

Essay Prompt and Guidance

Evaluation Essay

Length: At least 3000 words

Sources: At least 10 sources

Final Draft Due: Wednesday, 3/25 (11:59 PM)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this paper is to **evaluate** the argument presented in the article:

How Effective Is Social Media Activism?

Erin Lee (402)

Whenever you evaluate someone's argument, you must follow a few criteria before you agree or disagree with the writer. In addition, you may agree with some claims the writer makes and disagree with others. The problem is that sometimes, readers will say that because they disagree with one claim a writer has made, the entire argument is bogus. That's unfair because there's usually something we can agree on, and as far as solving our problems is concerned, we've to start with those issues that we agree on before we can move on to more complex disagreements that divide us.

I've provided below the organization of your paper, so please try to follow it.

Organization of Paper

1) Introduction and thesis: In the introduction, you should tell the reader why is the issue you are writing about an important one. Why should we care about the problem that the writer is analyzing? The goal should be to convince the reader that the issue is worth thinking about seriously.

At the end of the introduction, you should provide your position regarding the writers' position. Here's an example:

Though income inequality has been on the rise since the 80s, there is considerable debate about the causes and consequences. X argues that.....I agree with X that the government needs to legislate policies to mitigate the effects of rising inequality, but I

disagree with both his analysis of the causes and his solutions. I would argue that a better way to ameliorate the effects of rising income inequality is to do A or B.

Avoid using cliched language such as good and bad and important. Be specific about what you agree with and what you disagree with.

2) Next, you should summarize the writer's position in a few paragraph. Tell the reader, in your own words, what his or her larger argument is.

X's main point is that A is caused by B. And summarize the logic of his argument. Pay attention to how the argument is organized. Evaluate rhetorical strategies and ask yourself whether the strategies are effective.

3) Next, you should evaluate FIVE major claims that the writer makes to argue his or her position. In order to evaluate the argument, you should first tell us what the claims are and then find evidence to support or challenge those claims.

Here's a way you could organize this section:

To support his position, X makes numerous argumentative claims that need to be evaluated. One of the claims s/he makes is that A is caused by B. Many economists would disagree with this claim. According to Y, 75% of those who are poor have at most a high school diploma or physical or mental disabilities that prevent them from getting or keeping a job (citation). It's naive to blame the wealthy for the institutional problems...

Organize your evaluation of claims into different paragraphs like the following:

Paragraph 1:

Claim 1

Evaluation

Paragraph 2:

Claim 2

Evaluation 2

And so on.

You WILL need to find evidence to support some of the writer's claims and reject others. Whatever the case, make sure to use evidence to support your evaluation and cite your sources.

4) In the last part of your essay, you should argue how the argument can be improved: what evidence or claims would make the argument stronger. Provide constructive criticism.

You're free to write as many paragraphs as you want but please make sure to edit your paper thoroughly for grammar and syntax errors.

More Guidance About Paper: What you should not do.

- 1) Please do not use the second person **You** in formal writing.
- 2) Do not use pros, cons, good, bad, or interesting when writing formally. Avoid cliched language.
- 3) Do not use personal experience as evidence to support your claim. This does not mean that your experience is not valuable, but just that the purpose of research is to give objective data that is true for not just an individual, but for millions.
- 4) Please edit thoroughly for grammar and syntax errors. Use **Grammarly** to isolate errors you may have missed.
- 5) When you make a claim, please look for factual/statistical evidence that supports or challenges. It's not enough to just say that A is caused by B. Support the connection by providing evidence.

Here's an example:

John Doe has argued that growing screen time among children is the primary reason for growing anxiety among children between the ages of 10 and 16 (page 12, paragraph 3). What he ignores in making this claim is that there is just as much evidence that shy and anxious children tend to use social media as tools to empower themselves or to reduce their anxiety. According to the National Institute of Mental Illness, 65% of children who have been diagnosed with anxiety also suffer from social phobias (citation)

So, don't just make a claim; support or challenge it with evidence.