

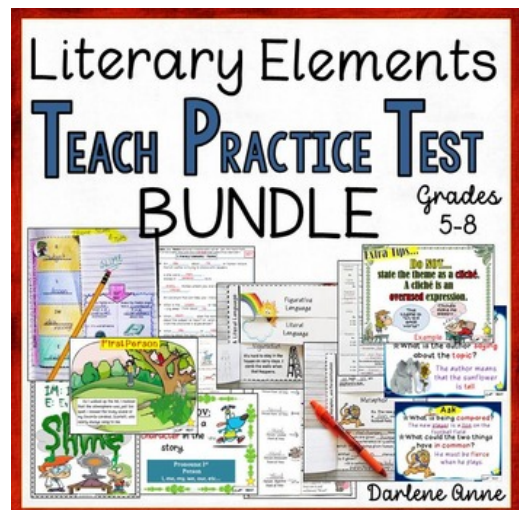
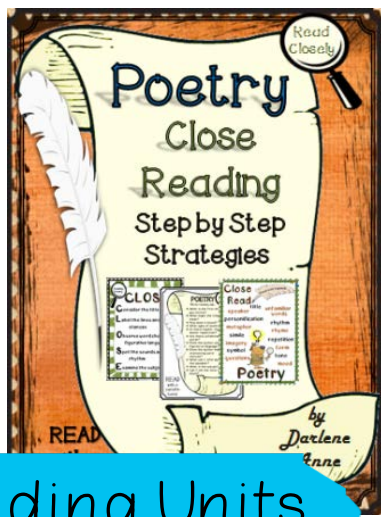
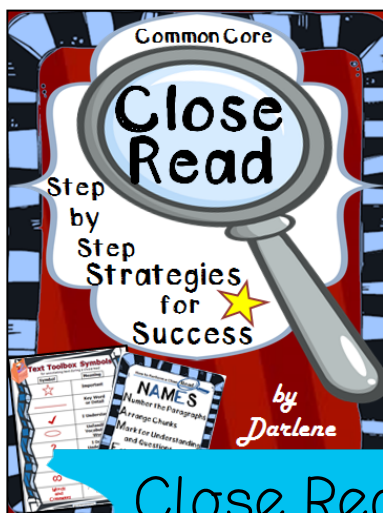
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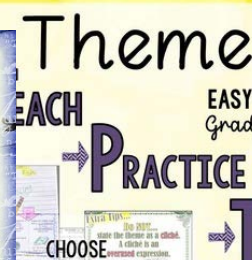
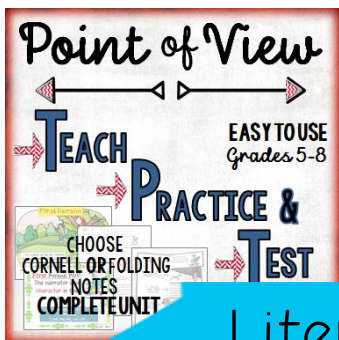
I strive to create high quality, ready-to-use resources that engage your students and save you many hours of precious time. If I've achieved my goals, please let me know [HERE](#). I use all comments and suggestions to improve existing resources and to create more of the products that YOU need!

Please contact me if you have any questions. I LOVE to hear from great teachers! In the meantime, go hang out with family and friends, because

THIS lesson is READY-TO-GO!

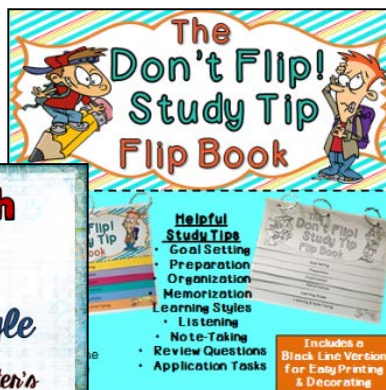
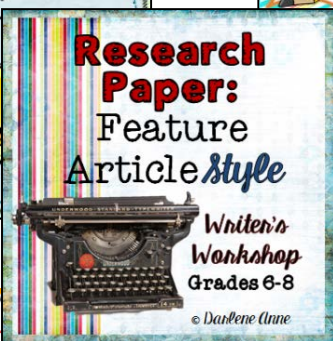
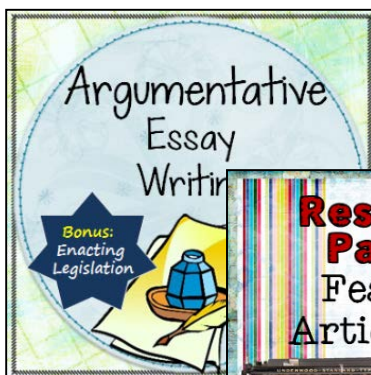


Close Reading Units

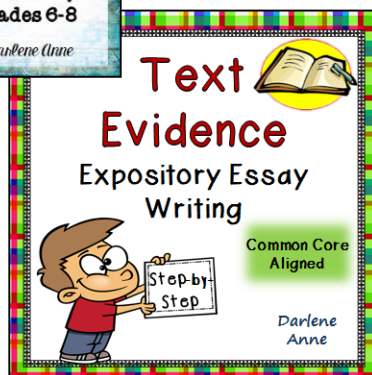
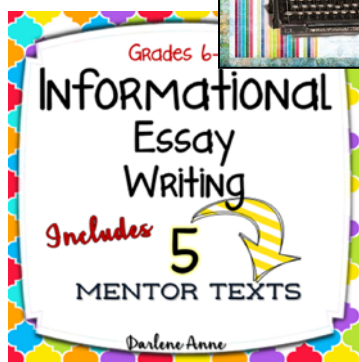


Literary Elements: PowerPoints Choice: Interactive or Cornell Notes

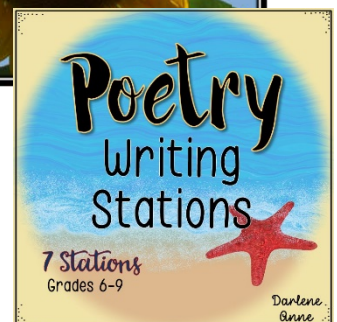
Darlene Anne



Writing Units



And
Much
More!



ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

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ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP is designed to specifically address the Common Core State Standards for ARGUMENTATIVE writing in grades 6-9. It aligns with the following Common Core Writing and Language Standards:

- W.6.1; W.6.1a-e; W.6.7; W.6.9; W.6.10
- W.7.1; W.7.1a-e; W.7.7; W.7.9; W.7.10
- W.8.1; W.8.1a-e; W.8.7; W.8.9; W.8.10
- W.9-10.1; W.9-10.1a-e; W.9-10.9; W.9-10.10

HOW TO USE THIS ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY WRITING UNIT

I use this unit as described below. It is something of a “loose” plan, instead of a schedule. I have heard from teachers who would also like a day-to-day plan, so I have included one on pages 6 & 7.

- This unit is easy to use. I’ve designed it the way I would use it in my classroom; however, you can easily make changes to suit your students’ needs.
- I start out by giving my students some quick-write journal topics for about a week prior to our argumentative unit. I pick one current event topic a day, and I ask students to express their opinion about the topic. The quick-write prompts are not included here, because there is no way I can anticipate newsworthy topics in advance. However, I have included a list of suggested topics that can be used for the quick-writes if other ideas are not available. Quick-writes get the kids thinking about what is going on the world and makes choosing a topic easier later on.
- Then I introduce the unit by starting with the essay example on page 8. You can read it aloud, and ask students what they notice about the purpose, evidence, and organization of an argumentative essay. They will be revisiting the essay on another day to label the specific parts.
- Once we have read the mentor text, I go over the argument or persuasive sheets on pages 9-10. I’ve provided you with two options, because I want you to find the one that is about a topic you think is best for your students. (Or you can use both!)
- Introduce the terminology sheet on page 11 and the organizational sheets on pages 13-16. When we finish, students are ready to revisit the mentor text and label the parts on p. 17.
- In order to really drive home the organization of the essay, pages 18-27 include a paragraph-by-paragraph essay that students can cut out like a puzzle and reassemble on the templates provided. I allow them to work with a partner. Students can assemble one paragraph at a time, but if you feel like you want to give them a real challenge, have them cut apart the entire essay, mix all of the pieces up, and then piece them all together like a giant jigsaw puzzle. Assembled, this essay will serve as another mentor text, and it is the essay that is modified for the legislation letter at the end of the unit.
- When you are ready to assign a topic, you can give students a specific topic, or you can give them the list on page 31. You can have them find their own by using the questions on pages 29-30.
- The proposal form on page 32 helps out with recordkeeping. I don’t allow students to get started unless they have my approval.
- Students are now ready for the nitty-gritty! Pages 33-38 are for research and planning. Then they are ready to write the essay. The student checklist will help students revise and edit. They should peer revise and edit using pages 41-42.
- References: On pages 39-40, you will find instructions on parenthetical citations and MLA guidelines. I provided you with parenthetical citation instructions; however, I don’t require my students to use them. I do require a **Works Cited** page. Your call.

