

English 092 Unit 3.3

092 Persuasive Essay Assignment

Write a persuasive essay in which you take a position on one of the topics below.

- Your essay should be **about 600** words long.
- Your essay should have an **introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs,** and a **concluding paragraph**.
- Your introductory paragraph must include a **thesis statement** that indicates three clear points that you are making to support your position.
- **Double Space** your essay.
- Use **MLA Formatting** for name, course number, date, etc. See page 310 in *Essay Essentials*
- Write in third person.
- Choose from one of the topics below.

Persuasive Writing Topics

1. The legal drinking age should be lowered and the driving age should be raised.
2. The price of gas should be raised to reduce consumption.
3. Reality shows have improved the quality of television programming, or reality shows are the lowest form of entertainment.
4. Penalties for drunk driving should be dramatically increased.
5. The food industry is largely responsible for the obesity epidemic in North America. Argue for or against.
6. Pornographic and violent films, music and video games should be heavily censored.
7. Victoria should establish a safe injection site for intravenous drug users.
8. In the interest of preserving the environment, the government should place restrictions on the use of private automobiles and heavily tax gas guzzlers.

9. Panhandling should be treated as a criminal offence.
 10. Manufacturers and retailers should be responsible for recycling everything they produce and sell.
 11. Human cloning research should be supported by the government.
 12. There should be zero tolerance for the use of performance enhancing drugs in sports, or because drug use is impossible to stop, sports organizations should stop drug testing.
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Writing Tips

1. Decide on the position you are taking. Remember that you are arguing for a position and you are trying to convince your reader that your position is the right one. Acknowledge the other side, but point to the flaws in the other position. Strive for balance. **A persuasive essay is not a one-sided rant.** Your tone should be firm and reasonable.
2. **Brainstorm** to come up with points to support your position.
3. State your position as a **thesis statement**. E.g. **Because of the potential benefits, B.C. should actively pursue off-shore oil exploration and development.** Or, to take the opposite position: **Because of the potential dangers, B.C. should not go ahead with off-shore oil exploration and development.**
4. Develop a **separate point in each body paragraph** and support your point. Acknowledge the other position, but present reasons why it is not supportable. **You should have three body paragraphs with two or three supporting statements for each point.** There is no need to research your topic, but you can include statistics and other information that you have picked up through reading or through the media. E.g., If you are arguing for an end to grizzly bear hunting in B.C. you might point out that according to the Sierra Club there are only 8000 to 10,000 grizzly bears in B.C., a low number which raises concerns over their survival. If you are arguing in support of a continued hunt, you'd probably prefer to use a statistic from one of the groups supporting hunting which pegs the number at closer to 20,000 and argues that hunting presents no danger to the long term survival of grizzlies. Even when people agree on numbers, they often interpret the meaning of those numbers quite differently.
5. **Reaffirm** your position in your conclusion.