

Persuasive Essay Assignment Description

Details:

- **All Papers Should be in MLA format**
- Must be **5-6 pages** long (that means a **full 5 pages** not including your Works Cited page)
- You **MUST** use **at least five sources for this paper.**
- Make sure you include a Works Cited page for all sources used, and that you have parenthetical (in-text) citations throughout the paper where source information is used. **Students cannot pass this essay without including in-text citations and a Works Cited page.**
- Block quotations are not allowed—you must learn to break down, paraphrase, and incorporate source material.
- Should be formatted as a **Microsoft Word document** (you can get Office for free)
- Due by 11:59 p.m. on the date listed in the syllabus.
- Worth 200 points.

Explanation:

For this assignment, you will compose a **5-6 page** essay where you make a researched, supported argument for your opinion on a contemporary issue that you are passionate about. I recommend looking through the list of issues present on the *Opposing Viewpoints, Issues and Controversies*, and *ProCon* databases for potential ideas. These databases can be accessed through the Composition I Library Guide in Blackboard under the Persuasive Essay tab at the top of the Library Guide home page. Please note you may be required to use Remote Desktop to access some of these databases at home.

DO NOT pick a hot-button topic that you **cannot be objective about**. To craft a good argument, you need to be able to at least acknowledge and understand the opposing point of view to argue against it. A counterargument paragraph is required for this essay.

Your job is to **approach the issue objectively**, provide context for the issue, and create a researched, supported argument for your opinion on the issue. This is a persuasive piece of writing, so you will be making a debatable claim about the issue in your thesis statement. You will defend your claim in your body paragraphs by creating multiple points of support for your thesis. The body paragraphs should be organized in an 8-point paragraph format.

You will not do well on this essay if you do not back up your claims with points from your sources and provide **your own commentary and analysis of the source material**. Remember, a strong balance to aim for is about 35% source material with 65% of your own commentary in the essay.

The tone of this essay should be formal. **Do not use 1st person or 2nd person point of view**. Contractions and informal language should be avoided.

For further guidance, see pp. 557-558 in Ch. 32 of *Engaging Questions*.

Checklist:

Directions: Go through the following checklist with your essay before submitting it. These are elements I will be looking at/for when I grade your essays.

- Is your essay a **full 5 pages**?
- Is your essay **no longer than 6 pages**?
- Does your essay have an original title?
- Does your essay have a thesis that states your debatable claim, and does it list your points of support?
- Is your paper logically organized? Does it follow the outline provided in Module 6?
- Do your body paragraphs back up the points you made in your thesis?
- Do your paragraphs have topic sentences?
- Do your essay's body paragraphs follow an 8-point paragraph structure?
- Do you have a counterargument paragraph before your conclusion?
- Is your essay free of block quotations?
- Does your essay use paraphrase and direct quotations? Do paraphrased sources have in-text citations as well?
- Is your paper MLA formatted?
- Does your essay have a Works Cited page?
- Are all your sources on the Works Cited page cited within your essay and vice versa?
- Does your essay avoid the first and second person as well as contractions and informal language?
- Are your sentences complete sentences?
- Are your sentences clear and concise?
- Is your paper free of any grammatical/mechanical errors?