to hire workers when they are young and employ them until they retire. In other business cultures, companies hire people to do a job and then fire them when they are not needed. I agree with the latter position.*

*In today's economy it is not important to hire employees for their entire lives. The important considerations for companies are an employee's performance, speed, and ability to change. Loyalty is not a consideration.*

*Today there is a lot of competition so we need to hire workers who can perform their jobs well. We need to find skilled workers who can do a job without a lot of extra training. We need to match the job to the worker, and if the job changes, we change the worker.*

*Because of competition, we also need to be able to produce our goods and services quickly. We need young people who are aggressive and will push themselves to do their job faster. We need young people who are willing to work long hours.*

*In order to compete, we have to be able to change to meet the changing demands of the market. By changing our workforce frequently, we can bring in new ideas. By hiring young workers, we get fresh points of view.*

*Although a feeling of loyalty between a company and its workers is a noble idea, it is not practical today. A company needs to keep up with the changing forces of the economy. In order to be able to do this, it needs to be able to change its workforce as necessary.*

5. Do you agree or disagree that progress is always good? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*Who would disagree with the statement "progress is good?" Without progress, there would be no change. Without progress there would be no improvements in our economy, our standard of living, or our health.*

*Progress is required to keep the economy moving forward. Without progress, new products wouldn't be developed and new services wouldn't be created. We would be living in the same way our grandparents and great grandparents lived and working at the same kind of jobs.*

*Progress is required to raise our standard of living. Our homes today are more efficient and use fewer resources thanks to improvement in home construction techniques. Our clothes are warmer and safer thanks to developments in textile manufacturing. Our educational system is better thanks to the use of modern computer technology.*

*Progress is required to improve the health of the world's population. Without progress, there would be no vaccines against terrible diseases like smallpox. Without progress, we would have high infant mortality rates. Without progress, we wouldn't have treatments for heart disease and cancer. Thanks to progress, our lives are longer and healthier.*

*Progress is a natural state. Without it, we would not evolve. Without it, our economy, our standard of living, and our health would deteriorate. Who could deny the necessity of progress?*

6. Some people like to travel with a companion. Other people prefer to travel alone. Which do you prefer? Use specifics and examples to support your choice.

*Traveling alone is the only way to travel. If you take someone with you, you take your home with you. When you travel alone, you meet new people, have new experiences, and learn more about yourself.*

*When I travel with a friend, I spend all my time with that friend. We do everything together. When I travel alone, I spend my time looking for new friends. I meet other tourists or local people. We have coffee together or share a meal and we become friends. It's easier to meet new people when I travel alone.*

*When I travel with a friend, my routine is predictable. We follow the same schedule that we do at home. When I travel alone, I adapt myself to the customs of the place. I might take a nap in the afternoon and eat dinner late at night. I might go to a club and dance all night. I am more open to new experiences when I travel alone.*

*When I travel with a friend, we take care of each other. When I am alone, I have to take care of myself. If I encounter a difficult situation, I have to find my own solution. Maybe I don't speak the language and I have to figure out how to make myself understood. Maybe the food looks strange and I have to decide what to eat. When I travel alone, I learn about how I react in new or strange situations.*

*I think it is always important to do things on your own. You can find new friends, have new experiences, and learn a lot about yourself, too. Isn't that the point of travel?*

7. Some people prefer to work for a large company. Others prefer to work for a small company. Which would you prefer? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.

*I would prefer to work in a large company rather than a small one. A*

*large company has more to offer in terms of advancement, training, and prestige.*

*In a large company, I can start at an entry-level position and work my way up to the top. I can start in the mailroom and, once I know the company, I can apply for a managerial position. In a small company, there would not be as much room to grow.*

*In a large company there is the opportunity to learn a variety of jobs. I could work in sales, in shipping, or in any department I applied for. I could be trained in a variety of positions and would have valuable experience. In a small company, there would not be the same opportunity.*

*In a large company, there would be more prestige. I could brag to my friends that I worked for one of the biggest companies in the world. I would always have something to talk about when I met strangers. If I worked for a small company, I would always have to explain what the company did.*

*Working for a small company would not give me the same opportunities for advancement or training as working for a larger company would. Nor would I be as proud to work for a small company-unless the small company was my own.*

