

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Write an Argument Essay

**Directions:** Read "Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?" Complete the essay kit on page 12.  
Then follow the steps below.

## STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

### Should you go trash-free at lunch?

Consider what you read in the article, as well as your own viewpoints.  
Check the box next to the point of view you will argue in your essay.  
Or write your own opinion in the space provided.

☐ **Yes!** Trash-free lunches are important. ☐ **No!** Trash-free lunches aren't worth the trouble.

☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 2: GATHER SUPPORT FOR YOUR OPINION

Look at what you wrote in the "Yes" and "No" columns on page 12. Which points support your opinion?  
What other information supports your opinion? List at least three supporting details on the lines below.

**Here's an example: If you think trash-free lunches are a good idea, one of your supporting details might be: "Americans throw away about 15 million tons of plastic containers and packaging each year . . ."**

**1.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think you **SHOULD** go trash-free at lunch, summarize the strongest arguments of those who disagree. If you think you **SHOULD NOT** go trash-free at lunch, summarize the main reasons some think that students should go trash-free.

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### STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR THESIS (CENTRAL CLAIM)

The thesis is where you tell readers what your essay is going to be about. The thesis should be a clear, strong statement of the opinion you gave in Step 1. The rest of your essay will support this thesis.

**Your thesis:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### STEP 5: WRITE YOUR HOOK

The beginning of your essay is called the hook because it "hooks" your readers' attention. The hook should relate to the topic of your essay, but it can take many forms. It can be:

- 1. An anecdote** (a very short story): Describe your average lunch at school. How much trash do you create? Do you use reusable containers?
- 2. A surprising fact:** Find a fact that will raise your readers' eyebrows. Several surprising facts are included in the article. You can also do some research to find one that is not included in the article.
- 3. A rhetorical question** (a question to which you don't expect an answer): Ask your readers a question that reflects your point of view. Here's one way you could structure your question:  
*"Is it really that inconvenient to \_\_\_\_\_?"*
- 4. A quote:** Find a thought-provoking quote that relates to the topic of your essay.

**Choose one of the ideas above, or use your own idea, and write a hook on the lines provided.**

**Your hook:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Let readers know a little about the issue you will be writing about. This is not your point of view; it's a brief summary of the issue. Finish the summary of the debate over going trash-free at lunch that appears below.

**Others think that** \_\_\_\_\_

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

On the next page, you'll find guidelines for how to organize your essay.

# Argument Essay Outline

**Directions:** Use the outline below to write your essay. You will use what you wrote on the first three pages of this activity.

**1**

## INTRODUCTION

**Open with your hook from Step 5.**



Write a transition sentence that relates your hook to the question of whether to go trash-free at lunch.



(See *Scope's* handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)



Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.



Finish with your thesis from Step 4.

**2**

## BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

**Now write your supporting points from Step 2.  
For each one, write 1-3 sentences that  
provide additional details.**

You can put your supporting points and detail sentences together in one paragraph or you can split them into several paragraphs. It depends on how much you want to write about each point.

*Hint! Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers will best remember details that are presented last.*

**3**

## ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

**Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument.**

Use what you wrote in Step 3.

Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.

**4**

## CONCLUSION

**Write 2-3 sentences to remind your readers  
of your main points.**

Finish with a strong final sentence.

*Need an idea?  
Refer to your hook,  
find a quote, or give  
a call to action.*

**5**

## READ AND REVISE

**Use *Scope's* "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **“Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?” Quiz**

**Directions:** Read “Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?” Then answer the questions below.

1. The anecdote about Devon's lunch contributes to the article by
  - (A) explaining what a trash-free lunch is.
  - (B) describing what students should eat for lunch.
  - (C) showing how much trash can be created by an average school lunch.
  - (D) supporting the idea that students should always pack their lunch.
2. Author Mackenzie Carro writes that Devon's lunch has a “dark side.” According to Carro, the dark side of Devon's lunch is that
  - (A) it is unhealthy.
  - (B) it leaves behind a lot of trash.
  - (C) it is expensive.
  - (D) it is boring.
3. Carro writes that the large amount of garbage people produce is a problem for our planet. What are TWO ways that she supports this claim?
  - (A) She explains that garbage can harm marine plants and animals.
  - (B) She explains that going trash-free at lunch can save money.
  - (C) She explains that most trash ends up in landfills, where it sits for centuries.
  - (D) She explains why disposable products are so popular.
4. According to Carro, disposable products are very popular because they
  - (A) are convenient.
  - (B) create a lot of trash.
  - (C) were introduced in the 1950s.
  - (D) are inexpensive.
5. Consider this quote from page 12: “It takes the same amount of time to put a sandwich in a plastic bag as a reusable container.” This quote
  - (A) supports the claim that packing a trash-free lunch is time-consuming.
  - (B) shows that trash-free lunches are inconvenient.
  - (C) refutes the claim that trash-free lunches can help the environment.
  - (D) refutes the claim that packing a trash-free lunch is time-consuming.
6. Carro wrote this article mainly to
  - (A) highlight one environmental problem and discuss a possible solution for it.
  - (B) argue that school lunches are the main contributor to America's trash problem.
  - (C) show that most environmental problems are fixable.
  - (D) encourage readers to recycle.

### **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. What idea about trash-free lunches does the cartoon on page 10 express? Explain your answer.
8. Consider the statistic on page 11 about how many tons of trash end up in the ocean each year. Choose one side of the debate and explain how this information could be used to support it.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **“Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?” Quiz**

**Directions:** Read “Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?” Then answer the questions below.

1. The author likely included the story about Devon's lunch to
  - (A) describe what a trash-free lunch is.
  - (B) explain what students should eat for lunch.
  - (C) show how much trash can be created from an average school lunch.
  - (D) convince readers to pack their own lunches.
2. According to author Mackenzie Carro, the problem with Devon's lunch is that
  - (A) it is unhealthy.
  - (B) it leaves behind a lot of trash.
  - (C) it is expensive.
  - (D) it is boring.
3. Which TWO lines from the article support the claim that the large amount of trash we produce is a problem?
  - (A) “Most of our trash ends up in landfills, where it will sit for centuries, giving off toxins as it slowly degrades.”
  - (B) “In fact, Americans throw away about 15 million tons of plastic containers and packaging each year . . .”
  - (C) “Some trash ends up in lakes and rivers, on beaches, and even out in the ocean, where it can harm marine plants and animals.”
  - (D) “But what is the cost of this convenience?”
4. According to Carro, disposable products are very popular because they
  - (A) are convenient.
  - (B) create a lot of trash.
  - (C) were introduced in the 1950s.
  - (D) are cheap.
5. Which line is meant to refute (prove wrong) the claim that packing a trash free-lunch takes a long time?
  - (A) “Reusable containers do have some drawbacks though.”
  - (B) “It’s often quicker to put together a meal when most of the food is already packaged . . .”
  - (C) “Americans loved the convenience.”
  - (D) “‘It takes the same amount of time to put a sandwich in a plastic bag as a reusable container,’ says Karli, 17, from Illinois.”
6. Carro wrote this article mainly to
  - (A) highlight one environmental problem and discuss a possible solution for it.
  - (B) argue that school lunches are the main reason for America’s trash problem.
  - (C) show that most environmental problems are fixable.
  - (D) encourage readers to recycle.

### **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. How does the cartoon on page 10 express the idea that going trash-free at lunch helps the environment?
8. Consider the statistic on page 11 about how many tons of trash end up in the ocean each year. Choose one side of the debate and explain how this information could be used to support it.