

Argumentative Essay Assignment

You will write a five paragraph argumentative essay on one of the topics listed below. An argumentative essay is an essay in which the author makes a claim and then supports their claim with evidence and commentary. They are **non-fiction**, and using the first person is not appropriate in argumentative essays.

Topic Choices:

1. Is it ever acceptable to tell a lie?
2. Do you give up your right to free speech when you're at school?

Format:

Times New Roman, 12pt font, left aligned, and double-spaced. Name and class period in top left corner. When finished, please share with me using a Google Doc or email your essay to my Google account at: slucyk@mmalions.org.

Important Dates:

February 24th & 27th: We will talk about how to write an argumentative essay. We will also watch a video and do exercises to practice recognizing strong arguments. Finally, we'll cover citing sources and what's expected with this assignment.

February 28th & March 1st: I'll answer questions about the assignment and review the elements of a strong argumentative essay. Then we will brainstorm, and prewrite using the graphic organizer included in this packet. We will also work on citing your sources so it's easy to insert them when you write your essay. If you are absent, you will need to make up this assignment.

March 2nd & 3rd: We will use the COW to write our essays. Your essay will be due at the end of class. If you are absent, you will need to make up this assignment.

March 6th & 7th: We will discuss editing and do peer editing in class. You will then take the information you receive from me and your peers and either make the edits or rewrite your essay at home, in Advisory, or in the mini-computer lab. Your edited and revised essay will be due to me by 4pm on Friday, March 10th. That gives you 3-4 days to make your edits and revise your essay, but there will be no in-class time to incorporate your edits or make revisions.

Your Grade:

You will receive three grades for this assignment because I want you to think of writing an essay as a multi-step process. First you brainstorm, use a graphic organizer, and create an outline or a draft. Then you write your essay. Finally, you revise or rewrite your essay. You will have three classes to work through the process, and I plan to support you every step of the way.

Your grades will reflect assessment on the following standards:

W5 (Your Pre-writing/graphic organizer): “With some guidance and support, I can develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting.”

W1 (Your argumentative essay): “I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.”

L2 (Your Revised Essay): “I can demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.”

Please see the rubric for this assignment for more information on what I’m looking for when I assess your proficiency.

If you have questions about this assignment or any of the steps, please reach out for help. I am always available after school. You can also come to my class for Advisory on travel Thursday. If these times do not work out, I’m happy to meet you at an alternate, pre-arranged time.

Argumentative Essay – Graphic Organizer

Introductory Paragraph

Hook the audience:

Give a little background on the issue:

Claim:

Body Paragraph #1

Reason #1:

List out your Evidence of Support:

Commentary:

Body Paragraph #2

Reason #2:

List out your Evidence of Support:

Commentary:

Body Paragraph #3

Counter Claim:

Evidence to refute the counter claim:

Commentary:

Conclusion Paragraph

Restate Your Main Idea:

You will turn this graphic organizer in, so please don't lose it.
Citing Sources

What does it mean to cite a source?

- An **in-text citation** is a note in an essay that tells the reader where a piece of information or an idea came from.
- In-text citations always appear in (parentheses).
- At the end of an essay, a writer includes a **list of works cited** that gives details about all the in-text citations.

Why do writers cite sources?

- To avoid plagiarism--the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.
- To prove that the evidence is real and credible.
- To inform the reader about where to find more information on the topic.

What gets cited?

- Quoted information from a secondary source.
- Paraphrased information from a secondary source.
- Information obtained in an interview.
- Any idea that is not your own.

How do you cite a source?

- Insert the in-text citation before the period at the end of the sentence in which the quotation or paraphrase appears.
- For any in-text citation, include the first item that appears in the works-cited entry that corresponds to the citation (e.g. author name, article name, website name).
- See the list below for examples concerning different types of sources.

Articles and Essays

Include the following information in the works-cited entry in this order:

- Article's author
- Title of the article in quotations marks
- Magazine or newspaper's title in italics
- Date of publication
- Page number
- Medium

Example In-Text Citation:

A new study shows that requiring students to wear uniforms to school increases the amount of student time on task in the classroom because of a decrease in disruptions and behavior problems (Bashear).

Example Works-Cited Entry:

Bashear, Leslie. "Uniforms Bring Surprising Results." *Time Magazine*. 7 Feb 2011: 28. Print.

Websites & Webpages

Include the following information in the works-cited entry in this order:

- Author and/or editor names (if available)
- Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)

- Title of the website
- Name of institution/organization publishing the site
- Date of resource creation (if available)
- Date you accessed the material.

****For websites and pages, remember to use *n.p.* if no publisher name is available and *n.d.* if no publishing date is given.****

Example In-Text Citation:

Long Beach Unified School District in California was the first large urban school district in the United States to require school uniforms. “A 1995 LBUSD survey of parents showed 91 percent agreed that school uniforms improve the school environment” (“School Uniform Fact Sheet”).

Example Works-cited entry:

“School Uniform Fact Sheet.” *LB School.net*. Long Beach Unified School District. Accessed 8 July 2012.

Personal Interview

For any information you get in an interview with a family member, friend, acquaintance, or interviewee, include the following information in this order:

- name of the interviewee
- the phrase “Personal interview”
- the date of the interview.

Example In-Text Citation:

My friend Troy says, “Wearing uniforms was awful at first. I wasn’t used to someone else dictating what I wore. But then I started to like it because I didn’t have to think about what to put on every morning. And I kind of like that all the students look similar. It makes school feel more like a community” (Jenkins).

Example Works-cited entry:

Jenkins, Troy. Personal interview. 20 June 2011.

Argument Paper Checklist- Check these Things Before Turning in Your Paper

CONTENT

Thesis Sentence

- Underline your claim in your draft. Make sure it’s debatable (not a fact—it should be a statement that that can be argued about)
 - Does your claim reflect what you’re actually arguing for in your paragraph?

Evidence

- Ask yourself: Is this the most effective evidence to use to prove your argument?
- Is there a variety of evidence—both factual and anecdotal?
- Did you use at least **2** credible outside sources?
- Did you cite all your factual evidence correctly?

Commentary

- Did you explain each piece of evidence?
- Did you tell the reader how this evidence proves your claim?
- Did you make sure that each piece of commentary reveals a different aspect of your claim?
- Did you explain why your claim is so important?
- Did you make sure your commentary doesn't repeat itself?

ORGANIZATION

Structure and Flow of Argument

- Check that your paragraphs are ordered to support your claim:
 - Did you use a block format or alternating format within your paragraphs?
 - How did you order your paragraphs? From general to specific? Most important to least important? Weakest claim to strongest claim?

Transitions

- Read through your paragraph and look for any places where you can add a transition word or phrase to bridge ideas. Focus on the places between evidence and commentary.
- Notice if you have repeated transition words or phrases and find a replacement for any repeats.

Formatting

- Check to be sure your formatting is correct and **your name and class period are on your paper.** (*Times New Roman, 12pt font, left aligned, and double spaced*)