

Assignment Sheet for Argumentative Essay

Academic argumentative essays take a position on a topic and then argues for it in ways that accounts for opposing positions. These arguments must also be backed up by outside research and evidence. In formulating argumentative essays for academic contexts, a writer must communicate that other sides are considered carefully.

Purpose: The writer of academic argumentative essays takes a position on a point that accounts for multiple aspects of the topic. The goal is to help the reader understand your thinking so that they can help you grow as an academic. To this end, your essay should have a **clear thesis**, implicit or explicit, **depending on the prompt**. For this assignment you will **follows the format and prompt** assigned by your instructor.

Format: This will be a **7-paragraph essay**. It must **contains a thesis statement at the end of the first paragraph** and follow the MLA guidelines. This means that your essay should make **use of topic sentences and connectors/conjunctions/transitions** for your body paragraphs. Such formatting is the foundation of effective communication in writing in the classroom.

You must also include a paragraph **of an opposition position and a paragraph refuting that opposing position**. These points must all be backed up by evidence and so it is crucial that you do external research and use appropriate citations. This essay must include a **Work Cited page and use MLA citation for attributing evidence**.

Audience: This essay will target a **scholarly audience**. Therefore, your language and style should meet the intellectual needs of individuals who read on a collegiate level and pique their interests.

Stance/role: What attitude and information (about yourself as a student) will you convey through the essay? Think about what you want to communicate to the reader (i.e., the professor) and convey your stance throughout your essay. **Careful wording and sentences will communicate your stance as a serious student**, someone who pays attention to details. Sloppy writing will communicate that you are a sloppy student or person.

Use of evidence and reasoned arguments will also communicate your effort on the assignment similarly. Therefore, you need to develop your writing using evidence from the text and lay out your analysis in a reasoned manner.

Instructions: 1. Brainstorm your ideas and do research on the topic

1. Compose an annotated bibliography of four sources and draft an essay on one of the prompts below
2. Submit the annotated bibliography and research materials to develop essay further
4. Peer review the essay with your classmates (or take it to the SVWC for tutoring help or use the Smarthinking resource on Blackboard)
5. Revise the draft to address their feedback.

Directions:

1. Brainstorm and outline: Before choosing your topic, you should consider what you want to write about. Once you have chosen your topic, you should decide where you stand on the issue.

2. Writing: Present your points in a way that convinces the reader that your analysis is valid. Remember, this essay should have a specific, detailed, thesis statement. It should use topic sentences to anchor each paragraph and evidenced-based exposition to layout the point and communicate your thinking to your reader/instructor.

3. Reviewing and editing: You will draft an essay for peer review. To proceed with this process, you must initially do a review in class using the peer review sheets provided and through the Smith Vidal Literacy and Language Center.

4. Finishing up and reflecting on the process: You will, finally, edit your essay based on the feedback and reflect on your writing process (refer to the “**An Essay In Three Drafts**”).

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Prompts:

1. On March 18, 2008, Sen. Barack Obama, a candidate for president, gave a speech entitled “A More Perfect Union” at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In his speech, Sen. Obama called for a national conversation on race relations in the United States and throughout the world. The title of the speech, A More Perfect Union, was taken from a line in the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution. **Write a 7-paragraph essay that argues for or against the idea that there is a need in this nation for a national conversation on race relations. Make use of Obama’s speech “A More Perfect Union” and 3 outside sources to support your argument.**
2. Senator Barack Obama delivered on March 18, 2008, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, his speech, A More Perfect Union. He was in the midst of campaigning against Hillary Clinton and other Democratic Party candidates for their party’s presidential nomination. In his speech, he mentions the institution of slavery as “sin.” **Write a 7-paragraph essay that argues for or against the point that slavery is responsible for how it shaped and how we understand the United States. Make use of Obama’s speech, “A More Perfect Union” and 3 outside sources to support your argument.**
3. Senator Barack Obama maintains that by moving beyond America’s “racial stalemate” and addressing shared social problems which are consequences of the past, we could achieve “a more perfect union.” **Write a 7-paragraph essay that argues for or against Senator Obama’s position. Make use of Obama’s speech and 3 outside sources to support your position.**

