**English 10H**

**Argumentative Research Paper**

**Preparation Packet**

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Name

The argumentative research paper combines many of the skills we have learned this year:

* Looking at multiple sides of an issue, analyzing the information, and choosing which side you feel is worth arguing.
* Creating a logical argument composed of a claim supported by reasons and evidence.
* Acknowledging and responding to a counterargument.
* Creating a well-structured paper with an effective introduction, well-developed body paragraphs, smooth transitions, and an effective conclusion.

In addition, we will learn a few new skills such as effectively researching an issue by finding relevant, credible sources; citing multiple sources in our writing; and smoothly integrating evidence from these sources into our writing.

**Due Dates:**

* Part A: Choosing a Topic – Due April 22
* Part B: Gathering Information – Due April 30
* Part C: Outlining your Argument – Due May 4

**Possible Research Starting Topics**

**(A Very Incomplete List to Get You Starting to Think)**

**Crime and Punishment**

Death Penalty/Capital Punishment

Discrimination in Criminal Justice

Jury System

Juvenile Delinquency

Racial Profiling

Treatment of Prisoners

Convicted Felons

Gangs

Hate Crimes

Animal Cruelty

Human Trafficking

Domestic Terrorism

Internment

Bioterrorism

Human Smuggling

Drug Legalization

Torture

Marijuana Legalization

Drug Testing

War on Drugs

Holocaust Denial

**Health and Beauty**

Food Safety

Junk Food Tax

Herbal Supplements

Local Food Movement

Mental Depression

Mental Health Insurance

Suicide

Beauty Pageants

Plastic Surgery

Tanning Salons

Teens and Cosmetic Surgery

Obesity

**Home and Family**

Child Abuse

Domestic Violence

Divorce

Child Care

Polygamy

Single Parents

Work and Family

International Adoption

Parentage, Adoptees Right to Know

Interfaith Marriage

**Individual Rights and Liberties**

Child Labor

Women’s Rights

Women in the Military

Curfew

Privacy Rights for Teenagers

Teens and Driving

Underage Drinking

Voting Age

Consumer Privacy

Identity Cards

Privacy in Schools

National Security and Privacy

Privacy in the Workplace

Technology and Privacy

Filtering Software

Banned Books

Second Amendment and the Right to Bear Arms

First Amendment and Censorship

Arts Censorship

Internet Censorship

Journalism and School Censorship

Student Expression and School Discipline

Rights of Islamic Fundamentalists

Religion in the Public Sphere

Rights of Non-Mainstream Religions

Military Recruiting

**Media and Technology**

Downloading

Music Lyrics

Violence in Mass Media

Advertising in Schools

Privacy and the Press

Advertising and Children

Internet and Mobile Advertising

Cyberbullying

Children’s Online Protection Laws

Identity Theft

**Politics and Economics**

Economic Inequality

Health Care Reform

Homelessness

Minimum Wage

Business Ethics

Internet Gambling

Sweatshops

State Lotteries

Jobs for Immigrants

Tax Exemptions for Religious Organizations

United Nations

Targeted Strikes

War on Terror

**School and Education**

Cheating

Educational Tests and Measurements

School Prayer

Single-Gender Schools/Classrooms

Homeschooling

Bullying

School Discipline and Corporal Punishment

School Shootings

School Uniforms

Zero-Tolerance Policies

Gun Safety

**Science and Medicine**

Genetic Engineering

Human Cloning

Organ Donation

Genetic Testing

Overpopulation

Water Use

Recycling

Global Warming

Energy Conservation

**Sports**

Sports for Children

Doping in Sports

Mixed Martial Arts/Ultimate Fighting

Controversial Mascots

**Part A: Choosing a Research Question**

**Objective: Pick a research question that addresses one of the following relationships:**

* The tension between communities and individuals
* The interaction between public and private life
* The relationship between misdeeds and consequences

**Step 1: Do preliminary research of possible topics to identify interesting issues.**

When you are interested in a subject, research is more enjoyable and your writing is usually better. Begin your research process by doing preliminary research of several possible topics to discover what issues are currently being debated and investigated.

Use the library’s databases to discover what issues people are currently debating and investigating for each topic. Here are 3 databases available in the LPHS library that will help you find interesting topics:

**2014-15 LIBRARY DATABASE PASSWORDS**

LPHS Library website: http://lphsmedia.blogspot.com/

***Opposing Viewpoints:*** Go to the library website’s Student Tools tab. Click on Pioneer link that has (Opposing Viewpoints) by it. Click on Opposing Viewpoints.

**Username: pioneer**

**Password: discover**

***SIRS Issue Researcher:*** Go to http://sks.sirs.com

**Username: IWU7P6SM**

**Password: 98GPQWGQ8U**

***Pros & Cons of Controversial Issues:*** Go to procon.org.

Pick 3 topicsthat you would like to consider. Answer the following questions for each topic. In order to answer these questions you will have to do some light reading on the topic. Read through the summaries of various articles (you do not necessarily need to read entire articles).

**Topic#1:**

a. What do you already know about this topic?

b. What are some disagreements people have about this topic? (2 minimum)

c. What is something you don’t understand about this topic?

d. Why would you want to learn more about this topic?

**Topic#2:**

a. What do you already know about this topic?

b. What are some disagreements people have about this topic? (2 minimum)

c. What is something you don’t understand about this topic?

d. Why would you want to learn more about this topic?

**Topic#3:**

a. What do you already know about this topic?

b. What are some disagreements people have about this topic? (2 minimum)

c. What is something you don’t understand about this topic?

d. Why would you want to learn more about this topic?

