

PERSUASIVE ESSAY MINI-RESEARCH PROJECT
{SOL: 10.6A-G; 10.8A-F}

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.

Task: Your job is to persuade your audience to adopt your position or stance regarding your chosen topic (see attached list) that you feel show be changed or improved. Your position should be made eminently clear as either pro (for) or con (against) and must be supported with evidence from the sources that you have located.

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).**

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, _____...”

Encourage:

*Incorporate transitions
*Use high-level vocabulary
*Vary sentence patterns
*Create a strong “voice”
*Show a logical argument throughout

GUIDING RULES FOR MECHANICS & REQUIREMENTS

- You **may use “I”** in your essay, as this is an essay in which you are providing your call to action or recommendation(s).
- **Avoid the use of contractions** (“didn’t” for “did not”) UNLESS part of a direct quotation.
- **Watch your subject-verb agreement**; this must agree in number (singular subjects need singular verbs; plural subjects need plural verbs).
- **Watch your pronoun-antecedent (noun being referred to) agreement**; this must agree in gender and number (**Example: Annie’s book = her book** {singular & feminine})
- Be sure to provide a **creative title** for your essay.
- **Each paragraph needs to have a minimum of five sentences**, complete with proper capitalization and punctuation. If you can, try for a total of six to seven sentences per paragraph.
- **YOU MUST USE A MINIMUM OF TWO SOURCES TO SUPPORT THE EVIDENCE YOU HAVE PRESENTED; THESE MUST BE NOTED IN THE TEXT OF THE PAPER AS IN-TEXT DOCUMENTATION, WHERE NECESSARY, AND YOU MUST ALSO INCLUDE A WORKS CITED PAGE AT THE END OF THE TEXT OF YOUR PAPER ON A SEPARATE SHEET.**



Prewriting: Using the **Thesis-Outline model**, list specific reasons (evidence) as to why you are recommending a change to the chosen proposal or its specifics. Include support, yours and others, for your reasons so that the person who is reading your essay understands the importance of what you are proposing. Then, organize the details into a sequence. **Your prewriting is due on April 16, 2021 and is worth 30 points.**

Drafting: Use your **Outline as the basis for drafting your essay**. Your essay needs to be a **minimum of five paragraphs**. Add supporting details that will support why you believe your proposal needs to be seriously considered; also consider actions a person has taken in the past that you may not agree with wholeheartedly. **Your rough draft is due on April 23, 2021 and is worth 50 points.**

Revising: As we will be **using Google Docs (Classroom Google)**, via the **Chrome Books**, once your essay has been reviewed, you may begin revisions on it. **Your final copy is due on April 28, 2021 and is worth 100 points.**

Persuasive Mini-Research Paper Topic Choices

1. Some people believe that students should be required to take a music, a drama, or an art class. Should students be required to take a class in the arts, or should such classes be electives? Take a position on this issue. Use reasons and specific examples to support your position.
2. Some states have now made it illegal to drive while using a hand-held cell phone. Do you agree or disagree with this law? Why or why not? Take a position on the issue and support your response with reasons and examples.
3. Many schools require students to participate in volunteer programs in their communities as a requirement for graduation. However, some people feel that requiring students to volunteer defeats the purpose of volunteering. Do you think students should be required to volunteer in their communities to receive their high school diplomas? Take a position on this issue. Support your response with reasons and specific examples.
4. Technology allows people to complete many tasks without having contact with others. People can check out books, shop, and play games without speaking to another person. Has the limitation of human contact due to the use of technology had positive or negative effects on people's lives? Take a position on this question. Support your response with reasons and specific examples.
5. Many people feel that American society is too competitive. Does competition lead to better products and results, or does it lead to a focus on winning at all costs? Is fierce competition a good idea or bad idea? Take a position on the issue. Support your response with reasons and examples.