English II Argumentation Research Paper Instructions

**Focus**:

The learner will choose a controversial topic by reading and researching the topic. The learner will collect research and formulate a stance on that particular controversy. The learner will construct a persuasive essay with research to support the stance taken over a controversial issue.

**Note:** Plan on using email, Google drive, or a flash drive in order to carry information from school to home.

**Requirements**:

*The BODY of the paper* should be

* roughly 6 paragraphs
* 2 pages minimum and 5 pages maximum
* *basic MLA requirements* - double-spaced and typed in Times New Roman using 12-point font size with one-inch margins

*Proper MLA format must be used*, including an appropriate heading (no title page), pagination, and parenthetical notation/citation. You may visit the MLA web site for help at [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org), use the Purdue Writing Lab at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>, and use the sample Works Cited entries provided as a guide. MLA citation directions are also on www.brahmaenglishii.weebly.com.

**Sources**:

The *Works Cited* will

* be the last page of your essay (not part of the required/maximum page count)
* include **a minimum three separate articles from ANY database through the EBISD Library (EBSCO, Brittanica, and Gale).**
* Don’t forget other types of sources: interviews, audio/video recordings, email, books, etc.
* Utilize online sources to help you create citations: [www.easybib.com](http://www.easybib.com)

**Helpful Hints**

* When developing your reasons, *be careful not to be repetitive*.
* *Do not continually use the same source over and over again*. If you find three or four paragraphs whose support is all taken from the same source, you are relying too heavily on it. This is especially true if they are in a row. You have three sources; make good use of all of them.
* *Use transitions not only to divide reasons but to subdivide them*, so the reader knows clearly when you are moving to the next main point and not just continuing with another subdivision of the previous point.
* The title should not only make your topic clear but your point of view on that topic. Consider using part of your commentary as your title. Don’t title your essay RESEARCH PAPER OVER ABORTION. Boring!
* *Remember that everything must be connected with logical reasoning and explanation*, from support to reason to argument/thesis. Don’t forget your other types of persuasion – ethos and pathos.
* If you’ve had trouble with accidental plagiarism, check over your paraphrases very carefully. If you’re not sure, it probably needs to go in quotation marks. Do not attempt to do sentence-by-sentence “paraphrasing.” That never works.

Developing a Thesis Statement

Remember, the thesis statement is the MOST IMPORTANT SENTENCE in your paper. It informs the reader of the main idea of the paper and answers the question, “What am I trying to prove?” It’s not a factual statement, but a claim that has to be proven throughout the paper. When you’ve decided on your topic, you need to brainstorm to decide what position you want to take on the issue. You can make a list, web, or anything else that will help you. Write points for each side of the issue, and then decide which one is most convincing. This will be a daily grade.

*Consider this:*

Your thesis statement is your topic as well as your opinion about that topic.

**CONTROVERSIAL TOPIC + YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE TOPIC = THESIS STATEMENT**

*Example:*

*Topic*: Assisted Suicide

*Opinion*: Patients should be able to decide whether to die before the body dies, and doctors should be able to help them.

*Thesis*: Physician-assisted suicide should be a legal option for terminally ill patients.

**Your turn:**

What is your *topic*?

What is your *opinion* about that topic?

Put them together to write your *thesis statement*.

**Student keeps the top portion as a record of the thesis statement.**

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**CUT ALONG THE DOTTED LINE**

Topic of the Argumentative Research Paper: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Opinion of the Topic: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Final draft of the thesis statement: *(Remember: It should be one sentence long with specific focus for the topic and without repetition of ideas.)*

Teacher Comments:

SAMPLE OUTLINE   
**Directions:** Use this sample outline to organize your essay. Use full quotes and thoughtful commentary. You will integrate quotes, finalize sentences, and add transition words later.

1. Introduction
2. Lead-In - Suggested Options to Choose From:

Quotation(s)

Question(s)

Anecdote (from your experience or reading)

Myths ("Most people think that . . . ; but in fact . . .)