**Step 2: Make a Choice**

After looking at a few topics and related issues, what is the topic that you want to research for your research paper?

**My Research Topic Choice:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Step 3: Formulate a research question.**

In order for this assignment to work well, you must go into your research with some type of question. You simply can’t start researching “Gun control.” Instead, you must ask “Why do some people think gun control is necessary?” or “How does gun control affect my constitutional rights?” Picking a focus question (or in some cases two questions) allows you to focus your research rather than feel lost in the broad topic you’ve chosen.

*Just so you know, sometimes a focus question can change as you research. You might read something that changes the direction you wish to go. If this happens, go with it! That is part of the research process.*

What is your focus question? *Please write it below and check it off with me.*

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**Part B: Gathering Information**

You have now picked a topic for your argumentative research paper. It is now time to spend time researching your topic so that you can, after a few days of researching, make a claim regarding your topic. Remember your claim is another word for your argument or your thesis statement for the argumentative research paper.

**Research Requirements**

**Step 1: Read and collect ideas from a variety of sources.**

Read and annotate at least 4 sources (including 2 article sources, 1 book source, and at least 1 opposing viewpoint, which can be from either a book or an article). Pass your annotations off with me when completed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Type | Title of source |
| Book |  |
| Article 1 |  |
| Article 2 |  |
| OpposingView |  |

**Instructions for online articles:**

Annotate your articles either by printing them off or by making notes on an electronic copy. Annotate for two things:

* Write the main idea of each paragraph in the margins of the article.
* Identify and analyze quotes that you could potentially use in your final paper.

**Instructions for book sources:**

Write at least one page of notes including summary of main ideas and potential quotes you might use in your paper.

**Step 2: Record MLA citations for your sources.**

It is important to keep track of your sources as you research. By doing so, it will be easy later to create the Works Cited page of your paper. Write down the correctly formatted MLA citation for each source, either on this page or on a separate electronic document. Check it off with me at the same time you check off your annotations

There are many resources to help you create MLA-formatted citations. One easy-to-use tool is available on our library’s website:

http://www.easybib.com.

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**Part C: Outlining Your Argument**

Writing an outline is an important part of the writing process. An outline will help keep you focused as you write your argumentative research paper. It will make the writing process easier.

**Introduction Paragraph**

Hook: W*hat type of hook do you want to use? A shocking statistic? A quote? A short, anecdotal story?*

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Background Info: B*riefly explain the problem you are going to write about. Remember you aren’t getting into your argument yet. I shouldn’t know which solution you are arguing for until I get to your thesis.*

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Significance of Issue: *You should show why this paper needs to be written. What is being debated, is not resolved, or is not yet fully understood?*

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Thesis: You should build a thesis for this paper by combining a clear statement of your own claim with an acknowledgement or concession of a counterclaim or qualifier.

Examples:

* Although some people think that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in reality \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_ is clearly the right choice despite the understandable concerns about \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* In order to best meet the needs of \_\_\_\_, the best solution will be to \_\_\_\_\_\_ .

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**Body Paragraph #1**

Reason —*the first reason you are making to support your big claim (thesis)*

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Evidence—*Which quotes from your sources do you think would effectively support this reason?*

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Explain— *Why does this evidence prove your claim? (Remember, explanation and analysis usually takes several sentences. Make sure your reader understands the evidence in the way you want them to.)*

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**Body Paragraph #2**

Reason —*the second reason you are making to support your big claim (thesis)*

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Evidence—*Which quotes from your sources do you think would effectively support this reason?*

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Explain— *Why does this evidence prove your claim? (Remember, explanation and analysis usually takes several sentences. Make sure your reader understands the evidence in the way you want them to.)*

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**Body Paragraph #3**

Reason —*the third reason you are making to support your big claim (thesis)*

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Evidence—*Which quotes from your sources do you think would effectively support this reason?*

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Explain— *Why does this evidence prove your claim? (Remember, explanation and analysis usually takes several sentences. Make sure your reader understands the evidence in the way you want them to.)*

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**Concession Paragraph(s): Overcoming Opposition**

Part of your paper should address the other side’s argument. The reader must have a clear idea of what the other side argues. Then, you must explain in this paragraph why your side is better. You must logically explain why.

You want to begin your concession paragraph stating the other side’s argument. Next, analyze/critique the argument. Explain why your argument “trumps” their argument. Use logic when explaining why your side is the better option. Avoid logical fallacies.

Counterargument — *Why would people disagree with you? (To appear fair and unbiased, you should present an impartial portrayal of your opposition. Acknowledge their strongest arguments.)*

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Rebuttal — *How will you handle this disagreement? Why is this counterargument wrong or less convincing than the argument you are presenting?*

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**Conclusion**

Your conclusion should answer the question “So what?” Show your readers why this paper was important, meaningful, and useful. Give your readers something to think about, such as how to apply the paper to their lives or how to use your paper in the “real world.”

Possible strategies for a conclusion:

1. **Echoing the introduction.** Echoing your introduction can be a good strategy to bring the readers full circle. If you begin by describing a scenario, you can end with the same scenario as proof that your paper was helpful in creating a new understanding.
2. **Challenging the reader.** By issuing a challenge to your readers, you are helping them to redirect the information in the paper, and they may apply it to their own lives.
3. **Looking to the future.** Looking to the future can emphasize the importance of your paper and redirect the readers’ thought processes. It may help them apply the new information to their lives or see things more globally.

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