

Grade 9-10

Expository Compositions

Arguing Pro/Con - What This Would Look Like in College

English IB

Writing Assignment #1

Arguing Pro/Con

You have read chapter 6 in the St. Martin's Guide, which lays out ways in which to explain and support an argument. You have also read chapter 13, about cueing devices, and chapter 11, about invention and brainstorming strategies.

A successful argumentative essay will include a number of components. A thesis, perhaps a forecasting thesis, will be useful, as will topic sentences and transitions between paragraphs or sections. You will also want to provide clear and explicit reasons for asserting your thesis to be true, as well as specific, relevant, credible support and evidence that backs up your reasons. A fair and objective discussion of opposing views and—where possible—refutation of those views will also be important.

You will identify a topic on which there is some debate among reasonable people. Taking one side or the other, lay out your position, reasons, and evidence. You will want to respond to opposing views, concerns, objections, or questions.

You can choose from a variety of topics but do not choose a topic that is overly controversial or personal. Do not for instance, choose a topic related to abortion, gun control, the death penalty, affirmative action, legalization of marijuana, or euthanasia.

When brainstorming possible topics, focus on the idea of rules, of what is permitted, prevented, required, or imposed on individuals or groups by those in authority over them. You may agree or disagree with the justice, appropriateness, or effectiveness of those rules. The entity imposing or enforcing the rules should not be acting as a private individual - that is, a parent's rules for a child would not be a suitable topic, but a boss's rules for an employee would.

Appropriate topics might include a policy at your workplace (or at another workplace you know about); rules imposed by educational institutions; rules laid down by a religious, cultural, or social organization for its members; rules imposed by a business on its customers or clients; legislation that unfairly protects or penalizes a group of people; or laws or regulations in your community, state, or nation.

Your essay should be 3-4 pages long, typed, in MLA format. See chapter 22 of the St. Martin's Guide for specifications, or consult the MLA format handout you received in class.

You will need to use at least one (1) source to support your discussion of the situation -but that source does not have to have the same perspective on the situation that you do. That source can be drawn from a reputable magazine, newspaper, or online source, from a book, or from an interview with a credible, knowledgeable witness.

1. [Rubrics](#)
2. Lesson Plans
3. Sample Essays
4. [Related Assignments](#)  
[Related Assignments](#)  
[Related Assignments](#)  
[Related Assignments](#)