

Argumentative Essay

Learning Objectives: to demonstrate the ability 1) to write a clear, focused and detailed argument that asserts a thesis claim, supports it with evidence, and incorporates counterargument, 2) to use effective quoting practices, 3) to locate and incorporate two or more books and/or articles through the Dean databases, 4) to cite and format according to MLA guidelines, and 5) to edit carefully for correctness.

Assignment Requirements:

- 1,250+ words
- MLA citations, works cited and formatting required

The argumentative essay is at least 5 pages and presents your viewpoint while supporting it with evidence and addressing counterarguments. You must quote from at least 2 or more readings.

Holistic Grading Criteria (greyed material should not be altered)

Criteria
A Essay • Introduction has a clear thesis claim, body supports that claim with evidence and discussion, strong counterargument is included in an effective position, conclusion is thoughtful and original. • Writer stays focused on the thesis idea for the whole paper and never shoots off on tangents or repeat unnecessarily. • Paragraphs are focused on a single idea, always use topic sentences and transitional language to explain relationships between paragraphs when needed. • Essay is rich with details and examples, and vague language is always avoided. • Quotes are carefully introduced to clarify who is speaking, correctly punctuated, and followed up by commentary by the writer. • Writer always correctly uses MLA in-text citations to give credit to source material. • Source material is excellent, reliable and authoritative, written by an expert in the field. • Paper follows all standard MLA formatting guidelines for header, page numbers, title, spacing and margins. • Paper demonstrates excellent editing. There are no more than 2 or more types of grammatical or mechanical errors or combination thereof per page. • Paper meets or exceeds length requirements.
B Essay • Introduction has a thesis claim, body supports that claim with evidence and discussion, counterargument is included at some point, and writer may offer a simple, summary conclusion. • Writer stays focused on a single main idea for the whole paper and usually does not shoot off on tangents or repeat unnecessarily. • Paragraphs are usually focused on a single idea and usually use topic sentences and transitional language to explain relationships between paragraphs when needed. • Essay uses details and examples, and vague language is usually avoided. • Quotes are usually introduced to clarify who is speaking, mostly punctuated correctly, and usually followed up by commentary from the writer. • Writer correctly uses MLA in-text citations to give credit to source material most of the time. • Source material is very good and reliable, written by an expert in the field. • Paper follows most standard MLA formatting guidelines for header, page numbers, title, spacing and margins • Paper demonstrates reasonable editing. There are no more than 5 types of grammatical or mechanical errors or combination thereof per page. • Paper meets or exceeds length requirements
C Essay • Introduction may struggle to clarify a single, thesis idea. The body may not always develop and elaborate on thesis idea main idea. Counterargument may not be adequately addressed. Conclusion may be absent or repeat language used earlier in the paper. • Writer may not successfully stay focused on a single main idea for the whole paper, and may sometimes repeat or shoot off on tangents.

- Paragraphs sometimes cover multiple ideas and sometimes fail to use topic sentences and transitional language to explain relationships between paragraphs even when they are needed.
- Quotes are sometimes not introduced at all, punctuation is often incorrect, and commentary after the quotes may be missing. Paragraphs may begin with unintroduced quotes or end with a quote that is not explained.
- In-text citations are sometimes missing or incorrectly used. The wrong information may appear in parenthetical citations. Paragraphs may end in one ambiguous citation.
- Essay is sometimes vague and general and may fail to provide enough details and examples in some places.
- Source material, while not obviously lying, may simplify issues and be directed at a casual popular audience, or have a commercial purpose that compromises its quality, or is written by a non-expert.
- Paper follows many standard MLA formatting guidelines for header, page numbers, title, spacing and margins
- Paper demonstrates troubled editing. (There are 6- 8 or more types of grammatical or mechanical errors or combination thereof per page).
- Paper barely meets length requirement or falls slightly short.

D Essay

- Introduction does not clearly indicate with the paper is about, body wanders from idea to idea without a unifying theme, counterargument is absent, writer avoids a conclusion or repeats earlier language.
- Writer is unable to focus on a single main idea for the whole paper and shoots off on tangents and/or repeats unnecessarily.
- Paragraphs are unfocused and fail to use topic sentences and transitional language to explain relationships between paragraphs even when they are needed.
- Essay is general and vague and includes few if any details or examples.
- Quotes are incomplete, inaccurate, rarely if ever introduced, poorly punctuated and rarely if ever commented upon.
- In text citations are often missing or incorrect.
- Source material is inappropriate for college writing.
- Paper does not follow many standard MLA formatting guidelines for header, page numbers, title, spacing and margins.
- Paper demonstrates distracting editing. There are 8 or more types of grammatical or mechanical errors or combination thereof per page.
- Paper fails to meet length requirements.

F Essay (Zero Grade)

- Writer does not do the assigned task and hands in something completely off task.
- Writer does not hand in the assignment at all.
- Writing is incomprehensible due to confusing sentence structure, exceptionally poor editing or both.
- Paper is partially or wholly plagiarized.

Comments and Grade: