The purpose of an argumentative essay is to present a well-reasoned, well-argued position with evidence in order to persuade the reader to consider a particular point of view.

Model

Does travel narrow the mind? Here are two opposing views.

I. The idea that travel widens people's horizons, promotes international understanding and turns us all into renaissance persons is absurd. You only have to see American tourists taking flash photos of Big Ben to realise that.

It may have been a good idea for Marco Polo to have sailed to Beijing, although it did not do the Chinese much good. It may even have been a good thing to send the educated elite of Britain on Grand Tours of the continent in the 18th and 19th centuries. But we have television and the Internet now. If it is learning you want, you can do it at home.

There is nothing wrong about going abroad (*overseas*). But you can only really learn anything about foreign countries by working in them, as opposed to sight-seeing. Living and working in foreign countries should be encouraged, within limits.

It is tourism which is objectionable, especially the desire to go to the remotest and wildest places in the world and build four-star hotels in them. It does not do the locals any good, as opposed to filling their pockets - highly selectively - with money. It encourages the demand for Coca-Cola and accelerates the homogenisation of world culture. (John Rentoul)

II. Travel abroad is no longer a luxury and nowadays most people have had at least one foreign holiday. This has benefited our society in a number of ways.

Firstly, it enables us to observe and value other cultures and discover that ours is not the only way of life. Consequently, this helps combat ignorance and narrow-mindedness, which so often lead to racial prejudice and even violence.

Secondly, foreign tourists can learn from and borrow those aspects of other cultures which are better than in their own country. For example, the improvement in some countries’ eating habits is thanks to/owes a great deal to/was helped by/is due to foreign travel.

Another benefit is that more people can now see the world’s most spectacular natural sights and visit its most important historic monuments. As a result, we discover our planet and become more knowledgeable in a way which is simply not possible with the Internet or television.

In conclusion, if one travels with an open mind, one’s horizons will be widened even more.

Other models:

Judy Syfer’s ‘Why I want a wife.’

Gore Vidal, Drugs.

Lindsy Van Gelder, The Great Person-Hole-Cover Debate.