# **The Classical Argument Essay Assignment**

The Aristotelian or classical argument, created by the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, has a set structure that must be followed. The ultimate goal is to convince or persuade your audience/reader that your side of the issue is stronger and/or correct. In today’s society, changing another person’s mind is not easy, but through a strong argument, you can convince/persuade your audience/reader to reconsider his/her/their position or at least have your audience/reader admit that you have presented a strong argument.

The classical argument consists of five parts, which you must follow.

1. Introduction
2. Narration
3. Confirmation
4. Counterargument, refutation, and concession
5. Conclusion

**Introduction**

* Presents the writer’s position
* Grabs the reader’s interest
* Establishes why the reader should care
* Provides a reason to help the reader understand why this issue should be addressed
* The thesis states the writer’s purpose and addresses what the writer wants to happen

**Narration (at least two sources)**

* Background information that will help the reader understand the argument (historical and current)
* Need to have at least two different sources to present both sides of the argument
* Objective paragraph
* Factual statements

**Confirmation (at least three different sources in this section)**

* Most important paragraphs
* Present your side
* Provide strong evidence to back up your thesis
* Need to have at least three reasons and evidence to support each reason
* Should have at least two different sources in each body paragraph. Don’t forget to cite each source (in-text citation): direct quotes and paraphrased statements.
* Have at least one long quote, no more than two long quotes

**Counterargument, Concession, and Refutation (at least three more different sources in this section)**

* Present the other’s side argument
* For each point from the other side, you need to refute or concede
* Need to have at least two different sources for each body paragraph in this section

**Conclusion**

* Reinforce your main points
* Have a call to action; remind the reader of the “so what” aspect of your argument

***Some Questions to Ask as You Develop Your Introduction***

1. Who or what entity is involved?
2. What is the issue? Concerns?
3. Who is my intended audience?
4. Why should the audience care? Why should the audience be concerned?
5. What needs to happen? What should happen?

***Some Questions to Ask as You Develop Your Narration***

1. Have I presented enough information to help the audience understand my topic?
2. Is the evidence objective?
3. Do I present “just the facts” or do I allow my bias affect my objectivity?
4. Have I presented both sides of the argument?
5. Have I included at least two pieces of textual evidence from two or more different sources?

***Some Questions to Ask as You Develop Your Confirmation***

1. What are my most convincing points? Evidence? Examples?
2. How strong is my evidence?
3. Are there any “holes” in my argument?
4. Are the sources reliable?
5. How can I demonstrate the validity of my evidence?
6. Is my evidence ruled by facts or emotions?

***Some Questions to Ask as You Develop Your Counterargument/Concession/Refutation***

1. Have I fairly presented the other side’s argument?
2. Have I presented all parts of the other side’s argument?
3. Have I done enough research to defend my argument against the opposing side?
4. Can I refute or make a concession for each part of the other side’s argument?
5. Have I addressed every part of the opposing side’s argument?
6. Have I allowed my emotional connection to my argument “blind” me to the opposing side’s views/perspectives?

***Some Questions to Ask as You Develop Your Conclusion***

1. How can I convince my audience to re-think his/her/their argument?
2. Have I presented the strongest parts of my argument?
3. Have I given my audience a sound reason or reasons to bring about change?
4. Have I reminded my audience why they should listen or care?

**Basic Requirements:**

* Times New Roman, 12-size font, double-spaced, and one-inch margins
* Page length: 5-8 pages
* APA format for student paper (not professional paper)
* APA References page with at least **eight source citations** used in specific locations. These sources should be from both of your annotated bibliographies.
* Note: If you need to swap out a source from your Annotated Bibliography see me for approval first. If you would like to add a source because you believe it will strengthen the argument, you may do so, provided it meets the criteria for a valid source.