Reference to text (e.g., one of the essays)

Statistics, Quick Background to Issue

1. Introduce and identify the controversy *within* your subject.
2. Thesis - **YOUR** position on the controversy.

1. Background Paragraph
2. Topic Sentence – make a general statement about the topic at hand as it is relevant to today.
3. Definitions, Background Information - Quote required here (at least one) Not too much, just enough so that the reader has a clear understanding of the issue and topic if not a widely understood concept/belief, etc.
4. Explain any implicit values that need to be made explicit and defended. State the “BIG idea” and then call out the specific idea that needs to be addressed. This is NOT a quotation.
5. Concluding sentence w/ transition to next paragraph
6. Counter-Argument Paragraph
7. Topic Sentence – an acknowledgment of perspective(s) other than your position
8. Succinct summary of opposing position – state the other side’s argument; Optional quotation
9. Quote from Opposition – support for B

*The 3rd paragraph can be moved according to the fluidity of the essay.*

1. Commentary of quote C
2. Quotation of Refutation – support for thesis
3. Commentary to clarify E/Refutation of Opposition
4. Concluding Sentence w/ transition to next paragraph

IV. Reason #1: *insert here the reason*

1. Topic sentence
2. Quote #1
3. Commentary for quote/B
4. Quote #2
5. Commentary for quote/D
6. Concluding Sentence w/ transition to next argument

V. Reason #2: *insert here the reason*

1. Topic sentence
2. Quote #1
3. Commentary for quote/B
4. Quote #2
5. Commentary for quote/D
6. Concluding Sentence

*Note***:** For those students wishing to challenge themselves, adding a third reason to your essay is permissible. Please keep the length of the essay in mind when adding a third point. Also, in ordering your sub-arguments and evidence, think about moving to your strongest argument or piece of evidence; think also of moving from rational appeal to emotional appeal, then culminating in ethical (values) appeal.

VI. Conclusion: Recommendations and Conclusions

1. Acknowledgment of the opposition (One or two sentences)
2. Restate argument - In light of material covered above, show once and for all how the evidence leads to the conclusion
3. Recommended course of action
4. Lead-out - Suggested Options to choose from:

Look to the future

Return to subject of lead-in and now look to a better future

Excellent final quote or astute observation

Integrating Quotations into a Research Paper  
**Directions:** Use the information below to help you integrate your quotes.

I. Dropped Quotation *(INCORRECT FORMAT)*

“Nowhere else in the house is there even a glimpse of nature, and, in contrast to the open window, the front door is locked; only Brently Mallard has the key” (Rosenblum 3909).

II. Partially integrate quote with signal phrase (you can use this *if* it is necessary to include the **whole quote**):

*One critic points out that,* “[nowhere] else in the house is there even a glimpse of nature, and, in contrast to the open window, the front door is locked; only Brently Mallard has the key” (Rosenblum 3909).

To avoid monotony, try to vary your signal phrases. The following models suggest a range of possibilities:

*In the words of researcher Hebert Terrance, “. . .”*

*As Flora Davis has noted, “. . .”*

*Jim Standsky, a literary critic, points out that “. . .”*

*Terrance answers this question with the following analysis, “. . .”*

III. Fully integrated quote (this is the *RECOMMENDED* version of integrating quotations):

It is not always necessary to quote full sentences from a source. At times you may wish to borrow only a phrase and weave it into your own sentence structure. Use “popcorn” integration when you want to weave your words with a critic(s) and/or with the text itself. Be careful to use correct grammar and sentence structure. Use brackets to change such thinks as verb tense to make the sentence complete and grammatically correct.

Example:

Joseph Rosenblum points out that the clouds “cast shadows on her happiness” while the blue sky beyond those clouds symbolize that “the horizon of her life is clearing” (3908).

**Make sure to:**

* 1. Use active verbs (sample verbs):

acknowledges comments endorses reasons

adds compares grants refutes

admits confirms illustrates rejects

agrees contends implies reports

argues declares insists responds

asserts denies notes suggests

believes disputes observes thinks

claims emphasizes points out writes

* 1. Cite the author’s last name and page number of the source in parentheses:

Example: (Smith 3).

- Notice punctuation *after* parentheses

- If there is an exclamation point or question mark in the quote you do the following:

! (Smith 3). Or ? (Smith 3).

* Do NOT use abbreviation of pages (no pp. or p.)
  1. If you use the author’s last name in the sentence, you only have to put page number at end

Example:

*Rosenblum points out that,* “[nowhere] else in the house is there even a glimpse of nature, and, in contrast to the open window, the front door is locked; only Brently Mallard has the key” (3909).