Due Dates:

Annotated Bibliography – Monday, November 28

Rough Draft – Wednesday, November 30

Peer Review - Thursday, December 1 (T/TH) and Friday, December 2 (MWF)

Final Draft – Sunday, December 4, 2022

Rubric for Argumentative Essays – English 101 (Final Grade= Sum of Points in Each Section)

Grade Rubric (in 10s)	Thesis	Organization	Content	Logic & Reasoning	Expression & Mechanics
20-17 points (Superior)	There is a well-focused Thesis Statement that introduces the essay and clearly addresses all elements of the writing prompt	The essay's organization and articulation of thesis is superior. Paragraphs are coherent and unified. Paragraphs use topic sentences, effective details and examples or supportive ideas. Paragraphs also contains effective transitions that control the flow of the essay.	The essay's content is superior in its treatment of the topic, rhetorical concepts, and prompt. It provides a coherent opposing position (or positions) and refutes them well.	The essay is sophisticated; it promotes critical thinking, displays sound logic and reasoning, and dispels rudimentary or simplistic understanding.	Sentence structure and word choice are clear and appropriate for the intended audience. The essay demonstrates mastery in grammar and mechanics. The essay does not contain mechanical errors.
16-15 points (Proficient)	The essay has a thesis that adequately addressing the writing prompt.	The essay is well organized and connects to the thesis. The paragraphs display coherence. Paragraphs use topic sentences, effective details and examples or supportive ideas. Paragraphs also uses transitions to control the flow of the essay.	The essay's content is appropriate in its treatment of the topic, rhetorical concepts, and prompt. It provides a coherent opposing position (or positions) and refutes them well.	The essay mostly promotes critical thinking, ideas logic and reasoning appropriately. Examples support the claims and the topic shows evidence of some research.	Sentence structure and word choice are clear and address an appropriate audience. The essay demonstrates control over grammar and mechanics. The essay does not contain major mechanical errors.
14-13 points (Competent)	The essay somewhat does have a thesis statement that only partially addresses the prompt.	The essay is competently organized. The paragraphs are somewhat coherent or unified. Paragraphs use topic sentences, effective details and examples or supportive ideas competently. Paragraphs also tries to use transitions.	The essay's content addresses the topic, rhetorical concepts, and prompt competently. It does provide an opposing position (or positions) and refutation, though /both needs improvement.	The essay mostly promotes critical thinking, ideas logic and reasoning competently. Examples support the claims and the topic shows evidence of some research, though these could all be done better.	Sentence structure and word choice are somewhat clear and addresses an audience competently. The essay demonstrates some control over grammar and mechanics. The essay also contains few mechanical errors.
12-11 points (Inadequate)	The essay contains a thesis that does not adequately address the prompt.	The essay is disorganized. The paragraphs are incoherent and lack unity. Paragraphs do not use topic sentences, details, and examples or supporting ideas adequately. There is no use of transitions.	The essay's content is inadequate and does not address the topic, rhetorical concepts, or prompt. It does not provide an opposing position or refutation.	The ideas are illogical or are not adequately developed. The essay displays rudimentary or simplistic ideas. Examples do not support the claims or need more specific development.	Sentence structure and diction are not clear and do not fully address an intended audience. The essay displays a lack of control over grammar and mechanics and contains numerous mechanical errors.
10 – 0 points (Unsatisfactory)	The essay does not contain a thesis addressing the prompt.	The essay is extremely disorganized. The essay contains incoherent paragraphs and lacks any satisfactory use of details, transitions, or examples.	The essay's content is off topic and does not address the prompt satisfactory.	The ideas are illogical and undeveloped. The essay does not display analytical or critical thinking skills.	Sentence structure diction, word choice, and tone consistently detract from the readability of the essay. The essay displays little control over mechanics.

