

Essay 3: Presenting an Argument

Your Assignment

For your third essay, you will begin with a starting question related to one of the essays found in the “Readings” folder in *Assignment Resources* or the “Science-y Articles” folder in *Web Links* on our class website. Your starting question should be a real question you’d like to research, and it should also be debatable (yielding more than one potential answer).

To complete this assignment you should (1) decide which issue you want to focus on, (2) develop a *narrow* starting question that you want to research, (3) conduct your research, (4) develop an argumentative claim (which will be the answer to your starting question), and (5) communicate your researched argument in an essay that integrates evidence from 3-4 sources, at least one of which cannot be given to you as part of class. At least one source must be presented as a paraphrase.

Other Considerations

1. Considering your audience is crucial in argumentation. In the early part of your essay, you must identify the controversy for your reader and clearly state the claim (thesis) that you will be supporting.
2. You need to acknowledge and respond to at least 1 opposing point of view somewhere in your essay.
3. Generally, you will want to organize your essay so that you end the body of your paper with the strongest evidence in favor of your position.
4. The sources that you select must be credible and current (avoid types of sources that our class discussion has suggested are unreliable). Get help from Donna or a Chemeketa librarian if you are having difficulty in locating suitable sources on your topic. Your Annotated Bibliography assignment should help you select sources as well.
5. Appeals to logic will be crucial in this paper; think about the connections between your claim and your support. Consider whether the assumptions you are making will be accepted by a reader who disagrees with your position.
6. You should write this essay for an adult reader who may not agree with the position you are taking on the issue. For this reason, consider your word choice carefully in order to present your position clearly without treating opposing views disrespectfully. You do not want to alienate members of your audience. Think about both ethos (your credibility) and pathos (appeals to emotion.)

Finally

Your paper should be 4-6 pages in length, double-spaced, 12-point font. It should also be thoroughly and accurately documented using MLA (or APA) style.

Essay #3: A Basic Structure for your Argument

Introduction:

- Introduce the reader to your controversial topic
- State your claim (thesis) clearly
- Use forecasting: Give the reader a sense of what's to come in the rest of the paper

Body Paragraphs:

- Include at least 3 reliable sources of information about the issue. These should be sources that helped you to answer your research question
- Include 1 opposing position on the issue—and as much as possible, address the concerns raised
- For each source used, you should do the following:
 - introduce the author of the quote and explain why he or she is a reliable source or worth paying attention to
 - give any needed background or context information that might help a reader make sense of the quote
 - summarize, paraphrase, or quote its main ideas (plus supporting ideas and key details as needed)
 - analyze each source-- What is important about it? What are its weaknesses? How does it connect to the other sources you've used? How does it connect to your thesis? Etc.
- Each paragraph should have a clear topic sentence
- Transitions should be used between major topic shifts

Conclusion:

- Sum up the main points of your essay
- Restate your thesis
- Discuss the implications of your ideas for the reader—leave the reader with a clear statement about what he/she should do/feel/think as a result of reading your argument

Documentation:

- Include precise in-text citations (as needed) that match up to your Works Cited list
- Use correct MLA formatting throughout the essay