

大学英语 议论文写作指南

仇亦倩 秦朝霞 主编

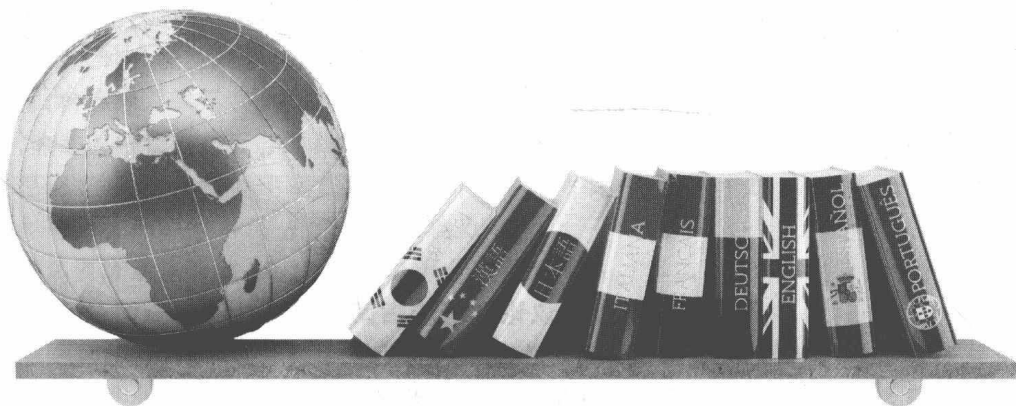


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大学英语 议论文写作指南

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前

言

笔者在常年英语教学中发现,学习者在议论文写作时往往内容空洞,言之无物,语言输出能力较弱。面对有些话题,即使用中文,也难以写出有理有据的文章。其主要原因在于学习者日常积累的论据素材贫乏,难以有效整合素材,形成逻辑严密、论证有力、语言地道的文章。

根据 Krashen 的输入假设和 Swain 的输出假设理论,语言学习输入与输出密不可分,只有遵循语言学习规律,确保输入与输出的有机结合,才能完成语言学习过程,促进语言习得。本书通过精心设计,确保输入与输出的有机融合:在输入方面提供了丰富的背景知识,为学习者提供丰富翔实的素材输入;在输出方面,安排多样化练习,为学习者目标语输出提供充足的机会。

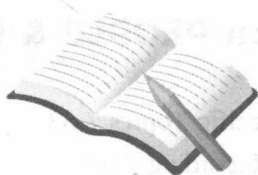
本书引言部分简述英语议论文写作常见结构,帮助学习者了解议论文写作范式,然后针对学习者议论文写作论据不充分、论证能力偏弱的通病,阐述论据类型、特点以及常见论证方法。正文部分按主题提供原汁原味的语言输入,选取国外时事报道、英语母语者写作成品等素材,内容涉及雅思、托福考试常见话题和国外热点话题,帮助学习者积累相关话题写作素材,熟悉英语议论文写作思维方式,开拓写作思路;通过形式多样的练习训练收集、甄别不同类型论据,运用论据阐述观点的能力,引导学习者做中学、学中思,培养议论文写作中论据充分和论证有力的意识,提升语言运用能力。

每章内容涵盖四部分。第一部分为名言警句导入。第二、三部分收录大量论据素材,选取不同视角,围绕相关主题展开,观点或相互补充,或截然相反,引导学习者多角度、全方位地思考问题;不仅为学习者提供丰富的素材、话题和思路,还设计循序渐进、形式多样的练习激发学习者思考,引导其高层次思维能力的发展,帮助学习者实现写作论据素材的即学即用。第四部分为补充阅读,增强学习者对不同主题的熟悉度与敏锐感,进一步积累地道英文表达,拓宽思维空间,提升论证能力,逐步提高议论文写作能力。

本书在编写过程中难免有疏漏或错误之处,敬请各位专家、读者批评指正。

编者

2017 年 11 月



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Introduction

I Argumentative Writing Introduction

Defining Argumentation

The argumentative essay is a genre of writing that requires you to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.

The purpose of this type of essay is to fully investigate an issue or topic. This involves extensive research covering all aspects of the topic and gathering information on all involved points of view.

