



## UNIT 3 — TOUCHSTONE 3.2: Draft an Argumentative Research Essay

 Currently, it takes about 2-4 business days for a Touchstone to be graded.

*Touchstones are projects that illustrate your comprehension of the course material, help you refine skills, and demonstrate application of knowledge. You can work on a Touchstone anytime, but you can't submit it until you have completed the unit's Challenges. Once you've submitted a Touchstone, it will be graded and counted toward your final course score.*

### Touchstone 3.2: Draft an Argumentative Research Essay

**ASSIGNMENT:** Using your outline and annotated bibliography from Touchstones 1.2 and 2.2, draft a 6-8 page argumentative research essay on your chosen topic.

As this assignment builds on *Touchstone 2.2: Create an Annotated Bibliography*, that Touchstone must be graded before you can submit your research essay draft. Although unrelated by topic, Touchstone 3.1 must also be graded before you can submit your research essay draft.

 [Sample Touchstone 3.2](#)

In order to foster learning and growth, all work you submit must be newly written specifically for this course. Any plagiarized or recycled work will result in a Plagiarism Detected alert. Review [Touchstones: Academic Integrity Guidelines](#) for more about plagiarism and the Plagiarism Detected alert. For guidance on the use of generative AI technology, review [Ethical Standards and Appropriate Use of AI](#).

## A. Assignment Guidelines

**DIRECTIONS:** Refer to the list below throughout the writing process. Do not submit your Touchstone until it meets these guidelines. Refer to the Sample Touchstone for additional guidance on structure, formatting, and citation.

### 1. Argumentative Thesis Statement

- ☐ Have you included a thesis in your introduction that includes a clear, arguable stance and supporting reasons?

## 2. Argument Development

- ☐ Are all of the details relevant to the purpose of your essay?
- ☐ Is the argument supported using persuasive rhetorical appeals and page/paragraph-numbered source material (i.e., direct quotations, paraphrasing, and summary)?
- ☐ Is your essay 6-8 pages (approximately 1500-2000 words, not including your references or reflection question responses)? If not, which details do you need to add or remove?
- ☐ Does the essay consist of at least seven paragraphs – an introduction, five body paragraphs (with at least one for the counterarguments and rebuttals), and a conclusion? Are the body paragraphs ordered logically to strengthen the argument, and do they all contain accurate evidence from credible sources?
- ☐ Do your topic sentences make original and supportable points? Do your topic sentences directly support your thesis statement?

## 3. Research

- ☐ Have you introduced, contextualized, and cited outside sources effectively using at least some direct quotation, summary, and paraphrase techniques and included page/paragraph-numbered parenthetical citations?
- ☐ Are the sources incorporated smoothly, providing the reader with signal phrases and context for the source information?
- ☐ Have you referenced a range of at least 7 credible sources, and does each source have at least one accurate in-text citation in the essay?
- ☐ Have you properly formatted your citations according to APA style guidelines?
- ☐ Have you included an APA style reference page below your essay and do the sources listed there match those cited in the essay?

## 4. Reflection

- ☐ Have you answered all reflection questions including specific and concrete examples that provide thoughtful insight in all responses?
- ☐ Are your answers included on a separate page below the main assignment?

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## B. Reflection

**DIRECTIONS:** Below your assignment, include answers to all of the following reflection questions.