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING WITH 6TH GRADE

Grade 6 Options:

The Common Core State Standards for 6th grade argumentative writing do not *require* students to include a counterargument. However, most teachers I know have decided it is good practice to teach the counterargument anyway.

While we can all agree that we should “teach up” to the highest common denominator, it is not always practical. So I have made some accommodations for students who might struggle when writing a counterargument paragraph.

I do recommend teaching 6th grade students the definition and purpose of a counterargument and what it looks like in an essay. I would keep the reading portion of the unit exactly the same. Then, when it is time to write, you can use the alternate organization and planning outlines on pages 49-52. These optional pages substitute an additional supporting body paragraph for the counterargument paragraph. Pages 53 and 54 include an adjusted checklist and rubric.

BONUS RESOURCES FOR ALL GRADE LEVELS

I’ve included several pages on how to revise the essays to write letters encouraging lawmakers to enact legislation. Using the step-by-step guidelines, the essays can easily become letters to government officials.

We’ve had success with the letters (a senator was so impressed that he came to visit!) So I thought I’d share. If you use this section and have similar results, I’d love to know!

I HOPE YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS FIND MUCH SUCCESS USING THIS UNIT TO STUDY ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING! PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS. AND PLEASE LEAVE FEEDBACK ON THE UNIT [HERE](#). YOUR COMMENTS HELP ME PLAN FUTURE UPDATES, REVISIONS, AND NEW PRODUCTS.

**TAKE CARE!
DARLENE ANNE**

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING DAILY PLANNER

I use this argument writing unit as described previously. This is another possible way to use it. The timing might be different for you, based on your class schedule and your students' needs. Adjust accordingly.

Preparations: A couple of weeks prior to using the unit, assign some quick-write journal topics. I pick one current event topic a day, and I ask students to express their opinion about the topic. The quick-write prompts are not included here, because there is no way I can anticipate newsworthy topics in advance. However, I have included a list of suggested topics that can be used for the quick-writes if other ideas are not available. Quick-writes get the kids thinking about what is going on the world and makes choosing a topic easier later on.

DAY 1 (30 minutes)

- Begin by introducing the unit by starting with the essay example on page 8. You can read it aloud, and ask students what they notice about the purpose, evidence, and organization of an argumentative essay. They will be revisiting the essay on another day to label the specific parts.

DAY 2 (40 minutes)

- Go over the argument or persuasive sheets on pages 9-10. I've provided you with two options, because I want you to find the one that is about a topic you think is best for your students. (Or you can use both!)
- Introduce the terminology on p. 11. Please point out that there are different names for some of the sections. It is important to point this out to students, because future teachers might very well use different terminology. I've even tried to vary the terminology a bit, so students get accustomed to using different terms. They should use this sheet for reference throughout the unit.

DAY 3 (40 minutes)

- Review the organization pages on pages 13-15. Students have the hardest time with the counterclaim paragraph, so that part might require more time.

DAY 4 (40 minutes)

- Begin with a "Do Now/Bellringer" in which you have students explain the purpose of the thesis statement.
- Complete going over the organization of the essay by explaining how to write the conclusion on page 16.
- Revisit the mentor text by having students reread it on page 17. Explain they should use their notes to label the parts of the argumentative essay. Review it as a class.

DAY 5 (40 minutes)

- Group students into pairs for the organizational challenge.
- The organizational challenge can be approached in several ways.
 - You can choose to distribute pages 18-22 all at once and have students cut the pieces apart and mix them all up before assembling.
 - Or you can distribute one page at a time and require students to show you the organized paragraph before allowing them to move on to the next one.
 - The templates on pages 23-27 should be distributed so students have additional guidance. However, you might want to skip these templates for an additional challenge, those in grades 8 & 9.

Day 6 (30 minutes)

Some teachers like to assign a specific topic. If you are doing that, please go on to the next step

- Distribute pages 29-30, which will allow students to explore possible writing topics. They can include any ideas they explored during the prewriting stage. You can also distribute page 31, which includes topics that kids might like to explore.
- Give students the topic proposal sheet on page 32. Decide on a topic deadline* and tell students they must complete the deadline sheet and get approval before they can start researching and writing.

* By this time you've already spent a lot of time on the unit, so kids know should be prepared to choose a topic. I would tell them they have to finish the proposal sheet for homework and return it the next day, but your due date is up to you. (Maybe I'm just mean. ☺)

DAYS 7-8 (40 MINUTES)

- Set a day or two aside that is strictly for research. Use pages 33-35. I usually take students to the library for this step, so they have access to books, periodicals, and our awesome librarians.
- If you would like to show a short YouTube video on how to find reliable sources and why they are important, I like [this](#) one done by the Shmoop crew. Please note: This is a viable resource at the time I am writing these plans. Shmoop might decide at any time to remove the video from YouTube. Luckily, you can do a quick search to find other similar video resources.
- Suggest that students use their research to establish a claim, not the other way around. Often, students find they feel strongly about a specific argument, and then while doing their research, they completely change their minds. This is a great lesson about evidence and facts.

DAYS 9-10

- Distribute the essay planning organizers on pages 36-38 (grade 6 pages 50-52.) At this time, I also distribute the student revision checklist on page 43 back to back with the rubric on page 44 (grade 6 pages 53-54.)
- If you are requiring references, on pages 39-40, you will find instructions on parenthetical citations and MLA guidelines. I provided you with the parenthetical citation instructions; however, I don't require my students to use them. I do require a **Works Cited** page. It is your call.
- I recommend conferring with students twice. Once to check their claim/thesis and their reasons. Another time to check their counterclaim. However, conferences can begin as soon as kids start planning. A conference doesn't have to be lengthy. It can be a quick recommendation about ONE aspect of the piece.

DAYS 11-14?

- This is where the writing classroom gets really messy. By now you'll have kids who are ready for revising, while some are still writing, and others are switching their topic and starting over. Just breathe. It's messy, but that's how the writing process should be! Allow kids to work at their own pace, as long as they have the paper due by the day you set. I give them three days in class and an additional two or three at home. Every student must peer revise and edit using pages 41 & 42.
- I require that final drafts be typed and must include the works cited and rubric.

DAYS 15-16 (OPTIONAL)

- My favorite part of the entire unit is turning these essays into legislation letters! These instructions are on pages 46-48. I think your students will find them rewarding.

This argumentative essay was written by a student.

Should Metal Bats be Banned in Youth Baseball?

On March 11, 2010, a high school pitcher in California was facing a player using a metal bat, when he was hit in the temple by a line drive travelling 100 mph. His skull was crushed, and he spent weeks in a coma. Fortunately, after surgery and months of rehabilitation, he survived. The accident brought to the forefront an issue that has been a safety concern ever since the 1970s when metal bats began being used instead of wooden bats. Metal bats are dangerous and should be banned by youth sport leagues for several reasons.

Baseballs hit with metal bats travel at a higher rate of speed than those hit with wooden bats. Researcher J.J. Crisco studied aluminum bats and found that they produced a “trampoline” effect, which means the baseball springs off of the bat at a high rate of speed. This happens so fast that pitchers and infielders don’t have time to react, which places them in danger. *The New York Times* reported that baseballs hit with metal bats travel almost 20 mph faster than baseballs hit with wooden bats. This is a huge difference to a player trying to make a play on a line drive in time. Consequently, the high rate of speed makes using a metal bat dangerous.

In addition, there have been many instances of players getting hurt by baseballs hit with metal bats. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, between 1991 and 2001, 18 players were killed by batted balls, and only two involved wooden bats. This proves that wood bats are safer than metal. Also, *The New York Times* reports that several lawsuits have been won by parents who sued metal bat makers after their child had been hurt. After being presented with evidence about the dangers of aluminum bats, judges and juries agreed they are responsible for injuries. Therefore, the high rate of injuries proves that metal bats are unsafe.

