

Romeo & Juliet: Argumentative Essay

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

An argumentative essay uses reasoning, logic, and evidence - not emotion - to take a definitive stance on an issue. Argumentative writing is about giving the reader one perspective to consider on a debatable topic and proving why that position is the superior choice. A critical part of an argumentative essay is offering several claims for one side using textual evidence while also acknowledging that there are counterclaims from the opposition.

WRITING TOPIC

In a well-written 2-3 page essay, answer the following question:

- Who is to blame for the deaths of Romeo & Juliet?
 - You may select one of the following characters: Fate, Romeo & Juliet, the Feud, the Nurse, the Priest, Mercutio, the Prince - and prove that they are to blame for the death of the lovers.

PAPER FORMAT

- 2-3 pages
- Times New Roman, 12 point font
- Double Spaced
- MLA headers, citations, and works cited page

WRITING PROCESS

- Brainstorm - select topic; draft thesis statement; compile evidence for argument
- Thesis Pitch
- Outline
- Rough Draft
- Peer Edits
- 1:1 Conferences with Mrs. LaFlamme
- FINAL DRAFT DUE: _____

You will receive separate grades for completing your thesis pitch and rough draft. Your final essay will be worth 30% of your fourth quarter grade.

ESSAY STRUCTURE

Use this sample outline as a tool to make your writing process easier. Pay close attention to your thesis statement (it should be the main focus throughout your entire essay) and topic sentences in each body paragraph (they should remind the reader of your thesis).

1. Introductory Paragraph

- a. Hook - Attention grabber that relates in some way to your essay topic.
 - i. Quotation, Fact, Shocking Statement, Compare/Contrast
 - ii. **DO NOT** use a question as your hook
- b. Transition to summary - title of play, author, and summary.
- c. Thesis Statement - Your opinion (without saying "In this essay I will prove...")
 - i. Should include the three points in your argument.
 - ii. Example: *"If it were not for Tybalt's relation to Juliet, his tendency toward fighting, and his rebellion against authority, Romeo and Juliet would not have died so tragically."*

2. Body Paragraphs (You should have **THREE** body paragraphs)

- a. Topic Sentence - Introduces the subject of the paragraph and connects it back to the thesis statement.
 - i. Example: "Tybalt's blood relation to the Capulet's is one of the many factors that significantly influences the fate of Romeo and Juliet."
- b. Introduce Supporting Evidence
 - i. Using proper MLA citations
- c. Explain Evidence - This is your analysis!
- d. Provide Additional Supporting Evidence
- e. Explain Additional Evidence
 - i. Each body paragraph should have **TWO** pieces of textual evidence
- f. Transition to Next Paragraph

3. Conclusion

- a. Restate your thesis - using different wording than in your intro!
- b. Consider alternative opinions/arguments
 - i. *"Some may argue that..."*
- c. Explain why your opinion is superior to the other viewpoints
 - i. *"However, it is clear that..."*
 - ii. *"While this may appear to be a valid argument, after examining the evidence, the reader can see that the exact opposite is actually true."*
- d. End with one final thought or idea; Your final statement should consider the "so what?" of your argument...Why is this important or why does it matter to the reader?

FINAL PAPER DUE: _____

ESSAY SKELETON

INTRODUCTION

(HOOK) _____

(LINK CONNECTING HOOK AND SUMMARY) _____

(SUMMARY) _____

(THESIS STATEMENT) _____

This character is clearly to blame due to their _____,
_____, and _____.

FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

(CHARACTER) _____ plays a critical role in this unnecessary
tragedy first of all because of his/her _____.

(Introduce supporting quote) _____

" _____

" ().

This quote shows that _____

(Linking Sentence) _____

SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Again, (CHARACTER) _____ influences the tragic ending because of his/her _____.

(Introduce supporting quote) _____

" _____" (_____).

This quote shows that _____

(Linking Sentence) _____

THIRD BODY PARAGRAPH

Finally, the reader sees that (CHARACTER) _____ caused the death of these two young lovers due to his/her _____.

(Introduce supporting quote) _____

" _____" (_____).

This quote shows that _____

(Linking Sentence) _____

CONCLUSION

(Restate your thesis) _____

(Summarize your main points) _____

(Final thought) _____

When determining the "final thought" that you will leave your reader with, consider the following:

- What's important or interesting about the points I've made?
- What can readers take away from my essay that is useful, or that might shed light on their own lives or the world around them?
- If I'm describing a problem in my paper, what might be a possible solution?

