

## The Classical Model (adapted from *The Language of Composition*)

Classical rhetoricians outlined a five-part structure for an oratory, or speech, that writers still use today:

- The introduction introduces the reader to the subject under discussion. It draws the readers into the text by piquing their interest, challenging them, or otherwise getting their attention. Often the introduction is where the writer establishes ethos. The introduction may or may not end with the thesis.
- The narration provides factual information and background material on the subject at hand, thus beginning the developmental paragraphs, or establishes why the subject is a problem that needs addressing. Although the classical rhetoric describes narration as appealing to logos, in actuality it often appeals to pathos because the writer attempts to evoke an emotional response about the importance of the issue being discussed. In other words, this is where you tell your readers why you are researching this issue, or why we are talking about it. You may have your thesis in this paragraph instead of the first.
- The confirmation, usually the major part of the text, includes the development or the proof needed to make the writer's case—the nuts and bolts of the essay, containing the most specific and concrete detail in the text. The confirmation generally makes the strongest appeal to logos. That means your confirmation should be supported by facts, or your sources in research. You'll provide their facts, data, research, and then explain how that information proves your point—make the connection. The confirmation is usually two or more paragraphs because you will have more than one point or reason you believe the way you do.
- The refutation, which addresses the counterargument, is in many ways a bridge between the writer's proof and conclusion. Although classical rhetoricians recommend placing this section at the end of the text as a way to anticipate objections to the proof given in the confirmation section, this is not a hard-and-fast rule. If opposing views are well known or valued by the audience, a writer will address them before presenting his or her own argument. The counterargument's appeal is largely to logos.

Another place to put the counterargument would be in a paragraph before the confirmation.  
“There are those who believe ..., but...

Yet a third alternative to you counter would be to place it in each paragraph of confirmation.  
“Here's what people say about this, but they're not right because...” In other words, you're countering each of the claims or arguments there might be against your beliefs with your own proofs.

- The conclusion—whether it is one paragraph or several—brings the essay to a satisfying close. Here the writer usually appeals to pathos and reminds the reader of the ethos established earlier. Rather than simply repeating what has gone before, the conclusion brings all the writer's ideas together and answers the question, so what? Why was it important that we talked about this issue?