

Appendix A

ENG 102 - Argument Without Sources Assignment Sheet

What is a persuasive argument without sources?

The Owl of Purdue defines a persuasive argument as, “seek[ing] to convince its readers to embrace the point-of-view presented by appealing to the audience’s reason and understanding through argument.” Most students believe that an argument cannot be valid without adequate outside research and although that is a valid assumption it is important for students to learn how to argue a side or opinion without sources well before moving on to a researched argument.

These basics of argument and persuasion are important stepping-stones that **will** prepare you to write longer, more detailed arguments. Therefore, in order to convince an **audience**, you **will** use the rhetorical strategies (ethos, pathos and logos) to create your own credibility and emotional appeals while presenting a logical and structured argument without relying on outside sources

Too often, when asked to write an argument based on sources students have difficulties coming up with a topic. Students ask the question, “what should I write about?” because they are unsure of how to start the process. With this scenario in mind, an argument without sources assignment asks to students to begin the process by writing what they know already which will lead them to fruitful searches for information later.

The assignment:

Uses strong, forceful language

Reinforces teacher’s knowledge

Using our reader as a guide, you **will** ask a “research question” for one of five broad topics. Once you form the question, you **must** then answer it. The answer **must** be arguable and you **must** stand strongly on one side or another.

Provides little room for student agency

Your claim will be based solely on your reasoned opinion and **must** be supported by reasonable arguments without using faulty logic or logical fallacies. You **will** provide two or three supportive arguments to justify your claim and **must** also address and refute an opposition/counter-claim at least once in order to create a logical and unbiased persuasive essay.

You may choose one broad topic and then peruse your reader to help you determine a question; however, you will not be permitted to use any information from the reader.

1. Media and the New Millennium
 - o Sample research question: *Are Americans too reliant on technology?*
2. Ethics and Education
 - o Sample research question: *Should universities and colleges be run as businesses?*
3. Urban Growth and Renewal
 - o Sample research question: *Does gentrification positively or negatively affect cities?*
4. Cultures and Identities
 - o Sample research question: *Has America conquered racism?*
5. Science and Nature
 - o Sample research question: *Does humanity neglect nature and focus too much on science?*

Strict parameters

Perscriptive

Little room for student choice

Formatting:

Uses small print, single-spacing, and small margins

Promotes fear and apprehension
(i.e. THIS is what academic audiences expect)

The structure of an argument without sources:

- Introduction must contain
 - A hook
 - Explanation of the topic
 - The relevance of the topic
 - Debatable thesis statement
- Supportive body paragraphs
 - Topic sentences
 - Explanations of opinions
 - Relation to the thesis
- A Counter-Claim that contains
 - A clear explanation of possible opposing opinions
 - Either a refutation (disproves completely) or concession (concedes to a point)
- A Conclusion that
 - Sums up the main ideas
 - Restates the thesis
 - Offers either a solution or call to action from the audience

The structure is definitive

Creativity is not a priority

Rewards following the rules

Evaluation:

A successful argument without sources will include **all** of the following:

- A creative "hook"
- A clear introduction to the topic and relevance
- A debatable thesis
- Topic sentences with meaningful transitions
- Support of your position with valid evidence/examples
- Inclusion of a counter-argument with either a rebuttal or concession
- A persuasive conclusion
- Body paragraph transitions to move from one point to another
- Exclusion of logical fallacies
- Properly execution of the rhetorical strategies
- Formal, academic language
- Few mechanical or grammatical errors
- An appropriate mix of 1st and 3rd person
- Correct formatting and MLA
- A page length that is 2-3 pages
- Follows the basic structure of an argument without sources

Success occurs only if each action is performed

Lists "correct" argument features

Emphasizes traditional structure

Promotes teacher or academia as audience

Requires "single, uniform ('standard'), language and modality (SLMN) (Horner and Selfe, 2013)

Points:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| • Outline | 5 points |
| • Peer Response Workshop with Rough Draft | 15 points |
| • Highlighted revisions and correct labeling | 5 points |
| • Final Draft | 75 points |

Refers to process
BUT
privileges instructor evaluation

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- | | |
|---|----------|
| • Total Possible Points for Argument w/out Research Assignment: | 100 pts. |
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Due Dates:

Peer Response Workshop with rough draft due:

Friday, September XXX

Highlighting and labeling done in class:

Monday, September XXX

Final Draft & outline due:

Monday, September XXX

Works Cited

"Effective Persuasion Presentation." *The Owl of Purdue*. The Owl of Purdue and Purdue University, 2014.