Argumentative Essay

How to go about it?
When choosing a topic

- While a strong interest in a topic is important.
- It's not enough to be interested. You have to consider what position you can back up with reasoning and evidence.
- It's one thing to have a strong belief, but when shaping an argument you'll have to explain why your belief is reasonable and logical.
- Make a mental list of points you could use as evidence pro or against an issue.
How to write an introduction?

- A brief explanation of your topic
- Some valid background information
- A clear thesis statement
- Your thesis will be a statement of your position

Example:
Since the turn of the new century, a theory has emerged concerning the end of the world, or at least the end of life as we know it. This new theory centers around the year 2012, a date that many claim has mysterious origins in ancient manuscripts from many different cultures. The most noted characteristic of this date is that it appears to mark the end of the Mayan calendar. But there is no evidence to suggest that the Maya saw any great relevance to this date. In fact, none of the claims surrounding a 2012 doomsday event hold up to scientific inquiry. *The year 2012 will pass without a major, life-altering catastrophe.*
How to write an argument?

- Use adequate sources to make your point valid
- The winning argument does not necessarily need to be the first one after the introduction
- Have at least two arguments to prove your point.
- BUT you should not have too many either
- The depth of the argument is more important than to have 10 shallow ones.
How to write a counter argument?

- Write about how the other side of your argument might see the situation.
- Use good sources here as well to make your point more valid.
- If the counter argument is well structured, it is easier to come back to why your argument wins, I will show you some examples.
How to write a conclusion?

- So many ways to write a great conclusion
- Re-state your position as the most sensible one
  - Use the info from your previous arguments to make your final point
- Most important – NO NEW INFO
- AND – don’t use emotional language
  - Example: ”I think” or ”I like this because"
Tools and Tips

- Use linking words - but don’t overuse them
- Avoid emotional language
- Know the difference between a logical conclusion and an emotional point of view
- Don't make up evidence
- Make an outline before you write
- Never use "I" in an essay where you should persuade someone.
Outline

- Introduction
  - Thesis
- Arguments
  - Usually 2 that agrees with your thesis
  - And 1 counter-argument
  - (The counter-argument exists to validate your thesis even more.)
- Conclusion
TIP: You don't have to choose the side you believe, necessarily. If you are going to be graded according to your logical points, you might have to go against your gut feelings. Because it might be easier to find sources for instance.

Imagine that you have been assigned the topic:
Should death penalty be legalized in Sweden?
Yes:

- If someone commits a murder the person should not have the right to live
  - It is cheaper to end a life than to keep a person in jail for a lifetime
  - It is good to know that the person can never hurt anyone again
No:

- More of an escape for the prisoner than to shrivel in jail for life

- What if they have sentenced the wrong person?
How to use sources

- Refer to the last name of the author in the text or the magazine itself like this:
  - as the article in *Dagens Nyheter* mentioned, not all cameras are actually marked by a sign, thus making the surveillance secret and – illegal.
  - Michael Green (1998) writes about how wealthy people have a larger negative impact on the environment.
Incorporate a reference list where you write your sources in alphabetical order.

Use the Harvard system.

http://www hb se/Global/BLR/Skriva%20och%20refer era/Lathund_harvard.pdf