

Planning Your Persuasive Essay

1) First you need to focus on a topic like an issue, action, law, rule, regulation, policy, style, or procedure that you have a strong opinion about.

Ex. capital punishment, war in Iraq, war in Afghanistan, school uniforms, curfews, driving age, sagging pants, piercing, tattoos, school lockers, or funding for schools.

My topic is _____

2) Think about a story (an anecdote) about how you, somebody else, or a particular group had a problem, struggle, or had to overcome an obstacle related to your topic. Write it down. (You will use this in your 1st paragraph)

3) Next, write down your proposition that you will also be using as your thesis statement. This is a statement as to whether you are pro (for) or con (against) something.

Ex. (Simple proposition) I am totally against capital punishment.

Ex. (More complex proposition) I am totally against capital punishment because it is not only morally wrong to kill somebody, but it is also a violation of our 8th Amendment right that protects us from cruel and unusual punishment.

Write your proposition:

3) Now, make a list of all your reasons that support your position.

4) Now, go back and rank your reasons from the most important to the least important.

Write down your 1st and 2nd best reasons.

#1 Reason (you will use this in your 4th Paragraph)

#2 Reason (you will use this in your 2nd Paragraph)

5) Now, think about possible counter arguments. Think about the people that don't agree with you. What reasons do they have to disagree with you? Write them down.

Write down the best counter argument that the opposition could possibly make.

Write down the reasons why this argument is flawed, incorrect, morally wrong, inefficient, counterproductive, untimely, too crude, too rude, too costly, quantitatively deficient, or qualitatively deficient. You will use this information (ammunition) in your 3rd Paragraph.

6) Think about what you want your reader to do once they see things your way. You need to call the reader to action. Write down exactly what you want them to do. You will use this in your concluding paragraph.
