



STETSON UNIVERSITY

Writing Center



Journalistic Opinion Writing vs. Academic, Argumentative Writing

Thesis:

- Writer's stance on or interpretation of an issue
- May be an assertion that something exists or is evident
- May be an argument that something has a specific quality (good or bad; effective or ineffective; successful or unsuccessful)
- May be a call for specific political or social action

Main Ideas:

- PERSUADE the audience to believe or act on something by stating a position and supporting it with data, statistics, examples, testimony, or relevant experience
- INFORM the audience by reporting current thinking on a specific topic, including opposing views, without analyzing them or siding with a position
- SYNTHESIZE information to provide a survey of topics for an audience's consumption
- ENTERTAIN an audience, for example, with an anecdote

Audience:

- Who is reading your work?

Tone:

- Writer's attitude toward the topic; reflected by main ideas, audience, and word choice of the writing.

	Academic, Argumentative Writing	Journalistic Opinion Writing
<i>Thesis</i>	Opinion, stance, interpretation of issue	Opinion, stance, interpretation of issue
<i>Support</i>	Data, examples, theories, or relevant experiences	Data, statistics, examples, testimony, or relevant experiences
<i>Purpose</i>	Persuade	Persuade
<i>Audience</i>	Peers; experts in the field	Peers; would-be supporters; perhaps public
<i>Tone</i>	Formal	Casual



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Sentence-level Concerns

Passive Voice:

- The subject receives the action.
- *Am, is, are, was, were, been*, + verb with an *-ed* ending.
- Useful if you want to stress the recipient of action.
 - Example: "I *was invited* the other day to a gala honoring the C.E.O of one of these pharma companies for his moral leadership."

Active Voice:

- The subject performs the actions.
- Either *am, is, are, was, were, been* OR verb with an *-ed* ending
 - Example: "For decades, *America has waged* an ineffective war on drug pushers and drug lords."

Conciseness:

- Make each word count.
- Look for ways to rewrite sentences in fewer words, without losing important details.
- Delete adjectives and adverbs that do not further your thesis.

Replacements for Wordy Expressions

Instead of	Use
at this moment in time	now, today
due to the fact that	because
for the purpose of	for
it is clear that	clearly, obviously
it is my opinion	I think, I believe that
in this day and age	today



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AP Style: The Associated Press Stylebook

The AP Stylebook outlines basic rules on grammar, punctuation, usage and journalistic style. It also reflects changes in common language, offers guidance on media law, explains AP's news values and principles, and helps to navigate the ever-changing world of social media.

Purpose:

The Associated Press style provides guidelines for news writing. The content of newspapers and other mass media is typically the result of many different writers and editors working together. Some guiding principles behind AP style are:

- Consistency
- Clarity
- Accuracy
- Brevity

Refer to Purdue Owl for Common Guidelines

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/735/02/>