

WRITING SAMPLES

The first student writer uses the three-paragraph approach as she plans a research paper on the effects of caffeine on athletic performance. She includes in her bibliography materials from commercial and academic websites, professional periodicals, and scholarly journals. As you read, note the writer's ability to compress a lot of information and an extensive anticipated project into a brief form.

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"It Gives You Wings," but Is Caffeine Good for Exercise?

I am interested in researching how caffeine can affect athletic performance, and I plan to focus my research in the field of sports medicine. I used *Academic Search Premier* to search under "caffeine and athletic performance," "caffeine and sports," and "caffeine and exercise" and found good articles in *Sports Medicine*, *Physician and Sports Medicine*, and *Athletic Therapy*. I also found non-scholarly articles on caffeine that have good information. Some of the articles I found had a lot of the same information: for instance, I found that caffeine can affect performance positively and negatively; it helps endurance athletes, but it doesn't help athletes such as sprinters and weightlifters; it keeps the muscles contracting longer, and it turns fat into energy. Caffeine also affects the brain, mainly by preventing physical fatigue. Caffeine doesn't help short, high intensity exercise because it takes at least thirty minutes, and as much as two to three hours, for caffeine to start affecting muscles. These sources also describe some of the risks that caffeine use, and especially caffeine abuse, poses to athletes' bodies. If caffeine is over-used, harmful effects on the body can include tachycardia (a fast heart rate) and high blood pressure. Even with all of the research materials out there, the effects of caffeine are still unpredictable: it may work on some athletes but not others, so it is important to know the possible side effects and proper use of caffeine.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Graham, T.E. "Caffeine and Exercise: Metabolism, Endurance, and Performance." *Sports Medicine* 31.11 (2001): 785-807. Print.

The main argument is that caffeine allows athletes to train longer and at a greater output and to increase speed and power. The purpose is to show how caffeine affects long- and short-term exercise. The article covers long-term and short-term exercise and how caffeine affects blood flow, ion balance, blood glucose, lactate fluid, electrolyte balance, and caffeine dependency. It describes some case studies that were done with caffeine and different types of athletes, such as cyclists and swimmers.

The article is reliable because it comes from a recent, scholarly sports medicine journal. It is not biased, because its purpose is to inform readers about how caffeine can improve performance and about its side effects. The goal is to give someone in the sports medicine field information about caffeine. I want to read more studies on the effects of caffeine on blood flow, electrolyte balance, and lactate fluid.

Iknoian, Therese. "Caffeine: Performance Aid or Just a Jolt?" *Adventure Sports Online*. Web. 2 Feb. 2006. <www.adventuresportsonline.com/caffeine.htm>.

The purpose of this article is to inform the general public about caffeine and exercise. It gives good tips about how much to take and when to take it, and possible side effects.

It is fairly reliable, because the author is an award-winning and internationally published fitness and sports journalist, but the article may not be peer reviewed. The goal is to inform people with general fitness interests about caffeine and provide tips if readers plan to use it for exercise. Most of the information is repeated in the other sources, but it gave helpful tips that I would use if I used caffeine during exercise. I will find other articles with more analysis, but it is a good overview article.

Jenkins, Mark. "Caffeine and the Athlete." Web. 22 Feb. 2006. <www.rice.edu/~jenky/sports/caffeine.html>.

There isn't a main argument, but the website has good information for athletes about caffeine and its use in sports. It gives background information on caffeine and what happens when it enters the body, health and performance effects, side effects, and recommendations for athletes who choose to use caffeine.

The article may not be scholarly, but I think it is reliable because it was written by a doctor at Rice University and is on the Rice University website. This information is helpful, but it makes me want to find more sources on the physiology of caffeine's effects on the body.

Magkos, Faidon, and Savros A. Kavouras. "Caffeine and Ephedrine:

Physiological, Metabolic, and Performance Enhancing Effects." *Sports Medicine* 34.13 (2004): 871-89. Print.

The article's main argument is that caffeine can increase time to exhaustion during endurance exercise. The main points are how it increases endurance in long-term exercise but doesn't improve short-distance exercise. Caffeine can also improve speed and power in endurance exercise.

The article is reliable and has good, specific information; Magkos and Kavouras achieve their goal of showing how caffeine can enhance performance. This article is fairly short, so I will find another source with similar information but more depth.

Mangus, Brent C., and Cynthia A. Throwbridge. "Will Caffeine Work as an Ergogenic Aid? The Latest Research." *Athletic Therapy Today* 10.3 (2005): 57-62. Print.