Some people claim that wooden bats are too expensive to supply to youth leagues because they are not as long lasting. This is true. Even so, a higher cost should not matter when safety is concerned.

Metal bats endanger the lives of young baseball players. First, they make the baseball travel at a high rate of speed, making it difficult to catch. Secondly, they have resulted in many injuries. Banning metal bats is necessary in order to save the lives of young players, and everyone concerned should contact their local lawmakers.

Let’s think!

What is the author’s purpose?

What do you notice about the evidence?

What observations can you make about the organization of an argumentative essay?

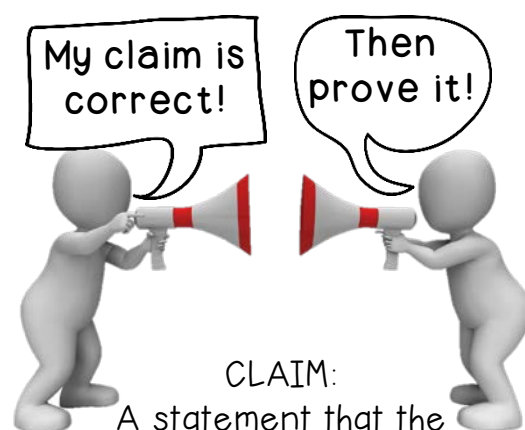
ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING VERSUS PERSUASIVE WRITING

What is argumentative writing?

Argumentative writing is writing in which a writer makes a claim about a topic and then supports it with logic and evidence. Learning how to formulate an effective argument is key to learning critical thinking skills and is an important part of both "school" and real life writing.

How does it differ from persuasive writing?

Persuasive writing also involves making a claim. However, the supporting details are based on opinions, feelings, and emotions, instead of facts and evidence.



CLAIM:
A statement that the author is trying to prove is true.

READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES. FULLY ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

In the past decade, technology has advanced and self-driving cars are looking more likely to be available in the near future. Many large tech companies are working with automobile manufacturers to get self-driving technology into cars for the general population. Autonomous driving technology will result in massive economic benefits.

What is the topic of the passage?

What is the author's claim?

What would be a good title for the passage?

Safety will be one of the most important benefits. Self-driving cars will result in dramatic reductions in the number of crashes that occur due to human error, such as distraction, alcohol impairment, and driver fatigue. This will save lives and money. According to the National Safety Council, in 2016, 4.6 million people were injured in accidents and property damage to vehicles was \$432 billion. Both numbers would be greatly reduced with autonomous cars that do not rely on a drivers' input.

Safety will be one of the most important benefits. Self-driving cars will result in dramatic reductions in the number of crashes that occur due to human error, such as distraction, alcohol impairment, and driver fatigue. This will save lives and money. People in autonomous cars will not have to make decisions to operate a vehicle, freeing them up to pursue other interests while the car drives safely without their input. They will be safer and other drivers will be safer as well.

Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or PERSUASIVE?
How do you know?

Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or PERSUASIVE?
How do you know?



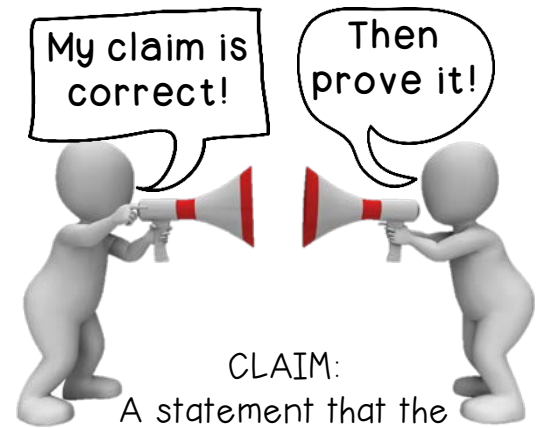
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CLAIM:
A statement that the author is trying to prove is true.

READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES. FULLY ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Two out of three people in the U.S. are considered obese. This makes the United States one of the most obese nations in the world. While many have theorized why this is true, there is another reason that is often overlooked. Overeating and gluttony are celebrated in the U.S., specifically through the tradition of competitive eating.

What is the topic of the passage?

What is the author's claim?

What would be a good title for the passage?



Every year, the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest is watched by millions of viewers around the country. They cheer for whoever can stuff his or her face with the most food. This kind of barbaric event sets a bad example for young people, as it glorifies the act of overconsumption and poor dietary habits. In a country rife with obesity and heart disease, it is disappointing to see so many Americans applauding an event that may very well lead to such health problems.

Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or PERSUASIVE?
How do you know?

Every year, the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest is watched by millions of viewers around the country. They cheer for whoever can stuff his or her face with the most food. What people don't realize is participants stretch their stomachs to an unnatural size, which can lead to permanent overstretching. According to a study published in the Journal of Roentgenology, overstretching the stomach can lead to chronic nausea that requires a partial removal of the stomach, as well as other health problems.

Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or PERSUASIVE?
How do you know?



ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY TERMS TO KNOW	
TERM	DEFINITION
argument	Making a claim and supporting it using logic.
persuasion	Making a claim and supporting it using feelings and emotions.
claim	The position that you are trying to get your readers to accept.
evidence	Facts that support your claim.
bridge or warrant	Statement that explains how the evidence supports and connects to the claim.
counterclaim or counterargument	Challenging the argument by addressing the position of someone who may not agree with the argument.
turn-back or refutation	Demonstrating why the counter-argument is wrong.
audience	Who will be affected by the topic? Who will read the essay?



ORGANIZING THE ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

For an argument essay to be effective, you must organize your ideas, provide solid supporting evidence, and present the information clearly. Let's take a look at how that's done.

An argument essay is usually at least 5 paragraphs. It requires an introductory paragraph, at least 3 body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.

Introduction

The first paragraph is where you will hook the reader and state your claim. The *hook* is sometimes called a *lead*. The claim is the *thesis statement*.



Body Paragraph #1

This paragraph introduces the first reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



Body Paragraph #2

This paragraph introduces the second reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



Body Paragraph #3

The paragraph should introduce an opposing claim, which is the counterargument. It also includes the turn-back, which takes the reader back to your claim and position.



Conclusion

The last paragraph restates the thesis statement and summarizes the main idea of the argument. It also contains a strong concluding statement.

WRITING THE INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

THE **INTRODUCTION** TO YOUR ESSAY HAS THREE PARTS AND PURPOSES.

- ① **Lead:** The lead “hooks” readers and encourages them to keep reading. Try one of the following:

I'll get your interest and convince you!

LEAD	EXAMPLE
Quote (Spoken by a famous person.)	President Obama once said, “ During the summer, students are losing a lot of what they learn. A longer school year makes sense.”
Unusual Detail	According to historians, American farm children once attended school from December to March and mid-May to August.
Statistic or Fact	Experts say that during the summer, students lose approximately 22 percent of what they learned during the school year.
Strong Statement	Students must attend school; a shorter school year is comparable to child neglect.
Question (Best if it also includes one of the other strategies.)	Are most Americans satisfied that compared to their peers in Europe and Asia, American students score lower on achievement tests?
Anecdote	There was a time when summer vacation meant endless lazy days, sitting on the porch, and watching the bees pollinate the flowers.

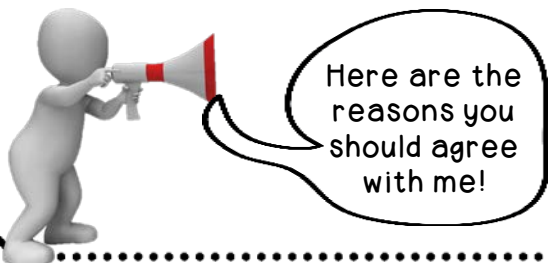
- ② **Introduce the issue:** Briefly explain the issue and the controversy surrounding the argument. Give background information.

Ex. Much to the public’s dismay, summer vacations are in jeopardy in America, as the Secretary of Education pushes forward with a movement to extend the school year.

- ③ **State your claim:** This is the **thesis statement**. It is a promise to the reader that the essay will address the argument and prove the claim. Use one of these key words to form the thesis:

***Reasons *Benefits *Advantages or Disadvantages**

Ex. There are definite advantages associated with switching to a year round school schedule in the United States.



WRITING THE SUPPORTING BODY PARAGRAPHS

Body paragraphs #1 & 2: Support the thesis statement/claim.

- ⇒ Start with a **topic sentence** that introduces a **reason** people should be convinced by the argument.

Ex. In order for students to improve academically, and avoid “summer slide,” American students should attend school year round.

- ⇒ Then include specific **evidence** to support the **thesis statement** (the claim). Use **facts, examples, and statistics** to back up the claim. Include at least 2-3 pieces of evidence.

Ex. For example, Balsz, a district in Arizona, saw reading test scores go up from 51 percent to 65 percent after extending the school year by 20 days.

- ⇒ Follow each piece of evidence with a **bridge** to explain how the evidence supports the claim. The bridge connects the evidence with the argument’s claim.

Ex. This significant improvement in reading scores proves that students benefit by having more time in school.

- ⇒ Close with a **concluding sentence**.

Ex. It is possible to improve student test scores by requiring more days in school.



Text-reference and transition words and phrases to use in the body paragraphs:

First,
For example,
Furthermore,
Therefore,

Also,
Above all,
Additionally,
Consequently,

Finally,
Particularly,
Specifically,

According to
For instance,
Due to

This is the
REASON you
should agree
with my
argument!

This is the
evidence that
supports my
claim

Now I'll tell
you why that
evidence is
important!

WRITING THE COUNTERCLAIM/COUNTERARGUMENT BODY PARAGRAPH

Body paragraph #3: Writing the opposing argument.

- 1) The opposing argument, called the **counterclaim** or counterargument, proves that you fully understand the topic and that you have considered the opposition.

Transition words and phrases to use in the counterargument:

It might seem that	It's true that	Admittedly,
Of course,	One might object	While
Certainly	At first glance,	Some people claim



- 2) The **turn-back** is a return to the original argument. It gives you an opportunity to prove why the opposing argument is invalid. Be sure to refute the opposing claim.

Transition words and phrases to use in the turn-back:

Yet,	Despite	However,	Nevertheless,
Still	Except	Conversely,	Even so,



Ex. Some critics of year round school say that the real results of studies that seem to show score increases in year round schools are inconclusive , and it is difficult to pinpoint the real reason for the increases. However, there is no doubt that students in Europe, where there is year round school, outperform American students on achievement tests.

Be sure to use the counterclaim transition words and phrases in pairs. Use one to introduce the counterclaim and another to introduce the turn-back.

It might seem that _____ counterargument ... except _____ turn-back

It is true that _____ counterargument ...nevertheless _____ turn-back

Some people claim _____ counterargument ...however _____ turn-back

** ** ** ** **

Try pairing counterclaim transitions with this imaginary argument:*

_____ counterargument there is no photographic evidence that Bigfoot exists;
 _____ turn-back people who have seen him up close say their
 eyewitness accounts should be proof enough.

***What was the original claim?**

WRITING THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

The **concluding** paragraph is important, as it must close the issue by showing that the topic has been covered thoroughly. It can also include a **call to action**, which is an idea about what people can do about the topic, how people can be warned about the topic, or how they can benefit from the position argued.

- ① Begin by restating the thesis statement or claim.

Ex. Year round school is the answer to the economic and educational problems in the United States.

- ② Then, present one or two sentences that summarize the reasons and evidence.

Ex. A year round schedule will prevent students from losing the hard earned knowledge gained during the school year.

- ③ Finally, provide a benefit that will result from complying with or heeding the argument. Or provide a **call to action** to move the audience into wanting to make a change.

Ex. The nation's future depends upon having intelligent citizens. Schools must be year round in order to graduate such citizens.



General Tips

DO	DO NOT
Use strong, convincing language.	Weaken your argument by using "I believe" or "I think."
Use reliable websites for research.	Make up "facts" or statistics.
Use 2-3 facts, examples, and/or statistics per body paragraph.	Rely on personal experiences.
Be respectful of those who disagree with your position.	Insult those who disagree.

ARGUMENT ESSAY EXAMPLE

Directions: Read this argument essay that was written by a student. Draw arrows and label the following parts in the right-hand margin:

▪ Hook/Lead	▪ Thesis Statement/Claim	▪ 4 Examples of Evidence	▪ 2 Reasons	▪ Background information
▪ 4 Bridges	▪ Counterargument	▪ Turn-Back	• Call to Action	

Should Metal Bats be Banned in Youth Baseball?

On March 11, 2010, a high school pitcher in California was facing a player using a metal bat, when he was hit in the temple by a line drive travelling 100 mph. His skull was crushed, and he spent weeks in a coma. Fortunately, after surgery and months of rehabilitation, he survived. The accident brought to the forefront an issue that has been a safety concern ever since the 1970s when metal bats began being used instead of wooden bats. Metal bats are dangerous and should be banned by youth sport leagues for several reasons.

Baseballs hit with metal bats travel at a higher rate of speed than those hit with wooden bats. Researcher J.J. Crisco studied aluminum bats and found that they produced a “trampoline” effect, which means the baseball springs off of the bat at a high rate of speed. This happens so fast that pitchers and infielders don’t have time to react, which places them in danger. *The New York Times* reported that baseballs hit with metal bats travel almost 20 mph faster than baseballs hit with wooden bats. This is a huge difference to a player trying to make a play on a line drive in time. Consequently, the high rate of speed makes using a metal bat dangerous.

In addition, there have been many instances of players getting hurt by baseballs hit with metal bats. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, between 1991 and 2001, 18 players were killed by batted balls, and only two involved wooden bats. This proves that wood bats are safer than metal. Also, *The New York Times* reports that several lawsuits have been won by parents who sued metal bat makers after their child had been hurt. After being presented with evidence about the dangers of aluminum bats, judges and juries agreed they are responsible for injuries. Therefore, the high rate of injuries proves that metal bats are unsafe.

Some people claim that wooden bats are too expensive to supply to youth leagues because they are not as long lasting. This is true. Even so, a higher cost should not matter when safety is concerned.

Metal bats endanger the lives of young baseball players. First, they make the baseball travel at a high rate of speed, making it difficult to catch. Secondly, they have resulted in many injuries. Banning metal bats is necessary in order to save the lives of young players, and everyone concerned should contact their local lawmakers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

INTRODUCTION

Year-round schooling requires students to attend school for 12 months, with short vacations that occur at varying intervals.

Twelve month programs are not a good idea; the educational benefits do not outweigh the high costs involved, and summer vacation is critical to a child's learning and development.

There was a time when summer vacation was stress-free; it meant endless lazy days, sitting on the porch and watching the bees pollinate the flowers. It did not mean attending school and having homework.



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

BODY PARAGRAPH 1

According to *The New York Daily News*, when Jefferson County, Colorado, moved to a year-round schedule, test scores actually declined.

Therefore, year-round schooling was just not worth the expense.

Additionally, one school district in Prince William County, Virginia, saw no educational improvements after nine years with a year-round schedule. According to the Supervisor of Programs in Prince William County, "There were not enough advantages to outweigh the disadvantages."

First, year-round schooling is expensive, due to air conditioning, maintenance, and staffing; yet it does not lead to significant academic improvement.

If the investments do not lead to improvements in student learning, they are not cost effective.

The district was then forced to spend an additional 93 million dollars to go back to a traditional calendar.



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

According to Dr. Leo Wisebonder, psychologist for the Los Angeles Unified School Program, "Children learn many things outside of school. It's a different type of learning, which simply is not tested."

The ongoing demands of school would interfere with these valuable leisure and work experiences.

Children in year-round programs would be missing out on opportunities to discover talents and interests that are not taught in schools.

Furthermore, younger children would not be able to attend camp programs, and teenagers would miss out on summer employment opportunities.

Summer activities enhance a child's overall growth and development in a way that school cannot.

Another reason there should not be year-round school is because summer activities are critical to a child's learning and development.



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

BODY PARAGRAPH 3: THE COUNTERCLAIM/COUNTERARGUMENT

Nevertheless, summer vacation allows students an opportunity to learn about important topics that are not related to school. Critics of a traditional schedule are not taking into account all of the opportunities young people will be missing out on.

Some people claim that year-round schooling reduces summer learning loss. They point out evidence that suggests some students might lose up to two months of learning during the summer.



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

CONCLUSION

It has been proven that a year-round schedule does not lead to academic improvement, and it does not allow students to develop interests outside of school.

Year-round schooling would not be beneficial in any way.

Children should be our nation's first priority, and they deserve long periods of stress-free time, as well as the opportunity to explore the world outside of school.



