Optional Writing: perspectives and argument

Original skill preparation; versioned source scope

ACT Writing: Perspectives and Argument

- State a clear position, your **thesis 论点**, on an issue.
- Analyse how your view relates to each given **perspective 视角**.
- Develop an **argument 论证** with reasons and **evidence 证据**, such as examples.
- Answer a **counterargument 反论点**, and make a **concession 让步** where a point is fair.

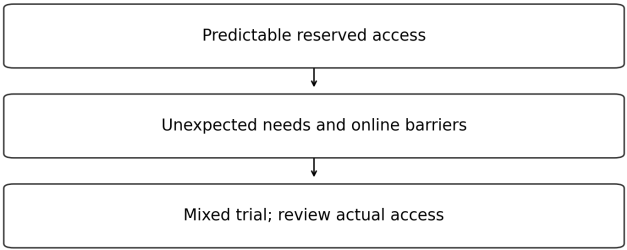
Planning a position

- Read the issue and the three perspectives. Note what each values: fairness, efficiency, freedom, safety.
- Your position can agree with one, combine parts of several, or offer a new view.
- Write one sentence that states it and the main reason.

Engaging the perspectives

- For each perspective, say where you agree, where you disagree, and why.
- Do not describe two perspectives as if they say the same thing.
- A strong essay shows the conditions under which a view works or fails.

Figure: Engaging the perspectives



- Worked steps: Predictable reserved access → Unexpected needs and online barriers → Mixed trial; review actual access
- Match each part of the diagram to the text.

Developing reasons

- Each body paragraph makes one point and explains it with an example or a likely consequence.
- Imagined examples can show how something would work; do not present them as measured facts.
- Link paragraphs with clear transitions.

Concession and conclusion

- A concession admits a fair point against you, then shows why your position still holds, or how it should change.
- The conclusion restates the position with its limits; it adds no new argument.

The practice issue

- **Writing issue.** A community learning centre has a small number of shared tools.
- Should every use require advance booking?
- Perspective 1: Requiring bookings for all tools makes access predictable and prevents visitors travelling only to find everything occupied.
- Perspective 2: Walk-in access is important because people may discover a need unexpectedly or be unable to book online.

Worked example: a plan

- Position: a mixed system, with some sessions bookable and some kept for walk-in visitors.
- Perspective 1: agree that predictable access matters; reject booking for every use.
- Perspective 2: accept the concern about unexpected needs and online barriers; question whether an unrestricted queue is fair.
- Perspective 3: develop its compromise, and take seriously its warning about running the rules.

Worked example: a model essay

- A learning centre should make access predictable without requiring every visitor to predict every need.
- I would reserve some tool sessions in advance and keep others available to people who arrive without bookings.
- This position accepts the first perspective's concern about wasted journeys, the second perspective's concern about unexpected needs, and the third perspective's warning that a compromise requires clear administration.
- Its success would depend on practical rules rather than the word mixed alone.

Evaluating the model

- It relates its position to all three perspectives, accepting part of each and rejecting what goes too far.
- Its examples show how things would work and are not presented as measured results.
- Its concession is real: the balance of sessions should change with **evidence**.
- Before acting on it, a centre would need local facts such as staffing, demand and safety rules.

Common errors

- Summarising the perspectives without taking a position.
- Agreeing with all three without explaining how they fit together.
- Making claims with no reasons or examples.

Common errors (2)

- Inventing statistics and presenting them as facts.
- A conclusion that only repeats the introduction.

Key terms

- **thesis**: The main position the essay argues.
- **perspective**: A point of view on an issue.
- **argument**: A position supported by reasons.
- **evidence**: Examples or facts that support a reason.

Check yourself

- What must your essay do with the given perspectives besides summarise them?
- Is "Studies show 80% of visitors prefer booking" acceptable if you have no such study?
- What does a concession do?