*Using Long Quotations: Long quotations (more than 4 typed lines) are not recommended for this paper, unless you want to use it for the introduction or conclusion…see me for approval for all long quotations!!!*

REVISION - Questions for Argumentative Research Paper Rough Draft

**Directions:** You will answer questions over another person’s research paper then have a brief conference with them. Feel free to comment on their essay by writing on the essay, but write all your answers on a separate sheet of notebook paper in complete sentences. Be detailed. The more information you can give the better. No, you do not have to write the question. After conferencing with your peer, allow them to keep *your* editing paper. You will need to attach *their* editing of *your* essay to your final draft.

1. **Look at the MLA format in the paper:** Heading €, Header €, 12 pt. font €, Times New Roman €, Double spaced €,

Interesting title €, Headers €, Margins - 1” €, Works Cited title €, Works Cited alphabetized €, Works Cited spacing €, Works Cited indentions €

1. **Read the introduction** *(paragraph one)* **carefully.**
2. Does it grip your attention and transitions into a controversy well? YES NO
3. Evaluate the thesis statement.
4. Do they have a thesis statement? YES NO
5. Re-write another thesis that could be proving the opposite of what they are arguing. If you realize they don’t seem to be arguing something that a normal, intelligent individual would actually disagree with help them figure out a way to rephrase their thesis *after* reading their paper.
6. Is the thesis too wordy or too vague? YES NO
7. **Read the background information** *(paragraph two)* **carefully.**
8. Do they have enough background information? YES NO
9. Do you understand the concept or topic of their paper by reading their background? YES NO
10. Write out what you learned about the topic below.
11. **Read the opposing information** *(paragraph three)* **carefully.** 
    1. What opposing argument did they decide to refute? (Write it out.)
    2. Were they successful in refuting the argument? YES NO
    3. How did they refute it?
12. **Read the argumentative paragraphs** *(paragraph four, five, and six)* **carefully.** 
    1. Are their reasons in their paper supportive of the thesis statement? YES NO
    2. Write out the reasons below and explain how they support the thesis statement. *If they do not support the thesis statement then help them figure out a way to rephrase or revamp the topic sentences that support the thesis.*
13. **Look at their citations.**
14. Are the quotes adequately explained, integrated, introduced and analyzed? YES NO
15. Do they provide quality commentary after every quote or reference? YES NO
16. Are they being repetitive or rambling? YES NO
17. **Look for fallacies in their arguments.**
18. Do you see any holes in the argument made? YES NO
19. Explain the problems below. Give paragraph(s) and line number(s).
20. **Evaluate their overall use of transitions in this paper.** Write down *any* transition words you saw as you read. Tally them if they repeat a transition (ex. Next llll - this means that the word “next” was used 4 times).
21. **Look for the words on the DO NOT USE LIST.** Highlight or circle each of these.
    1. Personal pronouns: I, me, you, we, and us.
    2. Contractions: won’t, don’t, can’t, isn’t, shouldn’t, couldn’t, etc.
    3. Informal words/phrases: kind of/kinda, should of/shoulda, a lot/alot, wanna, very, many, there is/are/were
    4. “This” statements *must* have a NOUN after the word “this”.
22. **Look at grammar.** On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being EXCELLENT), rate the grammar. **1 2 3 4 5**
    1. Are there any major grammatical issues reoccurring? Do you notice comma errors, citation errors, verb choice, or awkward wording? Do they need major help editing? If so, indicate a need for teacher tutoring.
23. **3 Things:** Write 3 things you saw that were executed well in this essay. Then, write 3 ways in which you would improve this paper. *Do not write I don’t know or the paper was perfect. Everyone can use improvement, even an A paper.*

**This paper belongs to: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Topic: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

FINAL EDITING

**Directions:** You will move computer to computer with my direction so that many eyes see your paper one last time before you turn it in.

**Part 1: Heading & Spacing**

* + 1. MLA Formatted Heading should *only* be on the first page of the document and *not* at the absolute top of the page.

**See below to double check:**

Smith 1

Suzie Smith   
  
English II, # Period   
  
Mrs. Steplock  
  
13 May 2016

Notice the diagonal between the heading and the header. These should not be on the same plane.

* + 1. Pagination should be at the top right corner (use the header/footer formatting option) with *only* last name and page number.

No dash, comma, or “page” added. See above.

* + 1. Spacing should be double spaced from the heading through the title, every paragraph, and all the way to the Works Cited,

even to the very last period of the very last entry on the Works Cited page.