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

INTRODUCTION

Topic
Sentence

Background
Information

Claim



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

BODY PARAGRAPH I

Topic
Sentence

Evidence

Bridge

Evidence

Bridge

Conclusion



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

Topic
Sentence

Evidence

Bridge

Evidence

Bridge

Conclusion



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

BODY PARAGRAPH 3: THE COUNTERCLAIM/COUNTERARGUMENT

Counterclaim

Turn-back



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

CONCLUSION

Restate
Claim

Summarize
Evidence

Final
Statement



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

COMPLETE ESSAY

There was a time when summer vacation was stress-free; it meant endless lazy days, sitting on the porch and watching the bees pollinate the flowers. It did not mean attending school and having homework. Year-round schooling requires students to attend school for 12 months, with short vacations that occur at varying intervals. Twelve month programs are not a good idea; the educational benefits do not outweigh the high costs involved, and summer vacation is critical to a child's learning and development.

First, year-round schooling is expensive, due to air conditioning, maintenance, and staffing; yet it does not lead to significant academic improvement. According to *The New York Daily News*, when Jefferson County, Colorado, moved to a year-round schedule, test scores actually declined. The district was then forced to spend an additional 93 million dollars to go back to a traditional calendar. Additionally, one school district in Prince William County, Virginia, saw no educational improvements after nine years with a year-round schedule. According to the Supervisor of Programs in Prince William County, "There were not enough advantages to outweigh the disadvantages." Therefore, year-round schooling was just not worth the expense. If the investments do not lead to improvements in student learning, they are not cost effective.

Another reason there should not be year-round school is because summer activities are critical to a child's learning and development. According to Dr. Leo Wisebender, psychologist for the Los Angeles Unified School Program, "Children learn many things outside of school. It's a different type of learning, which simply is not tested." Children in year-round programs would be missing out on opportunities to discover talents and interests that are not taught in schools. Furthermore, younger children would not be able to attend camp programs, and teenagers would miss out on summer employment opportunities. The ongoing demands of school would interfere with these valuable leisure and work experiences. Summer activities enhance a child's overall growth and development in a way that school cannot.

Some people claim that year-round schooling reduces summer learning loss. Nevertheless, summer vacation allows students an opportunity to learn about important topics that are not related to school. Critics of a traditional schedule are not taking into account all of the opportunities young people will be missing out on.

Year-round schooling would not be beneficial in any way. It has been proven that a year-round schedule does not lead to academic improvement, and it does not allow students to develop interests outside of school. Children should be our nation's first priority, and they deserve long periods of stress-free time, as well as the opportunity to explore the world outside of school.

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Choosing a topic can be difficult. When you begin considering a topic, remember that it is the topic that is important, not the claim. Your position on the claim can come later, after you do some research. So begin thinking about possible issues by answering the following questions.

I. Current Controversial Topics: People sometimes have strong feelings about topics currently in the news.

- a) Have you ever argued with someone about a controversial topic? If so, which one?
- b) Have you recently read or heard about something in the news that you either strongly agreed or disagreed with? If so, which one?
- c. Which school related issue do you feel strongly about?

Now choose a topic from the answers you wrote above. Write the topic and the controversy below.

Topic

Controversy:

II. Your Interests: Another approach is to think of a subject you already know a lot about, or think of a subject in which you are already interested.

- a) Is there anything controversial about something you've learned in school, or a sport or hobby you're interested in?
- b) List some of your favorite hobbies and activities.

c) Is there anything unfair involving one of the your hobbies or activities?

d) Are there any laws that seem unfair or controversial about one of your interests?

Now choose a topic from the answers you wrote above. Write your interest and the controversy below.

Interest

Controversy:

Something You Want to Learn About: Another way to find a topic is to research something you've wanted to know more about, but never had the time to pursue.

a) What are you curious to learn about?

b) Are there any controversies involving that topic of interest?

Now choose a topic you are curious about from the answers you wrote above. Write your interest and the controversy below.

Interest

Controversy:

Important to Remember!

Once you have chosen your topic, be open-minded and flexible about your claim. You may have a position in mind already, but that may change after you begin your research. That is fine.

You must gather facts in order to have a valid opinion.

POSSIBLE TOPICS

Possible Topics for an Argumentative Essay

- Mandatory curfews for teens
- Common Core curriculum
- School uniforms
- Year-round schools
- Technology dependence
- Cellphones in schools
- Animal testing
- Cheating in schools
- Cyberbullying
- Testing in schools
- Longer school day
- Homework policies
- Government health care
- Mandatory preschool
- Book banning
- School cafeteria food
- Trophy hunting
- Supersize soft drinks
- Smoking bans in public
- School sports safety
- Sportsmanship in school sports
- Salaries of professional athletes and actors
- Parental/guardian school attendance responsibility
- CAN YOU THINK OF MORE?



TOPIC PROPOSAL FORM

Directions: Fill out the following information in order to get approval from the teacher. If your position changes during the course of your research, fill out the bottom of the sheet and resubmit for approval.

Name: _____

Topic: _____

Argument: _____

Claim: _____

Why are you interested in this topic?

Your Signature: _____

Teacher's Signature: _____

Comments: _____

Position Switch

Explain your new position and why you changed your mind.

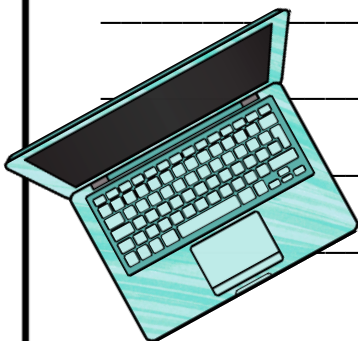
Reapproval: _____

GATHERING INFORMATION

Web Site

#	Author	Site	Title	Publication Date	Date Viewed	URL

Notes:



Web Site

#	Author	Site	Title	Publication Date	Date Viewed	URL

Notes:



GATHERING INFORMATION

Magazine

#	Author	Article Title	Magazine Title	Publication Date	Page #s

Notes:



Magazine

#	Author	Article Title	Magazine Title	Publication Date	Page #s

Notes:

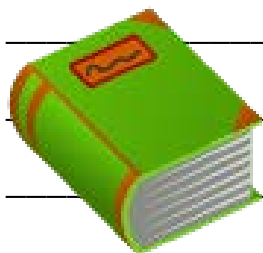


GATHERING INFORMATION

Book

#	Author	Book Title	Publisher	City of Publication	Year of Publication

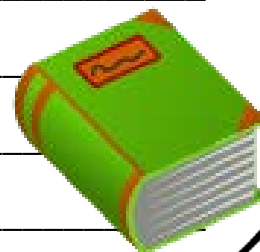
Notes:



Book

#	Author	Book Title	Publisher	City of Publication	Year of Publication

Notes:



ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

Hook: _____

Background Information: _____

Claim: _____

BODY PARAGRAPH I

Topic Sentence- Reason:

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Conclusion: _____

ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

Topic Sentence- Reason:

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Conclusion: _____

ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

BODY PARAGRAPH #3

Counterargument: _____

Turn-Back: _____

CONCLUSION

Restate Claim/ Thesis Statement: _____

Summarize the Evidence: _____

Final Statement: _____

References: Parenthetical Citation

When you write a short story or a poem, all of the information comes from your creative mind. The argumentative essay requires research. Whenever a writer crafts a piece that requires information from outside sources, it is necessary to alert readers as to the source of the information. Including the source is a way to avoid plagiarism and a way to be upfront with readers.

MLA Style

The Modern Language Association (MLA) developed a widely used style guide for research writing. Part of the style guide explains how to document the materials used to conduct research.

The guidelines require the creation of a bibliography, called a “Works Cited” page. This will be the last page in an academic paper, and it must be written in alphabetical order.

In addition, the style guide provides guidelines for parenthetical citations. Parenthetical citation is when a writer includes in-text information about the source of the information.

Example of a Parenthetical Citation for a Direct Quote

“Breeders, trainers, and researchers don’t agree about methods of measuring canine intelligence. Many believe that canine IQ tests are faulty in accuracy” (Curley 21).

direct quote from book author’s last name page

Example of a Parenthetical Citation for an Indirect Quote

Experts who work with dogs have varying views about whether or not current IQ tests dogs are valid (Curley 21).

author’s last name page

Works Cited

The Works Cited page can also be called a bibliography. It is a listing of every source you used in the parenthetical citations. It is always going to be the last page of your research essay, article, or report. The words “Works Cited” should be at the top of the page, right in the middle. The citations must be written in alphabetical order.

