

ESSAY MAPPING

Please revise the persuasive analytical essay structure if you are unfamiliar with this essay type.

Introduction with definitions: Define any keywords here

Argument: This is the main argument for each paragraph. Ideally, this should support the thesis or main argument of the essay.

Counterargument: This refutes the argument above or argues against your arguments main point.

Refutation: This refutes your counterargument so that your main argument remains strong and any opposing viewpoint is effectively destroyed.

Conclusion: Summarise key arguments in this section

Essay mapping example: Minors should not be allowed to have plastic surgery

In response to the above question, a university student brainstormed or mapped out the following response:

Argument 1: Cosmetic surgery has adverse effects on minors **physical** health

Counterargument 1:
Cosmetic surgery sometimes is necessary to correct birth defects therefore the risks are necessary

Refutation 1: Surgery risks are too significant for most, therefore unless extremely necessary, it should be avoided

Argument 2: Cosmetic surgery has adverse effects on minors **emotional** health

Counterargument 2:
Not all minors emotional health suffers, some feel better (Ashley 2000)

Refutation 2: Surgery results are not always perfect, leading to physical and psychological issues (Brown 2011)

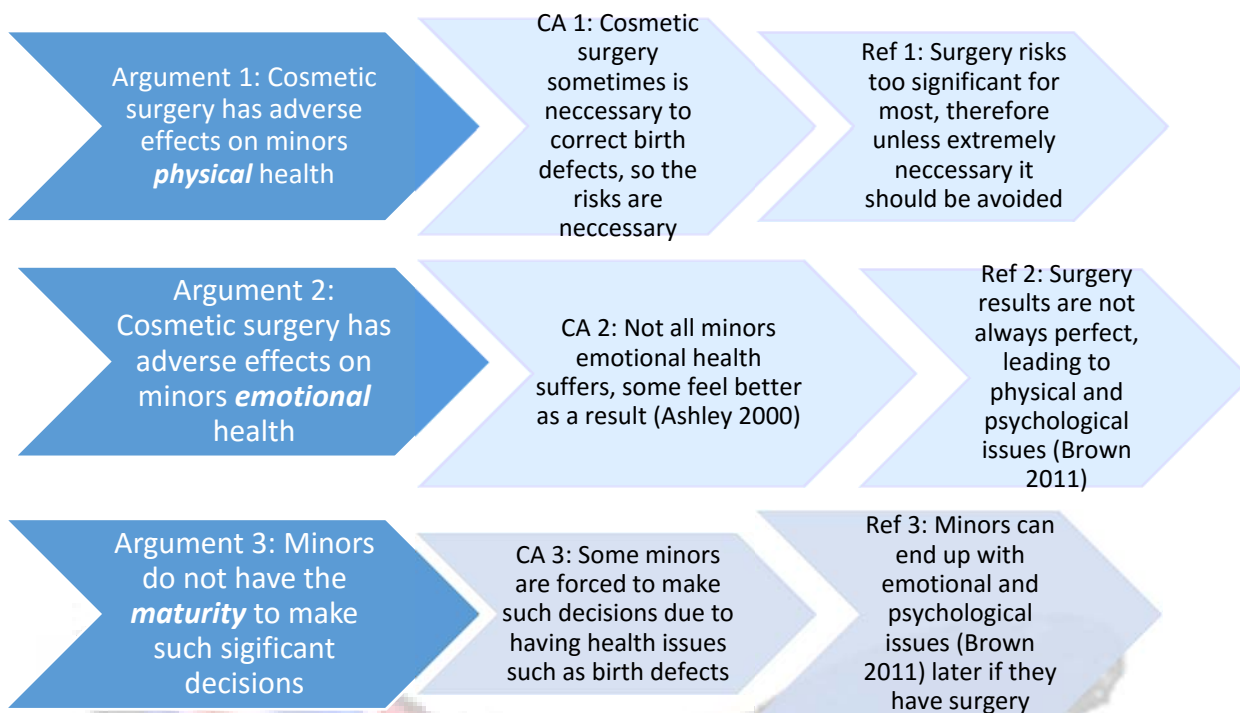
Argument 3: Minors do not have the **maturity** to make such significant decisions

Counterargument 3:
Some minors are forced to make such decisions due to having health issues such as birth defects

Refutation 3:
Minors can end up with emotional and psychological issues (Brown 2011) later if they have surgery

From the above example, it can be seen that the student has repeated counterargument 1 at counterargument 3 with all of the refutations ideas and references overlapping with each other. The student is still answering the question, however is repeating information unnecessarily which reduces the quality of their work. Furthermore, through mapping out what kind of references the student intends to use with their arguments, it becomes clear that the student has overused the reference from Brown (2011) and should ideally find an alternative argument and reference instead for counterargument 3. A concept map such as this helps students to identify such weaknesses in their work and allows students to visually picture where their work is at and how many more potential drafts may be needed, similar to how maps help motorists to work out how to get to their final destination.

This mapping can also be done in a number of ways, for example, it can presented in the form of a process as below:



Through googling 'graphics organisers' you can create your own preferred toolset that you can reuse when trying to map out different text types. While each individual has their own preferences, the type of organiser you select to organise and map out your ideas is less important than what you do with your plan or map later. You can show your first draft to your lecturer, friend or tutor before you invest more precious time to expand on your work. You may of course need to repeat this process a few times, till it becomes clear that your ideas are solid enough for you to write out your first complete essay or report.

Through carefully scrutinizing, questioning and editing your own work, you can master any text type and manoeuvre your way towards ultimate success in tertiary education. It is ironic that through poor initial planning, many students become blind to the faults in their own work and end up with poorer marks than they had anticipated due to overlooking significant problems with their key ideas, topic sentences and transitions. Planning forms the backbone of your work and through thorough 'mapping' you can determine if there are any ailments or weaknesses in the body of your work which may potentially make your essay collapse. Happy mapping!