Dear students,

In this folder you will find several "A" grade sample papers. The First-Year English Team suggests that you read at least four or five of these BEFORE you write your argument essay. When you read, pay close attention to:

1. **What's the "Because**"? Remember that a good thesis statement clearly states your position in the argument, and it LISTS the reasons for your position. Now, the "list" does not need to be all in one sentence. Several of the best essays devote a sentence to each individual reason. But the reasons are listed. The writer says that the audience should or should not take a certain course of action "because." and then lists those reasons. If your essay does not do this, you will almost certainly not earn that "A."

2.  **The conclusion**. The introduction may be more than one paragraph, but the introduction and thesis list the main points that you will talk about in your essay. The conclusion restates your argument and summarizes (or restates) your main points. The conclusion does NOT need to be a "happily ever after" ending. Summarize your argument. Stick to the facts. That's all you need.

3.  **Research, Citation, and Introducing Quotations**. First, notice how many sources the writers list in their Reference Page. "A" papers exceed minimum requirements. Many of our students will use more than ten sources to support their argument. How many will YOU use? Notice, also, that the Reference Page is in correct APA format. By now, all of you should be able to do this. This includes alphabetizing your citations A - Z. After this, notice how many citations the writers use in each paragraph. Good writers will support their ideas with quotations of paraphrases and cite those correctly. Each paragraph should have at least one citation, and many paragraphs will have more. Remember that an important part of your grade is how well you support your position with research and citation. Finally, notice how simply the writers introduce their sources. The magic words here are "**According to**..." Now, you don't have to use these exact words. But introduce your source BEFORE the quotation or paraphrase. Use natural language like "Professor Sterne says...", "Professor Sterne wrote...", "Professor Sterne found...", or "Research shows..." Things like this. Read these essays and notice how the students introduce their quotations. This is not difficult.

4. **Anticipate the counter-argument**.  Remember that every argument has two sides. Great essays acknowledge this, and good students show that they have considered both sides of the argument. The magic words here are "**Some people say**..." So, what is the "some people say" in these essays? Can you identify the place where these students offer a point from the "counter argument" and the tell the reader why that point doesn't change their position? 

5. **Using good examples to illustrate their points**. All of these authors use good examples to illustrate their points. The magic words here are "**For example**..." Can you read these essays and underline or highlight the places where they use concrete examples to make abstract points clear to the reader?

6. **What you should NOT find in these essays**. Two things that you should NOT find. First, point-of-view shifts. The writers stick to 3rd person point-of-view and don't lose control  of that in their essays. Second, the writers understand paragraph boundaries. There are no "run-on" paragraphs. A paragraph is a group of closely-related sentences organized around a single topic. When the topic changes, indent and begin a new paragraph! Remember that even the main points may be subdivided into smaller points that still make up an individual paragraph. If you find a paragraph longer than half-a-page, be very careful that you have not changed topic and created that run-on.

If you have read this, and you look at all six of these points, NONE of them have anything to do with your English language proficiency. You do NOT have to be great at English to write a good paper. All of these essays have some grammatical mistakes. Remember that 2/3 of your grade is based upon organization and thinking -- the points we have outlined above: research, citation, use of examples, paragraph organization, and point-of-view. Yes, good text helps, but it is NOT everything. Learning how to write has little to do with the language that you write in. Learn these points and you should do well. That said, it helps to proofread your paper carefully and eliminate all of the silly grammar mistakes that you can. Keep your sentence length under control. Remember SVO word order. Eliminate verb phrases. Get rid of those incorrect fronted adverbial conjunctions. Don't rely on emotional appeal (adjectives, adverbs, hyperbole, or poetic language). Stick to the facts! Let the facts persuade your reader. Keep your language under control to the best of your ability. Good writing makes complicated points simple. It does NOT make simple points complicated. So use common language that your reader will understand. This is NOT the place to show off your vocabulary. Yes, we want you to develop your vocabulary. But we want you to choose the right words -- and that means using language that is easily understood by your audience. Do this, and you will find it easier to write in English, and you will maximize your grade in this area.