Every source is written differently. Citation directions are on the next page. More information is available on the web. Purdue University has a helpful website for citation information:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>

References: MLA Style

Book:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. Title of Book. City of Publication: Publisher's Name, Year of Publication.

Example:

Ride, Sally. *Exploring Our Solar System*. New York: Crown, 2003.

Newspaper:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. "Title of Article." Name of Newspaper Day Abbreviated Month. Year of Publication, Edition ed.: Page Numbers of Article.

Example:

Rigg, Mackenzie. "Promised Land." *Newsday* 2 January 2015, Nassau ed.: A23.

Magazine:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. "Title of Article." Name of Magazine Day Abbreviated Month. Year of Publication: Page Numbers of Article.

Example:

Raloff, J. "Even Penguins Get the Flu." *Science News* 18 May. 2014:179-180.

Article in an Online Newspaper:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. "Title of Article." Name of Newspaper. Day Abbreviated Month. Year of Publication. Day Abbreviated Month. Year You Viewed It <URL>.

Example:

Raloff, J. "Even Penguins Get the Flu." *Science News* 18 May. 2014. 13 Nov.2004 <<http://www.usatoday.com/>>.

A Document from an Internet Site:


Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. "Article or Specific Web Page Title." Title of Entire Web Site. Day Abbreviated Month. Year Web Page Was Last Revised. Sponsoring Organization. Day Abbreviated Month. Year You Read It <URL>.

Example:

Ornes, S. "Sweets on the Brain." *Science News for Kids*. 28 June 2012. 2014 <<https://student.societyforscience.org/>>

WRITING Student Revision Checklist

Rockin' Revisions!



Revise

ARMS	You ✓	Peer ✓
A Add details, words & sentences		
R Remove unneeded details, words & sentences		
M Move information for clarity & organization		
S Substitute specific, vivid words for bland ones		

You've worked hard! Don't blow it now by skimping on the revision work!

Read over your draft once for each letter in the acronym ARMS, and then check the "You" column. That means rereading four times. Improvements should be made with each reading.

Also have a classmate revise your work. They can check the peer column and answer the revision questions below.

Peer Revision Partner

- ❖ Does the passage have an interesting hook that makes me want to keep reading?
- ❖ Is it well-organized?
- ❖ Are important and interesting details included?
- ❖ Is there an interesting conclusion?
- ❖ What is the best part of the passage? Why?
- ❖ What is the part that still needs some improvement? Explain.

Partners should meet to discuss revision suggestions and results.

WRITING Student Editing Checklist


Exceptional Editing!

You're nearing the finish line!
Don't give up now!

Just like the revision step, you should read over your draft once for each letter in the acronym, and then check the "You" column.

Also, have a classmate edit your writing. Sometimes we miss errors that others pick up.

Peer Editing Partner

Edit		You	Peer
 CUPS		✓	✓
C Capitalization - proper nouns: names, titles, etc...			
U Usage - subject/verb agreement, tenses			
P Punctuation - apostrophes, commas, quotes, etc...			
S Spelling - check all words, including homophones			

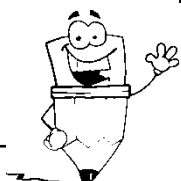
- ❖ Are titles, subtitles, proper nouns, and proper adjectives capitalized? How about the first word in every sentence and the first word in every quote?
- ❖ Are quotation marks used correctly? How about commas? Are apostrophes used in contractions and possessives?
- ❖ Is each sentence a complete thought?
- ❖ Are there any run-on sentences?
- ❖ Is the tense consistent? Do subjects and verbs agree?
- ❖ Have spelling errors been corrected?

ARGUMENT WRITING Student Revision Checklist

Criteria	Absolutely	Mostly	Partially	Not Really
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you provided an interesting hook? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you given background information? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you stated a claim in the thesis statement? 				
Body Paragraphs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you used statistics or facts to provide evidence? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you analyzed and explained your evidence by using bridges? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you included a counterargument and a turn-back? 				
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you restated the claim, summarized, and ended strongly? 				
Organization & Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you organized the response and used transitions? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you written for your audience? 				
Mechanics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you reviewed for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors? 				

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY RUBRIC

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear, interesting introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates grade level understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction of topic is unclear. ➤ Demonstrates limited understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction does not address task. ➤ Demonstrates little understanding of topic and claim.
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facts are well-chosen and support argument. ➤ Evidence is fully explained by use of a bridge. ➤ Counterargument and turn-back are convincing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facts are relevant to argument. ➤ Evidence is explained by use of a bridge. ➤ Counterargument and turn-back are included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partial use of evidence. ➤ Use of evidence that may not be accurate ➤ Counterargument and turn-back are incomplete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No evidence is provided, or evidence is irrelevant. ➤ Counter-argument and turn- back are missing or irrelevant.
Organization, Clarity, and Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Skillful organization and use of transitions enhance meaning. ➤ Includes style, sophisticated vocabulary, and voice. ➤ Interesting concluding statement that clearly stems from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear organization and use of transitions. ➤ Includes style and grade-level vocabulary. ➤ Concluding statement relates to topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partially organized, with little use of transitions. ➤ Some attempt at style, with basic vocabulary. ➤ Some attempt is made to conclude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Little attempt at organization. ➤ No use of transitions. ➤ Lacks style. ➤ Conclusion is missing or irrelevant.
Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is clear evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised and edited. ➤ There are few errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is some evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ There are some errors, but they do not interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is little evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors hinder understanding.



Total:

Argument Writing Rubric Scoring Guide

16	100
15	94
14	88
13	81
12	75
11	69
10	63
9	56
8	50
7	44
6	38
5	31
4	25

ENACTING LEGISLATION**Question:**

How can ordinary citizens participate in the legislation process?

Answer:

Enacting legislation begins with one person and one idea. The person must feel strongly enough about an issue to write a letter to the appropriate government official. This letter must include a well supported argument that is based on facts and specific evidence. If the letter is well-written and contains compelling evidence, the government official may act on it.

Letter to the Government Official

You will use the information from the argumentative essay to write a letter to the government official who would best represent the legislation topic. The purpose of your letter is to let the official know how you feel about the issue and to urge him/her to become involved in legislation concerning the issue. Use the attached form to draft the letter.

You will notice that when you write the letter, you are permitted to refer to yourself by writing, "I think..." and "I feel..." This is because the letter is more personal, and it is important to identify yourself. However, you will notice that the writing is still formal in tone.

Typing Requirements:

- Business letter format
- Single spacing
- Size 12 font
- Skip two lines between letter parts
- Indent each paragraph, and skip one line between paragraphs.
- Skip four lines between the closing and your typed name. Hand-sign your name in the empty space.



ENACTING LEGISLATION: LETTER TEMPLATE

School Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Today's Date

Name of Recipient
Street Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear _____:

My name is _____, and I am a _____ grade student at
_____ *your school* _____. During a unit on enacting legislation, I became
interested in the issue of _____ *state the topic* _____. I believe

_____ *state your claim: thesis statement* _____
Therefore, I urge you to vote for legislation that _____ *supports or prevents topic* _____
because _____ *reason #1 and reason #2* _____.

One reason I feel this way is _____ *explain reason #1* _____.

_____ *Give support with research. Paraphrase the research and conclude the paragraph.* _____

Another reason I feel this way is _____ *explain reason #2* _____.

_____ *Give support with research. Paraphrase the research and conclude the paragraph.* _____

I understand this is a controversial topic. Some people believe _____
_____ *state the counter argument* _____.

However, I believe that _____
_____ *restate your opinion using different words* _____

Therefore, I urge you to _____
_____ *supports or prevents topic* _____

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

hand sign your name

Type Your Name

ENACTING LEGISLATION: SAMPLE LETTER

555 Counterfeit Street
Fake City, ND
April 29, 2014

The Honorable John Doe
555 Government Road
Office Building 20155
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Doe:

My name is Ima Goode Citizen, and I'm a 7th grade student at Thebest Middle School. During a unit on enacting legislation, I became interested in the issue of year-round schooling. This policy would require students to attend school for 12 months with short vacations that occur at varying intervals. I believe that year-round schooling should be prohibited. Therefore, I urge you to vote against legislation that would mandate year-round schooling in our area. The educational benefits of year-round schooling do not outweigh the high costs involved, and summer vacation is critical to a child's learning and development.

