

EXAMPLE SENTENCE LEADS FOR YOUR "ANALYZE AN ARGUMENT" ESSAY

INTRO

- "In this argument, the author concludes that _____"
- "The supporting evidence that the author provides for the claim is insufficient, and more substantial evidence is needed in order to validate the claim."
- "This argument presents a series of unsubstantiated claims..."
- "The line of reasoning in this argument is severely flawed...."

ASSUMPTIONS (UNDERLYING) - unstated beliefs that the author must hold
 In order to make a particular claim

- "The author has assumed that..."
- "The author apparently feels that..."
- "It is clear that the author believes that..."

COUNTER-EXAMPLES - anything real or imagined that undermines or disproves a statement in the argument

- "Perhaps..." "Maybe..."
- "It is possible that..." "Alternatively,..."

EVIDENCE - an assessment of what is missing and what is needed in order to substantiate the argument

- "In order to substantiate the claim, the author would need to provide..."
- "In order to present a more well-founded argument, the author would have to..."

- **NOTE:** YOUR GOAL IN THIS ESSAY IS **NOT** TO EXPLAIN WHY THE AUTHOR'S CLAIM IS **INCORRECT**, BUT RATHER TO ASSESS **WHAT SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IS MISSING** AND **WHAT WOULD BE NEEDED** IN ORDER TO SUBSTANTIATE THE CLAIM AND PRESENT A MORE WELL-FOUNDED ARGUMENT (WERE THE CLAIM TO BE TRUE).

USEFUL VERBIAGE

- Unsubstantiated claim
- Logical fallacy
- Flawed line of reasoning
- Well-founded argument
- Correlation vs. Causation
- Skewed data
- Data collection method
- Interview
- Representative sample
- Accurate data
- Premise
- Undermine
- Contradict

CATEGORIZING THE CRITICAL REASONING QUESTIONS

- ❖ **ARGUMENT CONSTRUCTION:** These questions ask you to recognize the basic structure of an argument, properly drawn conclusions, underlying assumptions, well-supported explanatory hypotheses, or parallels between structurally similar arguments.
 - Watch for questions that ask about the following: **ideas that would logically complete the argument, statements/information that would best complete the passage, the role that highlighted portions of the argument plays, or statements/information that would support, strengthen, or weaken the argument.**
- ❖ **ARGUMENT EVALUATION:** These questions may ask you to analyze a given argument, recognize factors that would strengthen or weaken an argument, reasoning errors committed in making an argument, or aspects of the methods by which an argument proceeds.
 - Look for the conclusion of the argument first, then contextualize the information that surrounds the conclusion as evidence/data that the author is using to support the conclusion
- ❖ **FORMULATING AND EVALUATING A PLAN OF ACTION:** These questions may ask you to recognize the relative appropriateness, effectiveness, or efficiency of different plans of action; factors that would strengthen or weaken a proposed plan of action; or assumptions underlying a proposed plan of action.
 - Look out for words or phrases that hint towards the implementation of a plan, such as: **Implement, propose, enact, create, will begin/start, recommend, suggest, advise, intend, or plan.**

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTION TYPES AND CUES

Inferences - Tests your ability to go beyond what the author explicitly states

- ❖ It can be inferred... The passage suggests ...
- ❖ The author implies that ... The author apparently feels that ...

Supporting Ideas - Tests ability to understand what the author states explicitly

- ❖ According to the author... The author states...
- ❖ According to the passage... ...supported by the passage...

Main Idea - Tests your ability to find the central theme of a passage

- ❖ The main point of this passage is to ... The passage is primarily concerned with ...
- ❖ The author's primary purpose... The chief theme of this passage...

Style/Tone - Tests your ability to sense an author's or character's emotional state

- ❖ The author's attitude to the problem can best be described as ...
- ❖ The author's tone in the passage... The author's presentation is marked by a tone of...

Applying info to outside Contexts - Measures your ability to discern the relationships between situations or ideas presented by the author and other situations or ideas that may parallel those in the passage

- ❖ The passage provides information in support of which of the following assertions?
- ❖ The author of the passage would most likely agree with which of the following ideas?

Logical Structure - Requires you to analyze and evaluate the organization and logic of a passage

- ❖ The author mentions specific effects of ... in order to....
- ❖ In the context of the passage as a whole, the second paragraph serves primarily to ...
- ❖ In the context of the passage, the word ... most closely corresponds to which of the following phrases?

SUCCESS WITH SENTENCE CORRECTIONS: SOME COMMON ERRORS

Comma splice or run-on errors:

Incorrect: I went to the store, I bought milk and cheese.

Incorrect: I went to the store I bought milk and cheese.

- ✓ Use a semi-colon (;) Use a period (.)
- ✓ Use a comma and coordinating conjunction
- ✓ **(, F.A.N.B.O.Y.S. - For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So)**
- ✓ Reformat: **[Dependent clause], [Independent clause]**

Modifier Errors:

Incorrect: The children played with the dog **on Tuesday** that Kelly bought.

- ✓ Place the modifier next to the item being modified to clarify the sentence (Modifier: "On Tuesday"/ Item Modified: "The children")

Correct: **"On Tuesday,** the children played with the dog that Kelly bought."

Parallel Structure Errors:

Incorrect: "To be is living."

Correct: **"To be is to live."** or **"Being is living."**

Incorrect: "Last night, I skated and went dancing.

Correct: "Last night, I skated **and danced**" or "I went **skating** and **dancing**."

- ✓ Be sure that all endings and tenses are consistent"

Subject-Verb Agreement Errors:

Incorrect: The **salad** with croutons and tomatoes **were** made by world class chefs.

- ✓ Be sure that the subject and verb agree in quantity.
- ✓ If you suspect that there may be a subject-verb agreement error, try eliminating the prepositional phrase(s) (phrase that begins with a preposition, i.e. *under, of, over, through, above, into, upon, etc.*)

Correct: The **salad** with croutons and tomatoes **was** made by world class chefs. -> (prepositional phrase underlined)

Pronoun-verb Agreement and Pronoun-antecedent Agreement Errors:

Incorrect: **Each** member of the celebrity's entourage **have** style of **their** own.

- ✓ Pronouns such as *each, every, everyone, anyone, everybody, no one, nobody, someone, somebody, etc.* are treated as singular subjects
- ✓ Collective units such as *team, jury, swarm, entourage, group, class, etc.* are treated as singular subjects and team up with singular verbs
- ✓ A pronoun and its antecedent (the noun that the pronoun refers back to) must agree in gender and in number

Correct: **Each** member of the celebrity's entourage **has** style of **his** own. (Prepositional phrase underlined and pronoun/antecedent shown in Red)