The First-Year English Team

亲爱的同学们，

在这个文件夹里，你们会发现几篇评为“A”等级的样本论文。大一英语团队建议在你们写论证性论文之前，至少阅读四到五篇这样的论文。阅读时，请特别注意以下几点：

1. 什么是“因为”？请记住，一个好的论点声明清楚地表明了你在争论中的立场，并列出了你立场的理由。现在，这个“列表”不需要全部在一个句子中。许多优秀的论文会将每个理由分别用一个句子来阐述。但是理由是被列出来的。作者说，观众应该或不应该采取某种行动“因为”，然后列出那些理由。如果你的论文没有这样做，你几乎肯定不会得到“A”。

2. 结论。引言可能不止一段，但引言和论点声明列出了你将在论文中讨论的主要点。结论重申了你的争论，并总结（或重述）了你的主要点。结论不需要是一个“幸福快乐”的结局。总结你的争论。坚持事实。这就是你所需要的。

3. 研究、引用和引入引文。首先，注意作者们在参考文献页中列出了多少来源。“A”等级的论文超过了最低要求。我们许多学生将使用超过十个来源来支持他们的论点。你会使用多少个？同时，也注意参考文献页是否采用了正确的APA格式。到现在为止，你们所有人都应该能够做到这一点。这包括按字母顺序A-Z排列你的引用。在此之后，注意作者们在每段中使用了多少次引用。优秀的作者会用引文或改写来支持他们的想法，并正确引用。每个段落应该至少有一次引用，许多段落会有更多。记住，你的成绩中很重要的一部分是你如何通过研究和引用来支持你的立场。最后，注意作者们是如何简单地引入他们的来源的。这里的魔法词是“根据……”当然，你不必使用这些确切的词。但在引用或改写之前先介绍你的来源。使用自然的语言，比如“斯特恩教授说……”、“斯特恩教授写道……”、“斯特恩教授发现……”或“研究表明……”等。阅读这些论文，注意学生们是如何引入他们的引文的。这并不难。

4. 预见反论点。记住，每个争论都有两面。伟大的论文承认这一点，而且好的学生会展示他们考虑了争论的双方。这里的魔法词是“有人说……”那么，这些论文中的“有人说”是什么？你能确定这些学生提出了“反论点”的哪一点，并告诉读者为什么那一点不改变他们的立场吗？

5. 使用好的例子来阐述他们的观点。所有这些作者都使用好的例子来阐述他们的观点。这里的魔法词是“例如……”你能阅读这些论文并标出或高亮他们使用具体例子来让抽象观点对读者更清晰的地方吗？

6. 你不应该在这些论文中找到的两件事。首先，观点视角的转换。作者们坚持使用第三人称视角，并且在他们的论文中没有失去对此的控制。其次，作者们了解段落界限。没有“连篇累牍”的段落。一个段落是一组围绕单一主题组织的密切相关的句子。当主题改变时，缩进并开始一个新的段落！记住，即使是主要点也可能被细分为仍然构成一个独立段落的更小点。如果你发现一个段落长于半页，请非常小心，确保你没有改变话题并创建了那个连篇累牍。

如果你已经阅读了这篇文章，并且查看了所有这六点，你会发现它们中没有任何一点与你的英语语言能力有关。你不必擅长英语就能写出一篇好论文。所有这些论文都有一些语法错误。请记住，你成绩的2/3是基于组织和思考——我们上面概述的点：研究、引用、使用例子、段落组织和观点视角。是的，好的文本有帮助，但它并非一切。学习如何写作与你用什么语言写作几乎没有关系。学习这些点，你应该会做得很好。话虽如此，仔细校对你的论文并消除你能消除的所有愚蠢的语法错误还是有帮助的。控制好你的句子长度。记住主谓宾词序。消除动词短语。去掉那些不正确的前置副词连词。不要依赖情感诉求（形容词、副词、夸张或诗意语言）。坚持事实！让事实说服你的读者。尽你所能控制好你的语言。好的写作使复杂的观点简单化。它不会使简单的观点复杂化。所以，使用你的读者能理解的通俗语言。这不是炫耀你词汇量的地方。是的，我们希望你扩展你的词汇量。但我们希望你选择正确的词——这意味着使用容易被你的听众理解的语言。这样做，你会发现用英语写作更容易，而且你会在这个领域最大限度地提高你的成绩。

大一英语团队