Argumentative essays also provide your audience with a well-rounded summary of the issue at hand, but clearly indicate what your own point of view is and why this view is the best option over others.

Understanding Argument Structures

The structure of the argumentative essay is held together by the following.

- A clear, concise, and defined thesis statement that occurs in the first paragraph of the essay.
- Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Body paragraphs that include evidential support.
- Evidential support (whether factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal).
- A conclusion that does not simply restate the thesis, but readdresses it in light of the evidence provided.

Although there is no set model of organization for argumentative essays, there are some common patterns that writers might use. Below are 3 different patterns that you can consider.

Outline I

Introduction/Thesis-Claim

Body Paragraph 1: Present your first point and its supporting evidence.

Body Paragraph 2: Present your second point and its supporting evidence.

Body Paragraph 3: Refute your opposition's first point.

Body Paragraph 4: Refute your opposition's second point.

Conclusion/Restate Thesis

Outline II

Introduction/Thesis-Claim

Body Paragraph 1: Refute your opposition's first point.

Body Paragraph 2: Refute your opposition's second point.

Body Paragraph 3: Present your first point and supporting evidence.

Body Paragraph 4: Present your second point and supporting evidence.

Conclusion/Restate Thesis

Outline III

Introduction/Thesis-Claim

Body Paragraph 1: Present your first point and its supporting evidence, which also refutes one of your opposition's claims.

Body Paragraph 2: Present your second point and its supporting evidence, which also refutes a second opposition claim.

Body Paragraph 3: Present your third point and its supporting evidence, which also refutes a third opposition claim.

Conclusion/Restate Thesis

II Building Evidence-Based Arguments

In argument writing, the claims you make must always be substantiated with relevant and sufficient evidence. They must be based on logical reasoning rather than merely emotional appeals.

What Is Evidence

When writing an argumentative essay, after formulating a claim, i. e. the *thesis*, the writer must use evidence to persuade his/her readers to accept his/her claim. The evidence, i. e. the supporting material, grounds the essay, showing readers the writer has good reasons for feeling as he/she does about his/her subject. The evidence also adds interest and color to the writing.

Types of Evidence

There are different ways to support an argument. These options include examples, facts, details, statistics, personal observation or experience, anecdotes, and expert opinions. They can be grouped under four categories.

Facts

Using facts is a powerful means of convincing others, as facts cannot be disputed. Facts

can come from our reading, observation, or personal experience.

Statistics

Statistics, usually including amounts and numbers, are concrete, and therefore can provide excellent support for an argument. When using statistics, be sure that they come from good sources.

Quotes

Quoting opinions by leading experts or authorities in their fields will support our position. Using quotes is a logical appeal and is accepted by other academics as a good way to back up our claims. When you are citing the opinions of experts as evidence, you can quote directly, paraphrase, or summarize ideas in the original source. It is extremely important to make sure that the authoritative information you cite is accurate and relevant to your point.

Examples

Examples, i. e. personal experiences of yours or others can enhance your meaning and also engage the reader, as they are concrete and also allow readers to relate to the issues personally.

Characteristics of Evidence

All types of supporting evidence share the characteristics. You should keep these characteristics in mind so as to use evidence effectively.

(1) The evidence is **relevant and unified**. All the evidence in an essay must relate directly to the essay's central point, and clearly support the thesis.

(2) The evidence is **specific**. Specific, concrete evidence can engage your readers, persuade them that your thinking is sound, and clarify meaning. In contrast, when evidence is vague and general, readers lost interest in what you are saying, become skeptical of your ideas' validity, and feel puzzled about your meaning.

(3) The evidence is **adequate**. To make sure that readers will automatically accept your thesis, you need to provide enough specific evidence: facts, examples, reasons, personal observations, expert opinion and so on.

(4) The evidence is **accurate**. Sometimes, you have a strong belief and want readers to see things in your way, you may be tempted to overstate or downplay facts, disregard information, misquote, or make up details. By doing so, you have supported your point, but at the expense of truth.

(5) The evidence is **representative**. Make sure that you rely on the typical, the usual, to show that your point is valid. This is because exceptions are not representative; they don't prove the rule.

(6) Borrowed evidence is **documented**. You need to acknowledge where the information comes from if you include evidence from outside sources (books, articles, conferences, interviews). Otherwise, readers may regard as dishonest your failure to cite your indebtedness to others for ideas that obviously are not your own.



