**Argumentative Writing**

What it is:

* Presents both sides of issue, one side presented more forcefully (sway reader to take point of view)
* beginning of essay
* Do not rush to take a stand
* Plan – examine all points before taking side. Take a stand by choosing the side which offers strongest points (complete PEEL paragraph)

Structure:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Introduction | * Introductory sentences: 1 ~ 2 elements of CATFISH * Thesis statement: make a stand |
| Body | * PEEL 1: point 1 * PEEL 2: point 2 * PEEL 3: OVR (opposing view + rebuttal) |
| Conclusion | * Signalling devices * Restatement of position * Memorable closure |

PEEL structure

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **P**oint | Use one of the proposed points in the thesis statement |
| **E**vidence | Support point with evidence and/or examples   * Expand on the proposed point by giving more details * Can include facts, accepted norms, factual observations, analogies, etc. |
| **E**xplain | Explain how the evidence and/or example supports the point |
| **L**ink | * Sum up point of body paragraph (not a mere repetition of point) * Connect this paragraph with the next part of the essay |

**Introductory paragraph**: 1 ~ 2 elements of CATFISH + thesis statement (include stand)

CATFISH

1. **C**omment\*
2. **A**ppropriate quotation
3. **T**houghtful question\*
4. **F**actual background
5. **I**mportance of topic\*
6. **S**tory – anecdote / statistics
7. **H**ow you mix them

Thesis statement:

1. A **stand**
2. 2 **supporting points**

Example of intro:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| CATFISH | Importance of topic | Recently, the use of plastic straws has been a hotly contested topic among environmentalists and concerned individuals. Undeniably, plastic straws are part and parcel of our daily lives. In the spirit of eliminating waste, plastic straws appear to be a way to further the cause. Straws are not essential to the dining experience, and by banning them, oceans, streets, and general society may seem to benefit. |
| Thoughtful question | What exactly is so problematic about the plastic straw that has made it the villain of the food world? |
| Thesis statement | Stand | Banning plastic straws is not viable, so it should not be implemented. |
| Supporting point 1 | A straws-on-request policy, which would be easy for restaurants to adopt, could make an immediate difference. |
| Supporting point 2 | For some people with disabilities, the use of plastic straws is actually a necessity, not a choice. |

**OVR paragraph**: Opposing view + rebuttal (OVR)

Rebuttal methods

1. Limitations\*
2. New evidence
3. Faulty logic
4. Provide solution
5. Show other more important considerations / increase value of your point

Suggested structure

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Transition to opposing view | On the other hand of the spectrum, countless naysayers may adopt the perspective that  zoos should remain open |
| Opposing view  (PEEL) | because of their breeding programmes.  These zoos have the resources to help endangered species such as pandas to increase their numbers. Unlike most animals, female pandas are only fertile for a few days in spring, so the rate of reproduction of pandas is low. Zoos have adopted the use of artificial impregnation and medical procedures as solutions. |
| Transition to rebuttal | While this is a salient point to be taken into consideration, |
| Rebuttal  (PEEL)  [limitations] | the reality is that most of these breeding programmes are not as successful as many would believe.  They are often met with failures. For instance, the endangered rhinoceros continue to have problems in reproduction, and that calls into question the effectiveness of such programmes. Even though some of the zoos’ breeding programmes are useful as they yield positive outcomes, they may also be ineffective and result in a waste of resources due to high cost but low success rates. |

Tips:

* Focus on attacking the weakness of the opposing view. Do not bring in other new irrelevant arguments.
* Ensure the rebuttal is supported by logical and persuasive reasoning.
* Provide examples & evidence to fully convince the reader.

**Concluding paragraph**: Signalling device + restate stand + memorable closure (SRM)

Components of SRM

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signalling device (transition) | In view of all points above, |
| Restatement of stand | Stand related to subject in body & thesis statement + provide reason (summary of supporting points) |
| Memorable closure | 1. Suggest future / long-term possibility\* 2. Call for action\* 3. Warning / consequence\* 4. Use a quote 5. Evoke a vivid image (metaphor / simile) |

Tips:

* Concluding paragraphs are important in closing the essay with the last attempt to convince readers.
* Do not present any new points as it may confuse the reader.

Example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signalling device | To sum up, |
| Restatement of stand | medical research and testing involving animals have dramatically improved the health of the human race.  As discussed, without animal testing, the cure for many deadly diseases such as polio and diabetes would not exist and patients would suffer or die from their disease. |
| Memorable closure | Many new deadly infections appear every year and new treatments and drugs are needed to combat these deadly plagues. Animal testing is needed in the world we live in. Our responsibility is to manage the animals in our care and balance their suffering against the good that comes from them. |