

Developing Your Counterargument/Rebuttal Paragraph

Examine your research and outline. Discuss your topic with a partner. What might be some of the opposing viewpoints to your stance on your topic? Create a mock debate with your partner to help you understand both sides.

1. Find a reason given that opposes your opinion and state it as an opposing reason. Begin with a phrase that lets the reader know it is an opposing point of view, ex: "Some may claim..." or "Others may believe..."

a. Concession example: Many school administrators think an open campus would be a temptation for students to cut classes and act irresponsibly.

Your concession statement:

2. Argue back. State your logical argument refuting that reason. Begin with a transition word that shows contrast.

a. Rebuttal example: However, students who earn the privilege of open campus would be unlikely to jeopardize that privilege; besides, rules could be created to rescind the privilege after one class cut.

Your rebuttal:

3. Find a quote to support your rebuttal.

a. Example of quote defending rebuttal: "97% of students at Scotch Plains High School in New Jersey maintained their honor role status after three years of open campus."

Your quote defending your rebuttal:

4. Briefly interpret your quote for the reader and explain how your quote defends your rebuttal.

a. Example of explanation of quote: As the statistic explaining grade performance on open campuses shows, students would never risk lowering their grade point by cutting a class.

Your interpretation and explanation of your quote:

What will that look like as you begin to write your paragraph?

Many school administrators think an open campus would be a temptation for students to cut classes and act irresponsibly. However, students who earn the privilege of open campus would be unlikely to jeopardize that privilege; besides, rules could be created to rescind the privilege after one class cut. According to Principal Joseph Atkins, "97% of students at Scotch Plains High School in New Jersey maintained their honor roll status after three years of open campus" (Smith). As the statistic explaining grade performance on open campuses shows, students would never risk lowering their grade point by cutting a class.

Your counterargument paragraph draft (you may write on the back if you do not have enough room):