Collecting Evidence

Books, journals, websites, newspapers, magazines, and documentary films are some of the most common sources of evidence for academic writing. After you know what the essay question means and what your essay must do, you can start the researching process by reading broadly (i. e. an extensive reading of print and electronic sources on the key subject) and tentatively committing to a position, before you read narrowly in order to take a position. During the process, you have to use effective note-taking skills to record the evidence, weigh up the evidence, and select from it the most appropriate pieces as support of your argument.

How to Incorporate Evidence

Here are some ways to work evidence into your writing.

- (1) Offer evidence that agrees with your stance up to a point, and then add to it with ideas of your own; or
- (2) Present evidence that contradicts your stance, and then argue against that evidence and therefore strengthen your position; or
- (3) Use sources against each other, as if they were experts on a panel discussing your proposition.

Evidence can be included in the text as a quotation, paraphrase, or summary. When citing evidence in any of these forms, it is important to give credit to your sources.

Quoting

A quotation is an exact reproduction of another person's words. Here is the citation taken from Page 418 of the essay by Gordon Allport (Allport, Gordon, "Prejudice and the Individual", in Eds. Charles Muscatine and Marlene Griffith. *The Borozoi College Reader*, 6th ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988: 416 -422).

the original source

Much prejudice is caught rather than directly taught.

citing in quotation

Allport claims that "prejudice is caught rather than directly taught". (418)

According to Allport, "prejudice is caught rather than directly taught". (418)

"Much prejudice is caught rather than directly taught," claims Allport. (418)

"Much prejudice," Allport claims, "is caught rather than directly taught". (418)

Paraphrasing

To paraphrase a source for use as evidence, you should use as little of the original language as possible and put the ideas in your own voice and sentence structure. Here is another quotation from Allport and example of weak and strong paraphrase.

the original source

"Education combats easy overgeneralizations, and as the educational level rises we find a reduction in stereotyped thinking." (Allport, 422)

weak paraphrase

Learning fights against stereotypes, and as more people are more educated we notice a decrease in prejudice. (422)

strong paraphrase

Allport explains that the more we learn, the harder we will find it to make unfair assumptions about groups of people, which means as more people pursue more education, prejudice decrease. (422)

Summarizing

When you summarize another person's idea to use as evidence in your own writing, you are taking the essence of the writer's idea and stating it more briefly, with less detail and explanation, than in the original. Summaries should be mostly in your own words, but often summaries include quotations or paraphrases when it is necessary to highlight a certain key point. Here is the paragraph from Holly Devor (Devor, Holly, "Gender Role Behaviors and Attitudes", in Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon. *Signs of Life in the USA: Readings on Popular Culture for Writers*, 4th ed. New York: Bedford / St Martin's, 2003: 484 – 489).

the original source

"Body postures and demeanors which communicate subordinate status and vulnerability to trespass through a message of 'no threat' make people appear to be feminine. They demonstrate subordination through a minimizing of spatial use: people appear to be feminine when they keep their arms closer to their bodies, their legs closer together, and their torsos and heads less vertical than do masculine-looking individuals. People also look feminine when they point their toes inward and use their hands in small or childlike gestures." (486)

weak summary

Devor says that body postures and demeanors that imply weakness make people look feminine. Minimizing the space one takes up and using infantile gestures also makes one appear feminine. (486)

strong summary

Devor argues that body language suggests a great deal about gender and power in our society. People who minimize the body space they occupy and whose physical gestures are minimal and unobtrusive appear inferior and feminine. (486)

<https://www.ba.umich.edu/UndergraduateWriting%20Guides/HowToEffectivelyIntegrateTextualEvidence.pdf>

Arguments on EDUCATION

1

Chapter

I Quotes & Wise Sayings

1. *The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.*

Martin Luther King, Jr., leader in the African-American Civil Rights Movement

2. *Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.*

John Dewey, American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer

3. *Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.*

William Butler Yeats, Irish poet, one of the foremost figures of 20th-century literature

4. *Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.*

Malcolm Forbes, American entrepreneur

5. *An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.*

Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the U.S.

II Supporting Evidence for Specific Topics

TOPIC 1: Should going to classes be optional for university students?

