Step 1: Select Topic of Logical Argument

Common Core Standard*

Write a logical argument to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

1. **Leading Issues** are 300+ pro/con topics featuring Essential Questions with content to support all sides of the issue, a concise overview, timeline, statistics, global perspectives, multimedia, terms to know, and viewpoint quotes. **Click any of the icons below to browse SIRS Leading Issues:**

2. **What 5 Leading Issue topics of argument are you most interested in researching?**

   1. ______________________
   2. ______________________
   3. ______________________
   4. ______________________
   5. ______________________

   **Need Help?**

   Consider the following questions when deciding on a topic:
   - What topics are of interest to you?
   - Who is the intended audience?
   - Does this topic have personal or geographic appeal?
   - Does this topic meet the requirements of the project?
   - Is this a topic you have always wanted to know more about?
   - Is this a good topic for a logical argument?

3. **Make a final decision about your logical argument research topic.**
   My research topic of argument is:
   __________________________________________________________________________

4. **Why are you most interested in the topic of argument selected?**
   __________________________________________________________________________

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*"Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects."*  
Step 2:  
Research to Build and Present Knowledge

1. Access Leading Issue summaries (“Topic Overview” or “At Issue” Pages) and Timeline (under Research Tools) from the SIRS Leading Issue you have chosen. **In 3-5 sentences, summarize the background and historical information of the Leading Issue you selected. Include main controversies, key figures, important organizations, and key events.**

2. Read the Essential Question, Pro/Con articles, and Viewpoints to learn about the claims of your Leading Issue topic of argument. **What are all the claims related to the Leading Issue topic of argument you selected?**

3. Think about which claim you would like to be the focus of your argument.

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*Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.*  
<http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/key-points-in-english-language-arts>
**SIRS Common Core Guide: Writing Arguments**

**Step 3:**
**Introduce the Claim of the Argument & Gather Information from Multiple Source Types to Find Evidence to Support and Refute Your Claim**

1. **Decide on the main claim of your argument.**
   Review all the claims related to your selected Leading Issue topic of argument.

   **Need Help?**
   **THINK:** ‘Which claim do I most strongly agree with?’
   **CHALLENGE:** Select a claim you do not strongly agree with for a more challenging topic of logical argument.

   Which claim is the focus of your argument?

   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

   __________________________________________

   __________________________________________

2. **Gather information to find evidence to support and refute your claim.** Use the Leading Issue as a starting point. Utilize results list and advanced search to find supporting content. Find a variety of sources in SIRS Issues Researcher (newspapers, magazines, graphics, web sites). As you research, keep track of articles with My List.

3. **Distinguish pros and cons of your claim.** List the evidence and reasons that support your claim (pro) and the evidence/reasons that refute your claim (con):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Con</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ____________________________________</td>
<td>1. ____________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ____________________________________</td>
<td>2. ____________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ____________________________________</td>
<td>3. ____________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Step 4: Develop and Organize Claim**

1. **Develop claim by researching evidence.** The SIRS Note Organizer helps you cite sources and organize supporting evidence. Be sure to identify flaws in the evidence for and against your claim.

2. **Check mark ✓ next to each type of source you used to support your claim and refute the counterclaim(s):**

   - Definitions
   - Eyewitness accounts
   - Government documents
   - Graphics
   - Interviews
   - Magazine articles
   - Multimedia
   - Newspaper articles
   - Political cartoons
   - Reference books
   - Statistical information
   - Web sites

3. **Organize evidence to support your claim and refute the counterclaim(s). Cite your sources.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim:</th>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Con</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting Evidence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting Evidence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting Evidence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refuting Evidence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refuting Evidence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refuting Evidence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Common Core Standard*

Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

**Need Help?**

Consider these helpful tools located in Leading Issues topic pages:

- Supporting facts and figures via the Statistics link in Research Tools.
- Expert opinions in the Perspectives section of At Issues and Topic Overviews.
- Primary Sources in the Additional Resources of Topic Overviews.
- Definitions in Terms to Know in Topic Overviews.
Step 5: Synthesize Information and Write Argument

1. Write a clear claim statement to be used in your introductory paragraph.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

2. Write your introductory paragraph. Be sure to include the claim statement.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

3. Compose the body of the argument. Refer to your organization of pros and cons with evidence. If you used Note Organizer, refer to it now. Consider this possible format for your argument. Formats may vary depending on writing style and assignment requirements:

I. Introductory Paragraph with Claim Statement

II. Body Section 1 (Pro)
   a. Supporting Reason 1 with evidence
   b. Supporting Reason 2 with evidence
   c. Supporting Reason 3 with evidence

III. Body Section 2 (Con)
   a. Opposing Reason 1 with refuting evidence
   b. Opposing Reason 2 with refuting evidence
   c. Opposing Reason 3 with refuting evidence

IV. Conclusion

Common Core Standards*

Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Need Help?

When writing an introductory paragraph, ask:
- Can I use an interesting anecdote or stunning statistics to grab my audience?
- Have I clearly expressed my position?
- Is my claim specific and focused?
- Will my claim statement trigger thoughtful debate?

Need Help?

Use transitional words and clauses for clear, logical transitions between sections of your argument.

Examples:

Accordingly
Above all
Certainly
Furthermore
Granted
In particular
Nevertheless
To the contrary

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SIRS Common Core Guide: Writing Arguments

Step 6: Conclusion and Evaluation

1. A concluding paragraph is where you can spur or inspire action based on evidence presented. **What action will you suggest to the reader?**

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

2. Write the concluding paragraph of your logical argument.

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

3. Read over your logical argument assignment and ask the following questions as you write and proofread your paper. Make revisions as needed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is my argument well organized with an introduction, claim, body and conclusion?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have I used supporting evidence to defend each point related to the claim of my argument?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does every paragraph contain clear opening and closing sentences? Does it flow?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are transitional words or clauses used to separate ideas?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have I used vocabulary that is appropriate in style and tone for my intended audience?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is all punctuation correct?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have I cited my sources in the proper format required by my teacher?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I have a conclusion that supports the argument presented?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common Core Standards*

- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Need Help?

When writing a concluding paragraph, ask:
- Have I ended the discussion of logical argument?
- Have I restated the introductory paragraph?
- Have I avoided generalities and presented specific ideas for action such as further research or lobbying to politicians?
- Have I summarized the main points of the argument?


6 | Page