**Paragraph 1 - Introduction:**

* + 1. *Hook*: How does the author draw in the reader?
  1. If the author uses a quote or citation, does it seem to make sense for the rest of paragraph? YES NO
  2. Is it effective? YES NO Explain. If no, what improvements can be made?

5. What is the controversy within the topic? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Is it an actual controversy? YES NO

* 1. Is it actually a controversy? YES NO
  2. Is it actually an arguable position? YES NO

6. Highlight the thesis statement.

1. Is it clear? YES NO
2. If not, what should be changed?

**Body Paragraph #1: Background Paragraph** Does the paper have this paragraph? YES NO

7. Topic Sentence: This should be a thesis for the paragraph and should not contain quotes in this sentence.

1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence? YES NO
2. Does the sentence have quotes? YES NO

8. Quality Quotes

1. Does the paragraph have quotes or paraphrase included? YES NO
   1. If not, would it be beneficial to include a quote? YES NO
2. Are any of the quotations *dropped*? YES NO *Note the line numbers of any dropped quotations.*

9. Quality of the Information

1. Does the information come from a reputable source? YES NO NOT SURE
2. Is the original speaker/author given credit for his/her ideas? YES NO

10. Commentary for Quotations/paraphrases

1. For each quotation and/or paraphrase, was commentary given? YES NO
2. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being EXCELLENT), rate the commentary. 1 2 3 4 5

11. Parenthetical Notation/Citation: Double check that the citations are at the end of the sentence and the punctuation is *after* the close parenthesis. *Note the line numbers of those that do not have a citation.*

12. Evaluate the quality of the presentation of background information.

1. Does the author adequately educate the reader on basics of the topic? YES NO
2. Does he/she give personal preference? YES NO

13. Look for awkwardly worded sentences, spelling errors, etc. Note the line number of any errors.

14. Concluding Sentence

1. Does the paragraph have a sentence that sums up the paragraph? YES NO

**Body Paragraph #2: Opposition/Objection/Counter-Argument Paragraph** Does the paper have this paragraph? YES NO

15. Topic sentence: Should be a thesis for the paragraph and should not contain quotes.

1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence? YES NO
2. Does the sentence have quotes? YES NO

16. Quality of the Evidence

1. Does the evidence come from a reputable source? YES NO
2. Is the original speaker/author given credit for his/her ideas? YES NO

17. Quality Quotes

1. Does the paragraph have any quotes or paraphrases included? YES NO
   1. If not, would it be beneficial to include a quote? YES NO
2. Are any of the quotations *dropped*? YES NO *Note the line numbers of any dropped quotations.*

18. Commentary for Quotations/paraphrases

1. For each quotation and/or paraphrase, was commentary given? YES NO
2. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being EXCELLENT), rate the commentary. 1 2 3 4 5

19. Parenthetical Notation/Citation: Double check that the citations are at the end of the sentence and the punctuation is *after* the close parenthesis. *Note the line numbers of those that do not have a citation.*

20. Concluding Sentence

1. Does the paragraph have a sentence that sums up the paragraph? YES NO
2. Does it include a transition to the first point of the paper? YES NO
3. If not, what transition could you suggest they use?

21. Look for awkwardly worded sentences, spelling errors, etc. Note the line number of any errors.

22. Clearly presented Opposition/Objection

1. Has the author identified a clear opposition? YES NO
2. Is the quote attributed to the opposition clear and informative? YES NO
3. Note anything about the position of the opposition or the opposition itself that you would like to know more about.

**Body Paragraph #3: Reason 1 (weakest reason)** Does the paper have this paragraph? YES NO

23. Topic sentence: Should be a thesis for the paragraph and should not contain quotes.

1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence? YES NO
2. Does the sentence have quotes? YES NO

24. Point number one

1. Is it directly related to the thesis for the paper? YES NO
2. Does it make sense? YES NO

25. Quality of the Evidence

1. Does the evidence come from a reputable source? YES NO
2. Is the original speaker/author given credit for his/her ideas? YES NO

26. Quality Quotes

1. Does the paragraph have at least 2 quotes or paraphrases included? YES NO
   1. If not, how many need to be added to meet the minimum requirement? 1 2
2. Are any of the quotations *dropped*? YES NO *Note the line numbers of any dropped quotations.*

*Reminder: you don’t want dropped quotations.*

27. Commentary for Quotations/paraphrases

1. For each quotation and/or paraphrase, was commentary given? YES NO
2. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being EXCELLENT), rate the commentary. 1 2 3 4 5

28. Parenthetical Notation/Citation: Double check that the citations are at the end of the sentence and the punctuation is *after* the close parenthesis. *Note the line numbers of those that do not have a citation.*

29. Concluding Sentence

1. Does the paragraph have a sentence that sums up the paragraph? YES NO
2. Does it include a transition to the next point of the paper? YES NO
3. If not, what transition could you suggest they use?