A. Evidence Collecting & Recording

Read the example evidence, and add more in each category that can effectively support the essay on TOPIC 1.

TYPE 1: *Facts as Evidence*

- (1) We are currently teaching an evolving group of students that is not only able to access a wide array of material, but behaviorally different from any other generation.
- (2) At best, even self-motivated students tend to study what is easy and immediately accessible and at worst students may explore and study what they believe is critical

for their own personal growth.

http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/43977462.pdf

(3)

(4)

TYPE 2: Statistics as Evidence

- (1) One student survey of 431 students indicated that videos were not the reason that 70% of students missed classes. Only a small percentage of students reported that they skipped classes and used videos as an alternative to lectures. Interestingly, 75% of students surveyed indicated that they used videos as a review tool and were most likely to review videos before quizzes and tests, and indicated that they were doing better in classes because of the videos.
- (2) At the University of Alabama, 24% of high-absence students stated partying too hard was the reason they missed classes. In addition, 20% cited part-time work as the reason they missed many classes.

Gasner, C. (2002). "Faculty, administration look at class attendance". The Crimson White Online

(3)

(4)

TYPE 3: Quotes as Evidence

- (1) Romer (1993) presented quantitative evidence on absenteeism and performance in economics courses at 3 universities in the US. Romer reported absenteeism to be "rampant", with an overall absence rate of about one-third. Romer also reported evidence consistent with the hypothesis that absence affects student performance adversely, while acknowledging that no causal effect had been demonstrated given the endogenous nature of the relationship between attendance and performance.

Romer, D. (1993). "Do students go to class? Should they?"

Journal of Economic Perspectives, 7, 167–174.

- (2) In a study conducted by the Chicago College of Pharmacy studying students' motivations for class attendance, it was revealed that teacher behavior and the presentation of new and relevant material had significant impacts as incentive for student turnout.

Fjortoft, Nancy. "Student motivations for class attendance".

American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education. Article 15. 18 Feb. 2005.



- (3) _____

- (4) _____

TYPE 4: Examples as Evidence

- (1) When I was in school, it basically was. Or rather, it was skip-at-your-risk. If you were feeling terrible that day or you just really needed a break, you could just stay home. The one exception I recall was an optional one-unit introductory course in which the whole pass-fail grade was whether you showed up and listened to one-hour lecture per week. There was no exam.
- (2) I have a subject named Building Materials in our college whose lecturer is an old woman who cannot speak in English and has deficiency of a louder voice. In addition to that she cannot really do anything without simply reading the book which every student can do of course.
- (3) _____

- (4) _____

B. Evidence Identifying & Sorting

1. Read the two news reports on the issue of student attendance in the USA, and underline the evidence that may be useful for arguments on the essay topic.

REPORT 1

Will California Use Chronic Absenteeism as a New Metric of School Success?

By Jane Meredith Adams | February 21, 2016

Now that the California Department of Education has announced it will for the first time collect chronic absenteeism data—an early indicator of students at risk of dropping out—advocates are pressing the State Board of Education to include that information in the accountability system it is creating under the new federal education law.

The state board, which at its March 9–10 meeting will discuss the “multiple measures” of accountability it is considering under the new *Every Student Succeeds Act*, has shown little enthusiasm for chronic absenteeism rates as a performance indicator in the past, arguing that a less precise indicator of attendance would have to do because that was the only data the state collected, said Hedy Chang, executive director of the Oakland-based national nonprofit Attendance Works.

“Now we also have chronic absenteeism,” Chang said. “This is a huge, important, major development.” She added, “This is a game changer.”

The state will begin collecting the data from districts in late spring 2017, based on attendance for the 2016–2017 school year.

For years, Chang and other researchers have been working to shift the education discussion from paying attention to “average daily attendance”, which also is used in California to determine school funding, to students who are chronically absent, defined as missing more than 10 percent of school days since the start of the school year. That’s because attendance rates create the impression that absences are evenly distributed.

