



Mastering the Discursive Essay

Using the PEEL Method for Grade 12 Success

Learning Objectives



By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- **Define** the purpose of a discursive essay.
- **Structure** a paragraph using the PEEL method.
- **Evaluate** arguments for balanced writing.

The Big Question

Can you argue for something you don't actually believe in?

In Grade 12, your examiner isn't interested in *what* side you take, but *how* you build the bridge between two opposing shores. A discursive essay is a balanced exploration, not a one-sided fight.

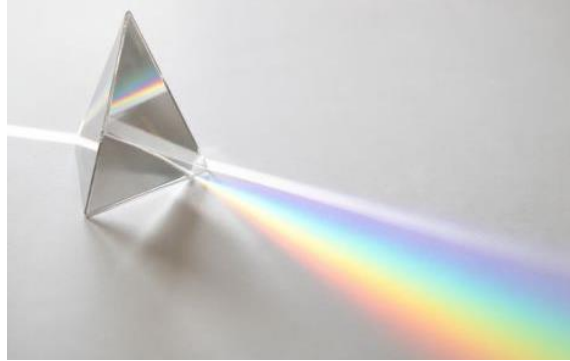


Key Vocabulary



Discursive

Moving from one topic to another; specifically, an essay that explores multiple viewpoints fairly.



Nuance

A subtle difference in meaning, opinion, or attitude that avoids oversimplification.

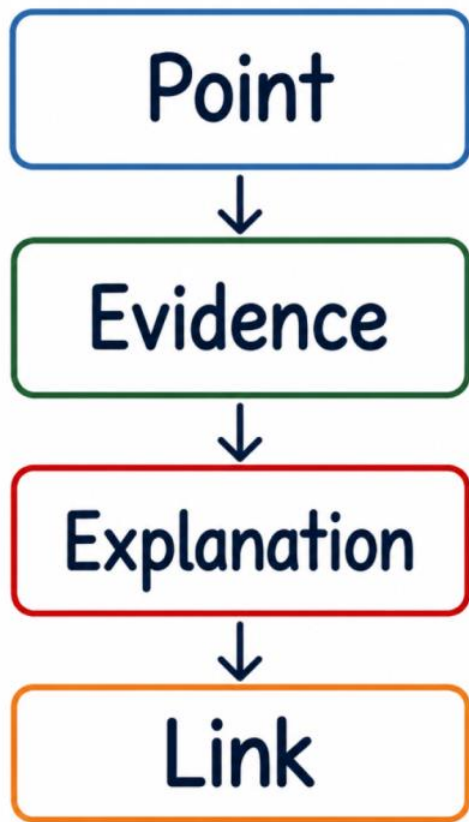


Counter-argument

An argument or set of reasons put forward to oppose an idea developed in another argument.

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The PEEL Method Explained



CORE CONCEPT

PEEL ensures every paragraph is a self-contained unit of logic:

- **Point:** The main idea of the paragraph.
- **Evidence:** Facts, quotes, or examples.
- **Explanation:** Why the evidence proves the point.
- **Link:** Connect back to the topic or the next point.



Key point

Without the 'Link', your essay feels like a list of facts rather than a flowing argument.

Evaluating an Argument

Listen to the audio and decide: true or false?



A Debate on Social Media Impact

▶ Play audio

1



Thabo is writing an argumentative essay where he only takes one side.

2



The 'Explanation' part of PEEL should simply repeat the evidence provided.

3



Thabo uses WhatsApp study groups as his 'Evidence'.

4



In a discursive essay, the writer's personal opinion usually appears in the conclusion.

Answers on the next slide...

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Evaluating an Argument



Check your answers below



A Debate on Social Media Impact

▶ Play audio

1



Thabo is writing a discursive essay, which requires exploring multiple viewpoints and maintaining balance.

2



Sarah explains that the 'Explanation' must show how the evidence proves the point, not just repeat it.

3



He mentions WhatsApp and YouTube as specific examples of educational collaboration.

4



Sarah notes that the writer stays objective until the conclusion where they weigh the arguments.

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The Art of the 'Link'

The **Link** serves two purposes: it reinforces your point and transitions smoothly to the next idea.

Examples:

- 'Consequently, while the economic benefits are clear, the environmental costs must also be considered...'
- 'This demonstrates that despite the risks, the potential for growth remains significant.'



Example

Use transition words like: *Conversely*, *Furthermore*, *In contrast*, or *Nevertheless*.



Structuring the Full Essay

Introduction

- Hook the reader.
- Define the topic.
- Outline both sides without picking one.

Body Paragraphs

- Use **PEEL** for every paragraph.
- Alternate between 'For' and 'Against' arguments.

Conclusion

- Summarize the main points.
- Weigh the evidence.
- Give a final, reasoned judgment.



Watch out

Avoid 'I think' until the conclusion.
Keep the body objective.

Order the PEEL Paragraph

Answers on the next slide...

Arrange the sentences of this paragraph about school uniforms in the correct PEEL order.

By removing visible markers of wealth, students are judged on their character rather than their fashion.

School uniforms can significantly reduce instances of bullying based on clothing choices.

A 2019 study showed a 15% decrease in peer-pressure related tension in schools with strict dress codes.

However, while social tension decreases, the issue of individual expression remains a concern.

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1.

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2.

By removing visible markers of wealth, students are judged on their character rather than their fashion.

3.

However, while social tension decreases, the issue of individual expression remains a concern.

4.

Final Checklist



Before you submit your Grade 12 essay, ask yourself:

1. Did I use **PEEL** in every paragraph?
2. Is my tone **formal and objective**?
3. Have I addressed **both sides** of the issue fairly?
4. Does my conclusion offer a **reasoned final thought**?

Ready to write?

Choose a controversial topic like 'Remote Work' or 'AI in Classrooms' and try drafting one PEEL paragraph now.

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