

Using Rhetoric: Debate and Disagreement

A Palimpsest Workshop



Snapshots of memory

Forgetting details

Compressing arguments

Structure > content

How does meaning change?

Paint a vivid picture

Order creates significance

Revisit key arguments

What Is a Palimpsest?

Text written, erased,
rewritten

Earlier traces remain

A metaphor for arguments

Writing Exercise: Argument Revision

Write your genuine position

State your honest view on the topic.

Rewrite it after strong opposition

Revise your argument to counter strong challenges.

Compare what changed

Analyse the changes made between versions.

This exercise is exploratory, not evaluative.

Guidance for Writing

1

Keep claims precise

2

**Notice which assumptions
drop**

3

Observe shifts in language

Writing Time

10–15 minutes

Reflection Questions

Compare your original and revised arguments.

What changed?

What strengthened or disappeared?

Why did the revision occur?

Rebuttal Insight

1

Strong Rebuttal

Leads to nuanced adjustments
Avoids abandoning core claims

2

Weak Rebuttal

Replaces arguments entirely
Lacks accountability

3

Control Framing

Adapt arguments not cut down
Shows better debating skill

Palimpsest (Extension)


Reflective writing for debaters

Track argument evolution

Visit palimpsest.digital for resources and tools for debaters.

Closing Thought

 Clarity persuades

 Revision reveals thought