

Persuasive Essay Format Structure

When you're trying to convince your audience of an idea or argument

INTRODUCTION

- **Hook** – interesting first sentence
- **Background information** – give context to your argument/subject; familiarize the reader with the content
- **Definitions** – define any terms that the reader might find usual/unfamiliar
- **Thesis** – a clear, concise statement of your main argument; the overall idea you'll be arguing. Your thesis will also serve as a roadmap for the rest of your essay, giving the reader a general idea of the path your argument will follow.

EACH BODY PARAGRAPH

- Only one point to support your thesis per paragraph
- **Topic sentence**
 - reflects the main idea of the paragraph
 - links back to support the thesis
- **Evidence** – information from a reliable outside source (not your own opinion) that supports the main idea of the paragraph
- **Analysis** – show how your evidence supports your argument; build your argument

CONCLUSION

- Tie up the essay – briefly **sum up** the main point
- Establish **significance** (see "So What?" handout)
- Bonus: give the reader food for thought

