



How to Write Your Essay

Introduction. (1) Recap the event or issue (include who, what, when, and where). (2) Write one sentence that explains the controversy (3) Tell why people disagreed about the dilemma or events. (4) Write an answer to the historical question, taking care to include the name and/or author perspective.



Supporting paragraph. (1) Introduce your strongest reason that supports your argument. (2) Select a quote or other evidence that will convince a skeptic of your argument AND state who/where this evidence comes from. (3) Explain how your quote or evidence supports your argument. (4) Explain your judgment of (a) the author's reliability, (b) the influence of context, and/or (c) the quality of the author's facts and examples.



Supporting paragraph. (1) Choose another reason to support your argument. Repeat the above (2)→(4). Select a quote or other evidence- convince someone of your argument!



Rebuttal paragraph. (1) Choose the strongest reason, quote, or other evidence that goes against your argument, but explains the other perspective. (2) Select a quote that someone who has the opposite perspective might agree with. (3) *Rebut*, or *reject* the opposing evidence by explaining your judgment of (a) the author's reliability, (b) the influence of context, and/or (c) the quality of the author's facts and examples.



Conclusion. (1) Write your answer to the historical question by comparing the two documents and explaining why someone should choose your perspective over the other perspective. Connect your ideas to what was happening in the historical context.

Helpful Phrases for Writing Historical Arguments

Introducing your argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reading [write down authors of each document], • After reading information from both sides,
Introducing a reason that supports your argument or perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Name of person or group]’s speech, diary, letter, or document gives many reasons why [something about the controversy] happened. • Another reason why [the perspective of your argument makes sense] is that... [explain an idea that supports your thinking].
Introducing a quote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In [Name of location/Date], [Name of person] wrote that, “....” • In [Name of location/Date], [Name of group of people] wrote that, “....”
Explaining a quote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His/Her quote supports my argument because... • His/Her quote shows that...
Judging your evidence	<p><i>Author’s reliability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I trust/doubt this author because... • The author is a better source of information because... • This author knows more about... • This author is more likely to understand... • This author is reliable/dependable because...
	<p><i>Influence of context</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compared to other people’s views at the time/in this place, this author... • Given what else was going on at this time/place, the author’s argument makes sense because... • Other events in history that support this argument include...because... • Another event in history that relates to this was when...
	<p><i>Quality of the author’s facts and examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This author’s facts/examples are convincing because... • This point makes sense because... • The author supports this point by showing that... • The author backs this up with facts/examples by saying/such as...
Adding to what you have already written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another reason why this is true is that... • Moreover... • In addition...
Including ideas from another perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the other hand... • It may also be argued that... • While... • [Name of the person with the opposing perspective] had a different point of view. S/he believed that...
Rejecting/Refuting another perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Name of person or Describe evidence] was more reliable [explain] • But there is a problem with [his/her] thinking because...
Wrapping things up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When all of the facts on both sides are considered, • While it may never be answered conclusively, the available evidence strongly suggests that...