

Module 2: The Art of Persuasive Writing

Topic 2 Content: Outline FAQs

Introduction

What if ...

... I agree with both sides of the topic?

... a body paragraph only has one supporting point?

... I have more than three ideas for a body paragraph?

Click the questions above to view the answers to commonly asked questions regarding outlines.

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What If I Agree With Both Sides of the Topic?

What if ...

- ... I agree with both sides of the topic?
- ... a body paragraph only has one supporting point?
- ... I have more than three ideas for a body paragraph?

What if after brainstorming, only half of your ideas are for your thesis and the other half are against it? You might be tempted to write an essay that develops both sides, but persuasive essays are supposed to persuade your audience to *one* side. Being indecisive will not produce an effective persuasive essay. Choose a side for which you can write a strong argument, and address the opposing viewpoints as a means to strengthen your argument.

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What If a Body Paragraph Only Has One Supporting Point?

What if ...

- ... I agree with both sides of the topic?
- ... a body paragraph only has one supporting point?
- ... I have more than three ideas for a body paragraph?

Part of the reason for outlining is to double check the balance of your essay before you put all the hard work into writing. Outlines allow you to anticipate pitfalls or weaknesses in your argument early. If you do find that you have little to no information for a paragraph, let that be a red flag that you need to revise your thoughts. Approach this as an opportunity to strengthen your argument by brainstorming more ideas or changing the topic of the paragraph.

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What If I Have More Than Three Ideas for a Body Paragraph?

What if ...

- ... I agree with both sides of the topic?
- ... a body paragraph only has one supporting point?
- ... I have more than three ideas for a body paragraph?

If you find that your ideas do not fit into the A, B, and C sections of a body paragraph, should you add more letters? The answer is that you can add more letters to an outline—or even remove letters if needed—in order to strengthen your argument. It never hurts to have more evidence as long as it is specific and convincing. However, make sure that all your body paragraphs are balanced, meaning that they have the same depth and amount of content.

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