Literary Argument: Drafting Your Essay

A well-written argument essay usually follows a certain formula, or structure. Once you have chosen your topic, you can use this template to help you think about each part of the essay as you write it. Use the information in the left column to guide you through each step of the writing. When you are done, you will be able to "sew" these pieces together with transition words to construct your first draft.

TOPIC _____

Introductory Paragraph

Part of the Essay	Your Plan: These can be sentences or bullet points to help you map out the main ideas of your essay.
Hook • An unusual detail • A strong statement • A quotation • An anecdote • A question	
Introduce the Issue - Give 2-3 sentences of background on the story that you are writing about. Be careful not to write a full re-telling. You can touch on the reasons that you will be including in the essay.	
Claim or **focus statement** (State your thesis in one sentence)	

Body Paragraph #1

Topic Sentence Reason #1	
Reference parts of the story that support your statement: • Quotes from the story. • Examples of what characters said or did.	
Concluding sentence	

Body Paragraph #2

Topic Sentence Reason #2	
Reference parts of the story that support your statement: • Quotes from the story. • Examples of what characters said or did.	
Concluding sentence	

Paragraph #3 Conclusion

Restate your claim or focus statement Sentence starters: In summary, In brief, To conclude,	
Paraphrase your 2 main arguments	
Concluding sentence - This should tie up your essay, giving the reader something to think about. It could also tie into the hook that you used at the beginning of the essay.	

TIP: Use transitions between sentences to serve as cues for the reader and to help your writing flow better. Here are some suggestions: first, second, last, then, however, consequently, therefore, thus, in addition, still, nevertheless, notwithstanding, furthermore, in fact, in contrast, similarly, instead.