**How to address counterargument**

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When you're writing an argument essay, you spend a lot of time preparing your offense, the claims you'll make in favor of your position. But there are reasonable people who disagree about your topic and object to your position, so you have to play defense too. That means knowing the objections and defending your argument against them, or counterarguing. Here's the good news: The more people disagree about your topic, the more interesting the game.

You're probably thinking, why should I bring up objections to my position in my own essay? Won't that weaken my argument? That's fair to ask. Actually, when you acknowledge opposing arguments and counter them, you strengthen your own position.

First, identify and explain the opposing views. Then argue against them to support your thesis. When you anticipate and respond to a counterargument, you show that you're fair and well-informed. This demonstrates respect for your readers, while making a more persuasive argument, you're building your credibility as a writer.

Let's say you've been doing careful research on the topic of school uniforms and decide to argue in favor of them. Realistically, you can't acknowledge all of the opposing viewpoints out there. There are just too many. So where do you start? First, ask yourself a few questions. How would opponents respond? Name the sources. What would they say? And what evidence would they provide to support their positions? Why do they hold these positions?

Take notes on the opposing viewpoints: who is disagreeing, and why. It isn't enough just to state a counterposition and run back to your position to show why you're right. Be sure to take the opposing view seriously by giving it credibility and showing your fairness in considering all sides of the argument. Use key phrases to signal an objection when you're presenting counterarguments in your own argument paper.

Counterarguments are key to a research argument because people are more likely to take your position in a debate seriously if they can see you've intelligently considered the alternatives. Reasonable people can disagree. It's OK. Playing offense and defense shows your readers you're a fair player with a good point.

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