30. Look for awkwardly worded sentences, spelling errors, etc. Note the line number of any errors.

**Body Paragraph #4: Reason 2 (strongest reason)** Does the paper have this paragraph? YES NO

31. Topic sentence: Should be a thesis for the paragraph and should not contain quotes.

1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence? YES NO
2. Does the sentence have quotes? YES NO

32. Point number two

1. Is it directly related to the thesis for the paper? YES NO
2. Does it make sense? YES NO
3. Is this point stronger than the first? YES NO

33. Quality of the Evidence

1. Does the evidence come from a reputable source? YES NO
2. Is the original speaker/author given credit for his/her ideas? YES NO

34. Quality Quotes

1. Does the paragraph have at least 2 quotes or paraphrases included? YES NO
   1. If not, how many need to be added to meet the minimum requirement? 1 2
2. Are any of the quotations *dropped*? YES NO *Note the line numbers of any dropped quotations.*

*Reminder: you don’t want dropped quotations.*

35. Commentary for Quotations/paraphrases

1. For each quotation and/or paraphrase, was commentary given? YES NO
2. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being EXCELLENT), rate the commentary. 1 2 3 4 5

36. Parenthetical Notation/Citation: Double check that the citations are at the end of the sentence and the punctuation is *after* the close parenthesis. *Note the line numbers of those that do not have a citation.*

37. Concluding Sentence

1. Does the paragraph have a sentence that sums up the paragraph? YES NO
2. Does it include a transition to the next point of the paper? YES NO
3. If not, what transition could you suggest they use?

38. Look for awkwardly worded sentences, spelling errors, etc. Note the line number of any errors.

39. Between the two reasons…

1. Is this the strongest reason? YES NO
2. Would the essay be best served if the two were reversed? YES NO

**Conclusion: Recommendations and Conclusions**

40. Opening Sentence

1. Does the sentence circle back to original assertion? YES NO

41. Does the paragraph have a sense of closure? YES NO

42. Lead out:

1. How effective is the lead out?
2. Did they offer any recommendations? YES NO

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GENERAL COMMENTS/CONCERNS:

Argumentative Research Paper Rubric Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Content**  5 4 3 2 1 0

Excellent Average Needs Work Weak Poor Missing

Introduction 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Provides a strong lead in, introduction to controversy, and thesis positioned at the end of the paragraph.*

Thesis 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Last sentence of Introduction, stated as a single sentence shaping an opinioned claim set to prove in the essay.*

Background

Information 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Provides a clear topic sentence followed by support (quote/paraphrase), implicit/explicit statement, and a transitional concluding sentence.*

Reason 1 (x2) 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Provides a clear topic sentence followed by at least two supports (quote/paraphrase) and a transitional concluding sentence.*

Reason 2 (x2) 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Provides a clear topic sentence followed by at least two supports (quote/paraphrase) and a transitional concluding sentence.*

Counter Argument 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Provides a clear topic sentence followed by support (quote/paraphrase), refutation of argument, and a transitional concluding sentence.*

Conclusion 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Begins with a concession to the opposition and brings the essay full circle ending with a restatement of thesis and a lead out.*

Integrating Quotes 5 4 3 2 1 0

*Blends important aspects of quotes gathered during research with writer’s own commentary.*

**Total Score (x 2): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** *(one major grade)*

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**Mechanics**

25 20 15 10 0

Excellent Average Needs Work Poor Missing

Format 25 20 15 10 0

*Follows proper MLA format for typing of all parts of the final copy.*

Works Cited 25 20 15 10 0

*Follows proper MLA format and includes only sources cited in the essay.*

Parenthetical Citation 25 20 15 10 0

*Uses proper MLA format as well as proper placement in sentences of essay.*

Grammar 25 20 15 10 0

*Contains minimal errors in grammar and mechanics.*

**Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** *(two daily grades)*