

Persuasive Essay (“Word Power”)  
English 11 (N. Ristau)  
SOL: 11.6A-F (Rough Draft); 11.6G-H (Final Copy)

**Purpose:** Persuasive writing, also known as the **argument essay**, utilizes logic and reason to show that one idea is more legitimate than another idea. It attempts to persuade a reader to adopt a certain point of view or to take a particular action. The argument must always use sound reasoning and solid evidence by stating facts, giving logical reasons, using examples, and quoting experts.

**Deadlines & Point Totals:**

1. Rough Draft is due on Friday, January 28, 2022 (50 points).
2. Final Copy is due on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 (100 points).

**Writing Situation:** Choose **another** one of the Persuasive prompts on your *End-of-Course Writing Prompts* sheet that you would like to rally for (pro) or to rally against (con). No matter which side you choose to rally for or against, **YOU MUST ALSO ADDRESS THE COUNTERARGUMENT**. Follow the directions listed below to guide you in the development of your essay.

**Writing Convention Standards**

For this task, students will write a persuasive essay that will:

- a. have a clear thesis statement (topic sentence) that expresses knowledgeable judgment.
- b. differentiate between fact and opinion.
- c. present detailed evidence, examples, and reasoning to support arguments.
- d. present support in an effective order.
- e. anticipate and answer reader concerns and counterarguments.
- f. support the judgment with devices such as analogies, comparisons, and quotations.
- g. be organized with a well-crafted lead/introduction, body paragraphs (3), and an effective conclusion.
- h. demonstrate appropriate sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

**Essay Set-Up**

**Introduction:**

\*Immediately engage the reader (**attention getter**)  
~get the reader “in the ballpark”

\*Strong & complete **thesis statement** (**can be anywhere in the first paragraph**)

\*Establish **context** (topic of essay)  
~usually 2-3 sentences narrowing down to the point of the paper  
~cite your source with title and/or author

**Body: (minimum of three paragraphs)**

\*Begin paragraphs with a clear, concise **topic sentence**

~Use **concrete details (CD)**

~these include facts or quotes

~cite sources when necessary (simplified: such as author's last name & pg #)

~Create insightful **commentary** to support concrete details (2-3 comments per CD)

~shoot for at least 2 CD per paragraph (+ commentary)

\*Address a **counterargument**

~include a rebuttal defending your thesis (which includes CD and commentary)

### **Conclusion:**

\*Transition into summary of key points

~Restate thesis (say it another way!)

~**Refer back to the attention getter and tie things up**

\*Answer "So what?"

~Leave the reader feeling persuaded or at least challenged

~This personal comment can include a universal observation (a prediction) or a call to action (a recommendation).

**NOTE:** You need to adhere to the following requirements as you put your essay together:

1. You **may use "I"** in your essay, as this is an essay in which you are providing your call to action or recommendation(s).
2. **Limit the use of contractions ("didn't" for "did not") UNLESS part of a direct quotation.**
3. Watch your **subject-verb agreement**; this must agree in number.
4. Watch your **pronoun-antecedent (noun being referred to) agreement**; this must agree in gender and number.
5. Be sure to provide a **creative title** for your essay. (**Hook your reader.**)
6. Each paragraph needs to have a **minimum** of four-five sentences, complete with proper capitalization and punctuation. If you can, try for a total of six to seven sentences per paragraph.
7. Watch your use of loaded language, bias, and stereotyping when you are writing your Conclusion; draw your conclusion and opinion based upon the facts presented.

#### **Suggested sentence starter for commentary:**

"This shows that..."

\_\_\_\_\_..."

"This proves that..."

\_\_\_\_\_..."

"This demonstrates that..."

#### **Suggested sentence starters for conclusion:**

"We need to..."

"It is **our** responsibility to ..."

"It is important to..."

"In order to \_\_\_\_\_, **we** must..."

"It would be to **our** benefit to..."

#### **Suggested sentence starters for counter:**

"On the other hand, some people believe

"One may argue \_\_\_\_\_; however,

#### **Do Throughout:**

\*Incorporate transitions

\*Use high-level vocabulary

\*Vary sentence patterns

\*Create a strong "voice"

\*Show a logical argument throughout