One reason I feel this way is because year-round schooling is expensive, due to air conditioning, maintenance, and staffing; yet it does not lead to significant academic improvement. According to *The New York Daily News*, when Jefferson County, Colorado, moved to a year-round schedule, test scores actually declined. The district was then forced to spend an additional 93 million dollars to go back to a traditional calendar. Additionally, a school district in Prince William County, Virginia, saw no educational improvements after nine years with a year-round schedule. According to the Supervisor of Programs in Prince William County, "There were not enough advantages to outweigh the disadvantages." Therefore, year-round schooling was just not worth the expense. If the investments do not lead to improvements in student learning, they are not cost effective.

Another reason year-round schooling should be prohibited is because summer activities are critical to a child's learning and development. According to Dr. Leo Wisebender, psychologist for the Los Angeles Unified School Program, "Children learn many things outside of school. It's a different type of learning, which simply is not tested." Children in year-round programs would be missing out on opportunities to discover talents and interests that are not taught in schools. Furthermore, younger children would not be able to attend camp programs, and teenagers would miss out on summer employment opportunities. The ongoing demands of school would interfere with these valuable leisure and work experiences. Summer activities enhance a child's overall growth and development in a way that school cannot.

I understand that this is a controversial topic. Some people claim that year-round schooling reduces summer learning loss. Nevertheless, summer vacation allows students an opportunity to learn about important topics that are not related to school. Critics of a traditional schedule are not taking into account all of the opportunities young people will be missing out on.

I believe that year-round schooling should be prohibited. Again, I urge you to vote against legislation that would mandate year-round schooling.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Ima Goode Citizen

Ima Goode Citizen

ORGANIZING THE ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

For an argument essay to be effective, you must organize your ideas, provide solid supporting evidence, and present the information clearly. Let's take a look at how that's done.

An argument essay is usually 4-5 paragraphs. It requires an introductory paragraph, at least 3 body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.

Introduction

The first paragraph is where you will hook the reader and state your claim. The *hook* is sometimes called a *lead*. The claim is the *thesis statement*.



Body Paragraph #1

This paragraph introduces the first reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



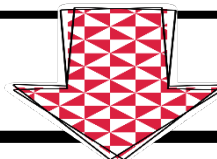
Body Paragraph #2

This paragraph introduces the second reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



Body Paragraph #3 (optional)

This paragraph introduces the third reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



Conclusion

The last paragraph restates the thesis statement and summarizes the main idea of the argument. It also contains a strong concluding statement.

ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

Hook: _____

Background Information: _____

Claim: _____

BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic Sentence- Reason:

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Conclusion: _____

BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic Sentence- Reason:

Evidence:

Bridge:

Evidence:

Bridge:

Conclusion:

BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic Sentence- Reason:

Evidence:

Bridge:

Evidence:

Bridge:

Conclusion:

CONCLUSION

Restate Claim/ Thesis Statement:

Summarize the Evidence:

Final Statement:

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING STUDENT CHECKLIST GRADE 6

Criteria	Absolutely	Mostly	Partially	Not Really
Introduction ➤ Have you provided an interesting hook?				
➤ Have you given background information?				
➤ Have you stated a claim in the thesis statement?				
Body Paragraphs ➤ Have you used statistics or facts to provide evidence?				
➤ Have you analyzed and explained your evidence by using bridges?				
Conclusion ➤ Have you restated the claim, summarized, and ended strongly?				
Organization & Style ➤ Have you organized the response and used some transitions?				
➤ Have you written for your audience?				
Mechanics: ➤ Have you reviewed for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors?				

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY RUBRIC **GRADE 6**

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear, interesting introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates grade level understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction of topic is unclear. ➤ Demonstrates limited understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction does not address task. ➤ Demonstrates little understanding of topic and claim.
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facts are well-chosen and support argument. ➤ Evidence is fully explained by use of a bridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facts are relevant to argument. ➤ Evidence is explained by use of a bridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partial use of evidence. ➤ Use of evidence that may not be accurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No evidence is provided, or evidence is irrelevant.
Organization, Clarity, and Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Skillful organization. ➤ Includes style, sophisticated vocabulary, and voice. ➤ Interesting concluding statement that clearly stems from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear organization. ➤ Includes style and grade-level vocabulary. ➤ Concluding statement relates to topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partially organized. ➤ Some attempt at style, with basic vocabulary. ➤ Some attempt is made to conclude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Little attempt at organization. ➤ Lacks style. ➤ Conclusion is missing or irrelevant.
Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is clear evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised and edited. ➤ There are few errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is some evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ There are some errors, but they do not interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is little evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors hinder understanding.



Total:

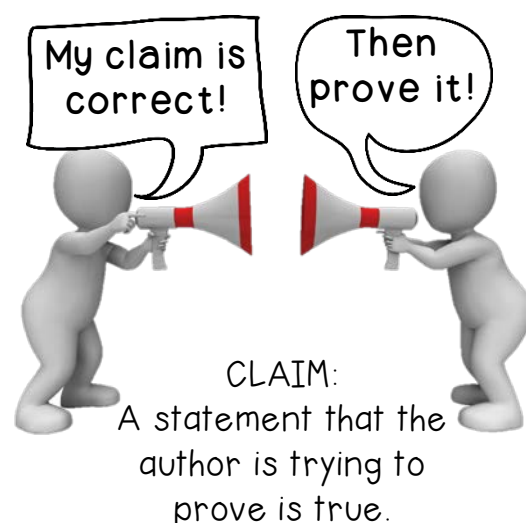
ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING VERSUS PERSUASIVE WRITING

What is argumentative writing?

Argumentative writing is writing in which a writer makes a claim about a topic and then supports it with logic and evidence. Learning how to formulate an effective argument is key to learning critical thinking skills and is an important part of both “school” and real life writing.

How does it differ from persuasive writing?

Persuasive writing also involves making a claim. However, the supporting details are based on opinions, feelings, and emotions, instead of facts and evidence.



READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES. FULLY ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

In the past decade, technology has advanced and self-driving cars are looking more likely to be available in the near future. Many large tech companies are working with automobile manufacturers to get self-driving technology into cars for the general population. Autonomous driving technology will result in massive economic benefits.

What is the topic of the passage?

What is the author's claim?

What would be a good title for the passage?

Safety will be one of the most important benefits. Self-driving cars will result in dramatic reductions in the number of crashes that occur due to human error, such as distraction, alcohol impairment, and driver fatigue. This will save lives and money. According to the National Safety Council, in 2016, 4.6 million people were injured in accidents and property damage to vehicles was \$432 billion. Both numbers would be greatly reduced with autonomous cars that do not rely on a drivers' input.

Safety will be one of the most important benefits. Self-driving cars will result in dramatic reductions in the number of crashes that occur due to human error, such as distraction, alcohol impairment, and driver fatigue. This will save lives and money. People in autonomous cars will not have to make decisions to operate a vehicle, freeing them up to pursue other interests while the car drives safely without their input. They will be safer and other drivers will be safer as well.

Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or PERSUASIVE?
How do you know?

Statistics & facts: ex.
“According to the National Safety Council, in 2016, 4.6 million people were injured...”



Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or **PERSUASIVE**?
How do you know?

Focuses on opinions: ex.
“...freeing them up to pursue other interests...”
and “They will be safer.”

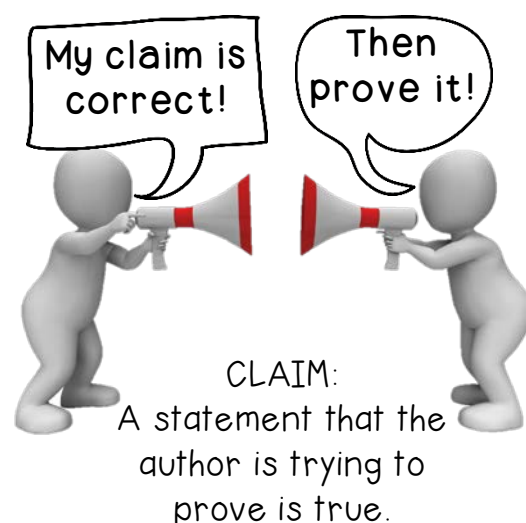
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READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES. FULLY ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Two out of three people in the U.S. are considered obese. This makes the United States one of the most obese nations in the world. While many have theorized why this is true, there is another reason that is often overlooked. Overeating and gluttony are celebrated in the U.S., specifically through the tradition of competitive eating.