8. Some people believe that success in life comes from taking risks or chances. Others believe that success results from careful planning. In your opinion, what does success come from? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*I think that we must all take risks in our lives, but they must be calculated risks. If we look at the great explorers and scientists of history, we see that their successes were usually a combination of both risk-taking and planning. Like the great thinkers, we must plan carefully, seize all opportunities, and reevaluate our plans when necessary.*

*It is hard to be successful without careful planning. In his search for a new route to India, Columbus drew maps, planned his route carefully, and gathered the necessary support and supplies. Madame Curie worked long hours*

*in her laboratory and recorded every aspect of her experiments. Neither of them could have made their achievements without this planning.*

*Even with a careful plan, changes occur. Columbus was looking for India, but he ended up in the Caribbean instead. Lewis and Clark were looking for a river passage west, but they discovered much more. You have to be ready to take advantage of new things as they occur.*

*When things go against plan, you must be ready to change direction.*

*Columbus didn't bring back spices from the East Indies, but he did bring back gold from the Americas. It is important to make your mistakes work for you and change your plans when necessary.*

*You will never succeed in life if you don't take chances. But before you start, you must plan carefully so that you are ready to take advantage of every opportunity and change your plans as required.*

9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? One should never judge a person by external appearances. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

*In most cases, you shouldn't judge a person by external appearances. It is better to reserve judgment until you have had a chance to get to know the person. Judgments based on external appearances prevent you from really getting to know a person, reinforce stereo types, and can lead you to conclusions that aren't true.*

*When you judge people by their external appearance, you lose the chance to get to know them. In high school I stayed away from students who were called "bad students" because they dressed a certain way. I wanted nothing to do with them. Later, I had a chance to meet a "bad student" because his mother was a friend of my mother. Then I realized that we actually had a lot in common. My impression of him was very different once I got to know him.*

*Judging people based on external appearances just reinforces stereotypes. You might think that a person with a tattoo, for example, is not a nice person. It's easy to start thinking that all people with tattoos are not nice people. Then*

*you will never make friends with people who have tattoos or want to work with them or like to live near them.*

*You will feel uncomfortable around them because all you will see about them is their tattoos.*

*Judgments based on external appearances can often lead you to conclusions that aren't true. Maybe you know someone who dresses in old, unfashionable clothes. If all you see are the clothes, it is easy to think that the person has bad taste or bad habits. But maybe the truth is different. Maybe that person comes from a less fortunate family than you and doesn't have money. Maybe the person is working hard to save money for school. You will never know if all you do is look at external appearance.*

*You should always take time to get to know new people before making judgments about them. External appearance often does not tell us anything about a person. Judging someone by their appearance is misleading, reinforces stereotypes, and doesn't lead to the truth. It can prevent you from making a true friend.*

10. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Most experiences in our lives that seemed difficult at the time become valuable lessons for the future. Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

*People say that experience is the best teacher; and I believe this is true. Difficult experiences, especially, can teach us valuable lessons. They can help us overcome fears, they can teach us better ways to do things, and they can show us that we have friends who are ready to help us.*

*Difficult experiences can help us overcome fears. I remember the first time I had to give a presentation to my classmates. I was very shy and afraid to speak in front of the whole class. I spent a long time preparing for my presentation. I was nervous and didn't sleep well the night before. I was surprised when I gave my presentation and everyone listened. No one laughed at me. They asked questions and I could answer them: Now I know I can talk in front of the class and do a good job.*



*Difficult experiences can teach us better ways to do things. I had a very embarrassing experience when I took the test to get my driver's license. I didn't practice for the test because I thought I was such a good driver. But I failed. I didn't really know what to expect so I got nervous and made mistakes. I was embarrassed about my failure and my parents were disappointed. Now I know that it is always better to prepare myself for something, no matter how ready I think I am.*

*Difficult experiences can show us that we have friends. Once I was very sick and I missed several months of school. I thought I would have to repeat the year. I didn't have to because there were a lot of people who helped me. My teachers gave me extra time to do my work. My classmates explained the homework to me. People who I didn't even know well helped me make up the work I lost. I learned that I had friends where I hadn't expected any.*

*Nobody looks for difficult experiences, but we all have to go through them from time to time. They help us overcome fears, learn better ways of doing things, and show us who our friends are. These are all valuable lessons for our future.*