

FIGURE 21.4 Flowchart for Revising an Argument Essay

QUESTIONS

1. **Circle** the section of your essay where you introduce the issue. Is the issue clearly defined? Is enough information provided? Is the issue sufficiently narrow?

NO

YES

2. **Highlight** your thesis. Is your claim stated clearly? Is it arguable? Is it sufficiently specific and limited?

NO

YES

3. Write a brief description of your intended audience. Does your essay take into account readers' knowledge of and attitude toward the issue? Do you appeal to your readers' needs and values?

NO

YES

4. Place a **✓** by each reason that supports your claim and an **✗** by each piece of evidence that supports a reason. Do you have enough reasons and evidence? Will they be convincing and appealing to your audience?

NO

YES

REVISION STRATEGIES

- Ask a friend unfamiliar with the issue to read this section and either ask you questions about it or tell you what else he or she needs to know.
- Use a branching diagram or questions to limit your issue (see Chapter 5, pp. 101–02).

- Without looking at your essay, write a one-sentence summary of what it is intended to prove.
- Try limiting the claim to a more specific issue.
- Add a qualifying word or phrase (such as *may*, *possibly*) to your thesis.

- Add more background information.
- Try to discover needs, values, and experiences you share with your readers. Add reasons and evidence based on those needs, values, and experiences.

- Brainstorm or conduct research to discover more reasons, stronger evidence, or reasons and evidence that will have more appeal to your audience.

QUESTIONS

5. Label the parts of your paper to illustrate the progression of your argument. Does each step follow a logical progression? Is your reasoning free of errors?

NO

YES

6. Write the method of organization you used. Is your method of organization clear? Is it effective for your argument?

NO

YES

7. [Bracket] sections where you present opposing viewpoints. Do you effectively acknowledge, accommodate, or refute the most important opposing viewpoints?

NO

YES

8. Review your introduction and conclusion. Are they effective?

NO

REVISION STRATEGIES

- Check the progression of your argument and your use of inductive and deductive reasoning by creating an outline or a graphic organizer.
- Check for and omit faulty reasoning and fallacies (see Chapter 20, pp. 516–17).

- Experiment with one or more other methods of organization (see Chapter 7, pp. 140–43).

- Try acknowledging an opposing viewpoint in your claim.
- Try to find a portion of an opposing viewpoint that you can build into your argument.
- Look for ways to refute an opponent's evidence (see Chapter 20, pp. 506–07).

- Revise your introduction and conclusion so that they meet the guidelines on pp. 548–49 and in Chapter 7 (pp. 147–51).