

Analytical Argument Essay Outline

A useful structure and outline for writing an **argument analysis** is suggested below.

Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introduce article & briefly outline what the article is about2. State purpose3. Outline your main points (ie. Finding claims and assumptions)
Body Paragraphs (claims 1, 2, 3 etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic sentence outlines claim• Evidence for claim
Body Paragraphs (assumptions 1, 2, 3 etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic sentence outlines assumption• Evidence for assumption• Analysis of assumption
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sum up and restate author's purpose• Relate to broader context

Sample introduction

Notice the three parts of an introduction and how the writer introduces them.

This argument analysis examines the article *Skip Dipping in Australia* (Rush, 2006). The article is about the practice of sorting through publicly located skips for items that may be eaten or reused and the motivations for this activity. Overall the article argues that skip dipping is politically and ethically motivated. It focuses mainly on a series of interviews the author conducted with 20 Australian skip dippers.

This analysis identifies the main claims, the evidence used to support these claims, and the key assumptions.

Rush makes four main claims and supplies some evidence. **Finally** the assumptions underlying the article are analysed.

1. Introduce article & briefly outline what the article is about

2. State your purpose

3. Outline the main points you will make in your assignment (ie. claims and assumptions)

Sample paragraph (claim)

Notice how the writer introduces the **claim** and the **evidence**

The first main claim is that skip dipping (also known as urban gleaning, freeganism and so on) is a growing trend in affluent societies (Rush 2006).

The article presents two pieces of evidence to support this claim. Firstly, responses are given by interviewees, almost all of whom claim to know a number of other people from all over Australia who engage in skip dipping. **Secondly**, information is taken from various websites on skip dipping.

Topic sentence outlines claim 1

Evidence for claim 1

Sample paragraph (assumption)

Notice how the writer analyses the assumption and how the ideas are introduced and linked (bold).

In order to make these arguments, the article relies on a number of assumptions, which will be examined.

Perhaps the most common assumption is that the very small and select group interviewed is representative of all skip dippers in Australia.

The article acknowledges that only people for whom skip dipping was at least in part politically motivated, were interviewed, therefore leaving out people who skip dip solely for economic reasons. These people may be much more numerous than their politically motivated counterparts and they may well fit the stereotype of being mostly young and poor. In this same vein, the article assumes that the small group of respondents, and the numbers indicated on the websites used in research, are indicative of a growing trend. The article claims that the website of the dumpster diving meet-up group in New York 'boasts' a membership of 194, but it would be difficult to argue that 194 people, in a city of millions, constituted a growing trend.

Transition from claims to assumptions

Topic sentence outlines assumption 1

Analysis of assumption 1

Sample conclusion

Notice how the writer **sums up** and connects the topic to the **broader context**

In conclusion, this essay identifies in the article four main claims and the assumptions on which they are based. **The article has attempted to research and document** an informal and relatively new movement that has not yet been the subject of many formal academic studies.

Rush's article makes an interesting starting point to what will no doubt become a growing area of study.

Sum up and restate author's purpose

Relate to broader context