

Essay Structure Ordering Exercise

Argumentative Essay Writing — Paragraph Sequencing

Name: _____

Class: _____

Instructions

This booklet contains three essays. For each essay, the five paragraphs are printed out of order. For each essay:

- Decide which part of the essay each paragraph belongs to (Introduction, Body 1–3, or Conclusion).
- Fill in the ordering table with the correct essay position for each paragraph letter.
- Briefly explain, in your own words, why each paragraph belongs in that position.

Essay Structure Guide (Reference)

- Introduction — Hook + thesis: define and introduce the topic.
- Body Paragraph 1 — First main point: topic sentence, examples, explanation, link back to thesis.
- Body Paragraph 2 — Second main point.
- Body Paragraph 3 — Third main point (often a counter-argument).
- Conclusion — Summary + balance: reinforce your stand and offer a personal opinion.

Contents

- Essay 1: Happiness & Health
- Essay 2: Money & Society
- Essay 3: Standardised Testing

You may try out this companion exercise: <https://edtechsims.com/argumentative-essay-paragraphing/>



Essay 1: Happiness & Health

"A happy person is a healthy person." How far would you agree?

The Paragraphs (scrambled)

Paragraph D

It is often said that happiness is the best medicine, suggesting a strong link between emotional well-being and physical health. In today's fast-paced world, the pursuit of happiness is frequently associated with a balanced and healthy life. While some may see happiness as a by-product of good health, others believe it plays a more direct role in promoting well-being. While happiness does contribute to health, it is not the only factor.

Paragraph C

A happy person tends to experience lower levels of stress, which can have a significant impact on physical health. Studies have shown that chronic stress weakens the immune system and increases the risk of illnesses such as heart disease. Conversely, individuals who maintain a positive outlook are more likely to adopt healthy habits like regular exercise and a balanced diet. These behaviours suggest that happiness can indeed promote better health outcomes.

Paragraph A

Furthermore, mental well-being has been linked to improved recovery rates from illness and surgery. Happy individuals often enjoy stronger social support networks, which can provide emotional comfort and practical help during times of ill health. A cheerful disposition can also increase motivation to follow medical advice and attend regular check-ups. These factors show that happiness can positively influence both mental and physical recovery.

Paragraph E

However, it would be unrealistic to claim that happiness alone guarantees good health. Genetics, environmental conditions, access to healthcare, and lifestyle choices all play major roles in determining a person's overall health. A person can feel happy and content but still suffer from chronic conditions beyond their control. Therefore, happiness is an important factor, but it is not the sole determinant of health.

Paragraph B

In conclusion, while happiness does contribute significantly to overall health, it is not the only element at play. Emotional well-being encourages healthy habits and faster recovery, but other physical and external factors are equally influential. A holistic view of health must include mental, physical, and social dimensions. Ultimately, a happy person is often healthier—but not always entirely so.

Your Answer: Ordering Table

Essay Position	Paragraph Letter	Reason for Placement
1. Introduction		
2. Body Paragraph 1		
3. Body Paragraph 2		
4. Body Paragraph 3		
5. Conclusion		

Reflection Question

Which paragraph was hardest to place, and why? What clues in the language helped you decide its position?

Essay 2: Money & Society

"The only thing people are interested in today is money." Do you agree?

The Paragraphs (scrambled)

Paragraph A

The interest that people take in earning money has also influenced education. In the university, professional courses are popular among students because many students think they can make more money by being doctors or engineers. It is tragic to realise that the primary reason why many students choose medicine as a career is not so much to heal as to make money. This shows that many people are just interested in making money and don't have a true passion when they look for a job.

Paragraph B

The modern world operates on money. With money, bills are paid, bigger houses and cars can be bought and holidays to Europe paid for. In fact, we live in a materialistic society where no one can deny that money is a necessity of life and where people talk in terms (and conditions) of money. Therefore, it is not surprising that for most people, the only thing that interests them is money.

Paragraph C

That said, to say that the only thing people are interested in today is money is not a fair statement, for there are bound to be people with different motives in life. There are people like Mother Teresa whose dedication to humanity has saved countless lives and whose motives are to serve the poor. Regretfully, there are also many people who are interested only in money, but more importantly, it is about finding a balance in life and not be consumed in the rat race.

Paragraph D

First and foremost, it is undeniable that people are getting increasingly materialistic. We often hear of people with high expectations and who are always trying to keep up with others who live extravagant lifestyles. This explains why the credit system plays such an important part in the lives of so many people. Very often people buy expensive houses and large cars on mortgage and are willing to spend the rest of their lives paying for their mortgages.

Paragraph E

In addition, the 'money-chase' does not stop when one is settled with a job. In employment, 'job-hopping' - where workers change job frequently - is not uncommon. In Singapore, for example, firms have often complained of employees switching jobs just for the sake of a few extra dollars. This phenomenon stems from the unhealthy belief that money is the all-important factor in a career, and few are likely to consider other crucial aspects like environment, career prospects and distance. This further strengthens the stand that people only consider the dollars and cents in their jobs.

Your Answer: Ordering Table

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4. Body Paragraph 3		
5. Conclusion		

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Essay 3: Standardised Testing

"Singapore should remove standardised testing in schools." Do you agree?

The Paragraphs (scrambled)

Paragraph D

In 2016, an 11-year-old boy committed suicide after receiving his end-of-year examination results in Singapore. He was not the first and he certainly will not be the last, unless Singapore chooses to remove the ferocious beast that is standardised testing. In my opinion, Singapore should indeed remove standardised testing because it causes stress for students and is not a holistic assessment of their abilities.

Paragraph B

Gone are the days when learning was enjoyable and meaningful. Instead, students' learning is now impeded by standardised testing which causes high levels of stress. As a result of these high stakes examinations, it is not uncommon to see students having emotional breakdowns in the months leading up to these tests. By removing standardised testing in Singapore, our students will be able to enjoy learning and their mental well-being will be improved.

Paragraph E

Using standardised testing to determine a student's ability is like using a ruler to measure the circumference of an apple. A standardised test is not an accurate measure of a whole person and to use standardised testing to grant students' entry into institutions of higher education or to certain jobs is flawed. Thus, such standardised tests should be removed and other methods of assessment that are more holistic should be considered instead.

Paragraph A

Advocates of standardised testing may argue that standardised testing is beneficial because test results helps teachers to teach their students according to their needs. While this may be true, standardised tests are not the only way to assess students' needs. For instance, teachers can look at students' daily work or assign several projects across the year to know how to best help them in their weak areas. Thus, removing standardised testing may not necessarily mean that teachers are unable to teach in a targeted manner.

Paragraph C

In conclusion, standardised testing has many disadvantages such as causing stress to students and not being a holistic assessment of them. This points to the fact that it has no place in Singapore society and should be removed. If the authorities can consider the negative impact and ineffectiveness of standardised testing, they would hopefully take steps to abolish it, resulting in our students having a meaningful and stress-free experience in school.

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