But in fact, schools that proudly display Average Daily Attendance rates of 90 or 95 percent, Chang says, often don’t track students who are consistently missing school for absences that are excused, unexcused or suspensions—and missing two to four days every month, for instance, adds up to a significant loss of time that could be spent learning to read or do math. A school with a 95 percent average daily attendance rate and an enrollment of 200 students, Chang noted, could have 60 students missing a month of school during the course of the year. Without the data, the school loses a chance to stop a small problem before it becomes a bigger one, she said. Research has linked chronic absenteeism in kindergarten and 1st grade to difficulty reading in 3rd grade, and students who are not reading at grade level in 3rd grade are four times as likely to drop out of high school.

Now there appears to be growing recognition of the significance of chronic absenteeism data, said Brad Strong, senior director of education policy at the nonprofit Children Now. The *Every Student Succeeds Act*, which was passed in December and takes effect in 2017–2018, requires states to collect and report data on chronic absenteeism—this was the key reason California will move forward with its data collection. The federal Office for Civil Rights just completed its first national collection of chronic absenteeism data. And in California, districts are required to set goals to reduce chronic absenteeism in their Local Control and Accountability Plans, the budget and academic improvement plans that districts must write. But the key starting point, said Strong, is having the statewide data collection. “It’s meaningful data,” Strong said.

Attorney General Kamala Harris, who for years has called for action to curb chronic absenteeism and prevent future dropouts and offenders in the juvenile justice system, estimated in a 2015 report that about 230,000 California elementary school students—about 1 in 12—missed more than 10 percent of school in 2014–2015.

She called the statewide chronic absenteeism data collection a “monumental step”. Now Harris has introduced an online chronic absenteeism toolkit for schools that is designed to answer a single question: “How should we talk to parents of elementary school students about their children’s absences?” On Friday, the White House and the US Department of Education announced two new initiatives to reduce chronic absenteeism.

The statewide data collection is expected to prompt school districts to ask their student information system vendors to upgrade software to start collecting and pinpointing which students are at risk of chronic absenteeism, Chang said. Attendance Works offers such data



collection tools at no charge to districts and schools, but it is not yet compatible with every student information system.

Such federal and statewide prompting is necessary, Harris said. In a letter in January to Acting Education Secretary John King, Harris noted that while Local Control Accountability Plans call for districts to pay attention to chronic absenteeism, “only about half of the districts reported they have the tools necessary to routinely monitor the absence patterns of individual students”.

But some schools, such as Oakland’s Garfield Elementary School, have both the data collection and a dedicated family outreach team in place. Naza’Reth Johnson is a family advocate at Garfield Elementary and at 7:45 a.m., he starts calling parents. “She hates me,” he said on a recent morning, kind of joking but not exactly, about a parent he calls every day. “It’s a love-hate thing. She knows I care.”

The parent’s two young children have missed more than one out of every 10 days at Garfield Elementary. They’re kept home because of the rain, to go shopping or to help their mother, who has a health condition. Their reading skills are slipping. Johnson, who works to reduce chronic absenteeism, started his patter—always positive. “Hey, I’m looking forward to seeing the girls in school today,” he said.

Each week Johnson and his colleague Rocio Cisneros text, meet with, write to and troubleshoot with families whose children’s names appear on a watch list of about 30 students who are chronically absent or close to it. Garfield Elementary has a total enrollment of about 600 students. On a recent rainy day, Johnson problem-solved with the mother of the two girls. “She said it was storming and she didn’t want the girls to walk in the rain and that it was best for them to stay home,” he recalled. He told her it was wet out, but not storming, and that he would walk over and pick up the girls. The parent agreed. “I met the girls at the corner,” he said. “We walked to school together.”

Sky Lowe, a junior at Oakland High School, said he became chronically absent this past fall after a series of family problems caused him to move out of the house. Eventually, he moved in with a family friend, he said, but money was tight and his spirits were low. Unable to afford bus fare, he missed “about two days a week” of school for three or four months, he said. The school was unable to reach his mother. It wasn’t until a teacher asked Lowe about his absences that things changed, he said.

His teacher got in touch with Lowe’s supervisor at a paid internship. The supervisor said Lowe’s pay would be docked \$25 if he missed three or more class periods a week. The teacher also referred Lowe to the school’s student wellness center, where staff referred him to a counselor he could talk with about what he’s been going through. Lowe is back at school.

But he says he has friends who are out of school and unnoticed. “I happen to be the lucky one who was forced to go back to school,” he said.