

Advantages/Disadvantages Essay

Attention-grabbing opening

Main idea statement

Advantage #1

Support (fact)

Advantage #2

Support (fact)

The Patter of Little Hooves

Can you imagine paying \$25,000 for a family pet? When Vietnamese potbellied pigs were first brought to the United States, they quickly became such prized pets that some people did pay that much to own the smart, cute, little piglets. Today, however, pig shelters are filled with unwanted pets in need of new homes, and pig rescue organizations have sprung up in many areas. Does this mean pigs don't make great pets? No. It simply means that not everyone can be a great pet-pig owner.

Would you be a great owner of a pet pig? A decision about what kind of pet is right for you and your family has to be based on knowledge rather than emotion. Just because you think an animal is cute or unusual doesn't mean it's the one for you. Before you choose a potbellied pet, you should consider the advantages and disadvantages of living with a pig.

Despite their reputation for wallowing in mud, pigs are quite clean animals. Because they don't sweat, their love of mud really comes from a need to cool their bodies during hot weather. Pigs will gladly accept a pool of clean, cool water in place of a mud bath. They also are easier to house train than many animals, and they can be trained to use a litter box. Of course, they do prefer the outdoors to a litter box.

Pigs also can be very playful companions. They love to play fetch and have been known to dance, ride skateboards, and jump through

Advantages/Disadvantages Essay *continued*

Support (anecdote)

Advantage #3

Support (expert opinion)

Disadvantage #1

Support (fact and expert opinion)

Disadvantage #2

Support (fact)

Disadvantage #3

Support (fact)

hoops. They also like to go for walks. My cousin's pet pig, Samantha, can even play golf and soccer, sort of, although she isn't very good at driving the golf cart.

The advantage most commonly cited by pig owners is the animals' intelligence. Said to be smarter and more trainable than dogs or cats, pigs are celebrated for their problem-solving abilities. The Pigs as Pets Association (PAPA) claims that pigs are only two species-steps away from having the intelligence of humans.

However, some prospective owners view pigs' intelligence as a disadvantage. Pigs can quickly learn to open refrigerator doors and kitchen cabinets in their quest for food. Because they are so smart, they tend to get bored easily and can become destructive when left alone. According to PAPA, owning a pig is "like having a two-year-old child that never grows up."

Another downside of owning pet pigs is their size. Many owners become overwhelmed when their 25-pound piglet grows to well over 100 pounds. Due to overfeeding—a common error made by owners—potbellied pigs have been known to exceed 300 pounds. Even with a proper diet, the typical pig grows to weigh between 100 and 150 pounds. This size makes trips to the veterinarian a challenge.

Perhaps the greatest drawback of pig ownership is that pigs will be pigs, especially if they haven't been raised to live with humans.

Owners must understand that pigs are herd animals. In the wild, each

Advantages/Disadvantages Essay *continued*

Support (expert opinion)

Restatement of advantage and disadvantage

animal must battle for superiority. Because it may view houseguests as newcomers to the "herd," a spoiled, untrained pet pig may become aggressive toward the guests. The herd instinct also leads some pigs to show aggression toward their owners. PIGS, a shelter for unwanted pet pigs, recommends that owners provide regular access to a securely fenced yard and adopt a second pig to promote socialization and to discourage aggression.

If you want an extra-smart, trainable pet whose behavior will be influenced greatly by your response to its needs, a pig could be the best pet you'll ever own. But if a hefty animal that may be aggressive toward your friends doesn't match your description of the ideal pet, maybe you should research gentle dog breeds or adopt a cat from your local animal shelter.

Advantages/Disadvantages Essay

Definition

An **advantages/disadvantages essay** presents a balanced look at both sides of a topic. An advantages/disadvantages essay can inform readers about all aspects of a complex issue, or it can help its writer make a difficult decision.

Many advantages/disadvantages essays use the structure illustrated in the framework below. After you look over this framework, you can print it and use it as a guide when you write your own advantages/disadvantages essay.

Framework

Directions and Explanations

Introduction

- Attention-grabbing opening
- Main idea statement

Get your readers' attention You can use a surprising question or an engaging quotation to get your readers interested in your topic.

Write a clear main idea statement Let your readers know what your topic is, and tell them that you plan to explore its advantages and disadvantages.



Body

- *First paragraph:* Advantage (or disadvantage) #1
Support for #1
- *Second paragraph:* Advantage (or disadvantage) #2
Support for #2 and so on
- *Third paragraph:* Disadvantage (or advantage) #1
Support for #1 and so on

Clearly state each advantage or disadvantage Write a paragraph explaining each advantage or disadvantage. You will want to group all the advantages together and all the disadvantages together.

Support each advantage or disadvantage Use facts, expert opinions, and anecdotes to back up each point you cover.



Conclusion

- Restatement of an advantage and a disadvantage

Conclude with an important advantage and an important disadvantage Restate the most important advantages and disadvantages, but do not include your own opinion. Readers should be allowed to come to their own conclusions.