What is the topic of the passage?

What is the author's claim?

What would be a good title for the passage?

Every year, the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest is watched by millions of viewers around the country. They cheer for whoever can stuff his or her face with the most food. This kind of barbaric event sets a bad example for young people, as it glorifies the act of overconsumption and poor dietary habits. In a country rife with obesity and heart disease, it is disappointing to see so many Americans applauding an event that may very well lead to such health problems.

Every year, the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest is watched by millions of viewers around the country. They cheer for whoever can stuff his or her face with the most food. What people don't realize is participants stretch their stomachs to an unnatural size, which can lead to permanent overstretching. According to a study published in the Journal of Roentgenology, overstretching the stomach can lead to chronic nausea that requires a partial removal of the stomach, as well as other health problems.

Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or PERSUASIVE?
How do you know?

Circle One
ARGUMENTATIVE or PERSUASIVE?
How do you know?

Focuses on opinions: ex.
“...sets a bad example for young people...”



Statistics & facts: ex.
“According to a study published...overstretching of the stomach can lead to chronic nausea...”

ARGUMENT ESSAY EXAMPLE

Directions: Read this argument essay that was written by a student. Draw arrows and label the following parts in the right-hand margin:

▪ Hook/Lead	▪ Thesis Statement/Claim	▪ 4 Examples of Evidence	▪ 2 Reasons	▪ Background information
▪ 4 Bridges	▪ Counterargument	▪ Turn-Back	• Call to Action	

Should Metal Bats be Banned in Youth Baseball?

On March 11, 2010, a high school pitcher in California was facing a player using a metal bat, when he was hit in the temple by a line drive travelling 100 mph. His skull was crushed, and he spent weeks in a coma. Fortunately, after surgery and months of rehabilitation, he survived. The accident brought to the forefront an issue that has been a safety concern ever since the 1970s when metal bats began being used instead of wooden bats. Metal bats are dangerous and should be banned by youth sport leagues for several reasons.

Baseballs hit with metal bats travel at a higher rate of speed than those hit with wooden bats. Researcher J.J. Crisco studied aluminum bats and found that they produced a “trampoline” effect, which means the baseball springs off of the bat at a high rate of speed. This happens so fast that pitchers and infielders don’t have time to react, which places them in danger. *The New York Times* reported that baseballs hit with metal bats travel almost 20 mph faster than baseballs hit with wooden bats. This is a huge difference to a player trying to make a play on a line drive in time. Consequently, the high rate of speed makes using a metal bat dangerous.

In addition, there have been many instances of players getting hurt by baseballs hit with metal bats. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, between 1991 and 2001, 18 players were killed by batted balls, and only two involved wooden bats. This proves that wood bats are safer than metal. Also, *The New York Times* reports that several lawsuits have been won by parents who sued metal bat makers after their child had been hurt. After being presented with evidence about the dangers of aluminum bats, judges and juries agreed they are responsible for injuries. Therefore, the high rate of injuries proves that metal bats are unsafe.

Some people claim that wooden bats are too expensive to supply to youth leagues because they are not as long lasting. This is true. Even so, a higher cost should not matter when safety is concerned.

Metal bats endanger the lives of young baseball players. First, they make the baseball travel at a high rate of speed, making it difficult to catch. Secondly, they have resulted in many injuries. Banning metal bats is necessary in order to save the lives of young players, and everyone concerned should contact their local lawmakers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

INTRODUCTION

**Topic
Sentence**

There was a time when summer vacation was stress-free; it meant endless lazy days, sitting on the porch and watching the bees pollinate the flowers. It did not mean attending school and having homework.

**Background
Information**

Year-round schooling requires students to attend school for 12 months, with short vacations that occur at varying intervals.

Claim

Twelve month programs are not a good idea; the educational benefits do not outweigh the high costs involved, and summer vacation is critical to a child's learning and development.



ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Answer Key

BODY PARAGRAPH I

Topic Sentence

First, year-round schooling is expensive, due to air conditioning, maintenance, and staffing; yet it does not lead to significant academic improvement.

Evidence

According to *The New York Daily News*, when Jefferson County, Colorado, moved to a year-round schedule, test scores actually declined.

Bridge

The district was then forced to spend an additional 93 million dollars to go back to a traditional calendar.

Evidence

Additionally, one school district in Prince William County, Virginia, saw no educational improvements after nine years with a year-round schedule. According to the Supervisor of Programs in Prince William County, "There were not enough advantages to outweigh the disadvantages."

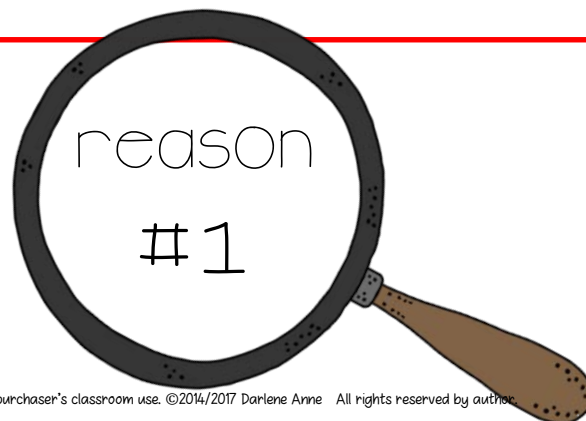
Bridge

Therefore, year-round schooling was just not worth the expense.

Conclusion

If the investments do not lead to improvements in student learning, they are not cost effective.

*Please note: The order of the evidence usually doesn't matter. I tell students to try putting the most convincing evidence first.



BODY PARAGRAPH 2

Topic Sentence

Another reason there should not be year-round school is because summer activities are critical to a child's learning and development.

Evidence

According to Dr. Leo Wisebonder, psychologist for the Los Angeles Unified School Program, "Children learn many things outside of school. It's a different type of learning, which simply is not tested."

Bridge

Children in year-round programs would be missing out on opportunities to discover talents and interests that are not taught in schools.

Evidence

Furthermore, younger children would not be able to attend camp programs, and teenagers would miss out on summer employment opportunities.

Bridge

The ongoing demands of school would interfere with these valuable leisure and work experiences.

Conclusion

Summer activities enhance a child's overall growth and development in a way that school cannot.



**BODY PARAGRAPH 3:
THE COUNTERCLAIM/COUNTERARGUMENT**

Counterclaim

Some people claim that year-round schooling reduces summer learning loss. They point out evidence that suggests some students might lose up to two months of learning during the summer.

Turn-back

Nevertheless, summer vacation allows students an opportunity to learn about important topics that are not related to school. Critics of a traditional schedule are not taking into account all of the opportunities young people will be missing out on.



CONCLUSION

**Restate
Claim**

Year-round schooling would not be beneficial in any way.

**Summarize
Evidence**

It has been proven that a year-round schedule does not lead to academic improvement, and it does not allow students to develop interests outside of school.

**Final
Statement**

Children should be our nation's first priority, and they deserve long periods of stress-free time, as well as the opportunity to explore the world outside of school.



Argumentative Essay

Purpose: How is the topic introduced?

Clear thesis, original hook, clear position, necessary background information.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Development: Are ideas supported with details?

Relevant evidence, understanding of topic, claim, counterclaim, turn-back, idea development.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Organization: Does the writing show direction & hold together?

Focus, logical organization of ideas, use of words, transitions show relationships among ideas.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Language Use: Does the essay show a sense of audience & purpose?

Formal style, sophisticated language, varied sentence structure.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc...

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Argumentative Essay Grade 6

Purpose: How is the topic introduced?

Clear thesis, original hook, clear position, necessary background information.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Development: Are ideas supported with details?

Relevant evidence, understanding of topic, claim, idea development.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Organization: Does the writing show direction & hold together?

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Language Use: Does the essay show a sense of audience & purpose?

Formal style, sophisticated language, varied sentence structure.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc...

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Argumentative Essay Grade 6

Purpose: How is the topic introduced?

Clear thesis, original hook, clear position, necessary background information.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Development: Are ideas supported with details?

Relevant evidence, understanding of topic, claim, idea development.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Organization: Does the writing show direction & hold together?

Focus, logical organization of ideas, use of words, transitions show relationships among ideas.

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Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc...

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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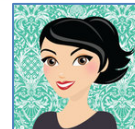
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