Useful Linking Words and Phrases for Essays

To indicate a contrast:

- however
- on the other hand
- alternatively
- in fact
- instead
- conversely
- on the contrary
- notwithstanding
- rather
- in comparison
- better/worst still
- all the same
- another possibility
- but
- nevertheless
- despite this
- in spite of
- although
- for all that
- yet
- in contrast

To provide an illustration:

- for example
- that is
- that is to say
- in other words
- namely
- such as
- typical of this/such
- on such
- a typical/particular
- including
- especially
- not least
- chiefly
- mainly
- most importantly

To extend a point:

- similarly
- equally
- likewise
- also
- furthermore
- indeed
- in the same way
- it can be seen
- besides
- above all
- as well
- in addition

To show cause and effect/conclusion:

- so
- therefore
- it might be concluded
- then
- thus
- from this
- in this/that case
- as a result/consequence
- to conclude
- for this reason
- resulting from
- linked to this
- it follows that
- consequently
- it can be inferred
- in conclusion
- owing to/due to the fact
- accepting/assuming this
- in short
- this suggests that
- this implies

To show the next step:

- first(ly) second(ly)
- to begin/start with
- in the first/second place
- first and foremost
- first and most importantly
- first
- another
- then
- after
- next
- afterwards
- then
- finally
- ultimately
- lastly

MLA FORMATTING RULES

- OVERALL PAPER

- 1" margins on all sides
- Indent the first line in all paragraphs
- Double-spaced
- 12 pt. font
- Times New Roman

- HEADER

- Upper left hand corner of first page
 - Your Name
 - Teacher's Name
 - Class
 - Date (6 January 2017)

- PAGE NUMBERS

- Upper right hand corner of every page should include a header with your last name and the page number

- WORKS CITED PAGE

- The last page of your essay should be titled Works Cited
 - This should be a complete separate page
 - It should follow all the same formatting rules as the rest of your paper
 - Citations need to use a hanging indent (where the second line of your citation is indented)
 - Citations should be formatted as follows:
 - Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Publication Date.

| | Exemplary (90-100) | Proficient (70-89) | Needs Improvement (50-69) | Unacceptable (0-49) |
|------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Purpose/Thesis | Consistently demonstrates a clear and thorough understanding of main ideas. Maintains focus through the use of a well-structured thesis. | Regularly demonstrates a clear understanding of main ideas and maintains focus through the use of a well-structured thesis. | Sometimes demonstrates an understanding of main ideas; maintains limited focus. | Rarely or never demonstrates an understanding of main ideas and is poorly focused. |
| Organization | Consistently uses organization to clearly and effectively develop ideas. Effectively uses smooth and logical transitions. | Regularly uses organization to clearly and effectively develop ideas. Adequately uses logical transitions. | Sometimes uses organization to develop ideas. Uses limited transitions. | Rarely or never uses organization to develop ideas. Uses few transitions or none at all. |
| Textual Evidence | Consistently and accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. | Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. | Attempts to cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly but fails to make inferences drawn from the text. | Does not cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says. |
| Style/Expression | Consistently creates well structured sentences, showing variety, originality, and highly effective use of language. Demonstrates exceptional word choice and vocabulary appropriate to form and audience. | Regularly creates well structured sentences, showing variety, originality, and effective use of language. Demonstrates appropriate word choice and vocabulary. | Sometimes creates sentences showing variety and originality with some effective use of language. Word choice and vocabulary are sometimes appropriate. | Rarely or never creates sentences showing effective use of language. Word choice and vocabulary demonstrate limited or no awareness of audience |
| Conventions | Demonstrates excellence in spelling, mechanics, usage, and grammar | Demonstrates appropriate spelling, usage, mechanics, and grammar | Makes some errors in spelling, usage, mechanics, and grammar | Makes considerable errors in spelling, usage, mechanics, and grammar |

TMHS School-wide Expectations that will be considered for this assignment:
2: Communication: B. Reading

| | Exemplary | Proficient | Needs Improvement | Unacceptable |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Connection | <p>Consistently connects ideas within the text in a logical and purposeful manner and draws insightful conclusions based on source material.</p> <p>Consistently connects these ideas and conclusions to real-world situations and points of view</p> | <p>Regularly connects ideas within the text in a logical manner and draws appropriate conclusions based on source material.</p> <p>Regularly connects these ideas and conclusions to real-world situations and points of view</p> | <p>Sometimes accurately connects ideas within the text and draws conclusions based on source material. Attempts to connect these ideas and conclusions to real-world situations and points of view</p> | <p>Makes few or no connections and draws limited conclusions.</p> <p>Little or no attempt to connect ideas and conclusions to real-world situations and points of view</p> |
| 2: Communication: C. Writing | | | | |
| | Exemplary | Proficient | Needs Improvement | Unacceptable |
| Organization | <p>Consistently uses organization to clearly and effectively develop ideas.</p> <p>Effectively uses smooth and logical transitions allowing for insightful observations</p> | <p>Regularly uses organization to clearly and effectively develop ideas. Adequately uses logical transitions allowing for appropriate observations</p> | <p>Sometimes uses organization to develop ideas. Uses limited transitions allowing for some observations</p> | <p>Rarely or never uses organization to develop ideas. Uses few transitions and makes few or no observations</p> |
| Content Accuracy | <p>Consistently incorporates well-supported, well-developed, relevant evidence; evidence supports the main ideas of the text, resulting in a compelling analysis</p> | <p>Regularly incorporates developed, relevant evidence; evidence supports the main ideas of the text, resulting in an effective analysis</p> | <p>Sometimes incorporates evidence which supports the main ideas of the text, resulting in a limited analysis</p> | <p>Rarely or never incorporates evidence which supports the main ideas of the text, resulting in a faulty analysis or no analysis</p> |

Final Grade:

/500 points = _____ %