The purpose of the article is to provide information on caffeine and how it improves athletic performance. The information is directed to athletic trainers to help athletes. The main argument is that caffeine can improve endurance exercise, but not short, high-intensity exercise. The article provides

background information on caffeine and covers theories of why caffeine affects exercise as well as possible applications for athletic trainers, including recommended amounts of caffeine, side effects, and ways to provide education for athletes.

This source is reliable because it comes from a scholarly sports medicine journal. It was also very recently published. The authors' goal (which they achieve) is to provide information to athletic trainers, coaches, and athletes about caffeine and how it affects athletic performance. It gives good information for application and it informed me on how caffeine can improve athletic performance.

"Soda Pop: An Athlete's Friend or Foe?" *Physician and Sports Medicine* 30.11 (2002): 17. Print.

This article was a cover story about coaches in Minnesota who weren't allowing their athletes to consume soda pop. The argument is that athletes shouldn't use soda pop for hydration, and the authors focus on the negative effects of soft drinks. The purpose of the article is to look at why soda pop and caffeine affect performance. It focuses on nutrition: soda pop is high in calories and a poor way to hydrate. The authors do admit that caffeine (and caffeinated soda) helps performance in endurance and power events.

It is reliable because it appeared in a scholarly journal. It helped me understand that soda pop is not good for performance. The article contains very little information on caffeine, so I would find more articles with deeper information.

Tarnopolsky, Mark A. "Protein, Caffeine, and Sports." *Physician and Sports Medicine* 21.3 (1993): 140–45. Print.

The purpose of this article is to give information on caffeine and its use in athletic performance. It talks about caffeine's background, issues surrounding its use, performance concerns, mechanisms, and potential benefits.

It comes from a reliable sports medicine journal, but it is not as recent as the other articles I have found. It also has a lot of the same information as the other articles. It is shorter, so I would probably find other articles with more information.

The second student writer plans to examine alternatives to current parole systems and compare their risks and benefits. Unlike the first writer, who used many types of sources, this student begins with newspaper reports of current debates and then turns exclusively to articles in scholarly journals to outline her research project. Consider this student's approach of using recent and older sources to develop a broad understanding of the debate about parole systems. How would you describe the differences between the first and second writers' research purposes?

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December 14, 2009

Parole and Probation: Where Can the Systems Go from Here?

Even though federal prisons started granting early release to inmates showing "good behavior" in 1867, it took three years to establish the United States Department of Justice to oversee parole decisions. Then, it took over four decades to get an official parole system in place in the United States. The same parole system has been used since June 25, 1910, when it was officially established as a sentencing option. It is clear to me that the current corrections system has been in need of revision for a long time.

The parole system has had some positive effect on the American judicial system, but it is apparent that new standards need to be set for overseeing this system in order for it to work to its full potential and meet current social needs. Many state governments are now reviewing and revising their probation and parole policies. In recent years, these policy reviews have picked up speed because of the need to address reduced financial and corrections resources. Some suggested revisions include reducing the number of prisons being built,

reducing the parole sentences to shorter periods of time, and reducing recidivism rates. Obviously, the parole system directly affects the prison population because it can help control how many inmates use prison facilities and how many may return before their sentences are finished. Changing the parole system and making it more effective will help to reduce prison populations and recidivism rates. There are many possible changes that could be considered, but many states lack the ability to find and implement new approaches and solutions to their problems. Indeed, change is needed, but if no one can make a good suggestion for change (and one that people will accept), the system may be forced to continue to work inefficiently.

I want to look at arguments in favor of keeping the current system and the solutions that have been proposed so far, and compare the arguments supporting and opposing each side. With such arguments taken into consideration, I will probably find that more needs to be done to improve the current system. While many local governments argue that problems with the parole and probation system are difficult to fix, and that few solutions have been found to correct all the flaws that the system has, those simply are not excuses. It is true that the proposed solutions have both pros and cons, but what governmental decision does not? Legislators and governors are there to make decisions, and they can't expect each issue they face to be easy. It is also true that any new legislation or amendments to existing legislation can take a considerable amount of time to put into effect. It is for that very reason that action needs to be taken now so that a prolonging of needed changes doesn't cause more trouble in the long run.

First, I will describe the origin of the parole system and look at both its beneficial elements and its flaws. Then, I will identify the changes the parole system has already undergone. With this strong historical foundation, I hope to show that the parole and probation system is stable and necessary, but can be changed or modified when needed. In researching this topic, I found that some good solutions have been proposed, but so far little action has been taken. I

will outline the major concepts or ideas that seem to dominate reform plans in various states. From this information I will demonstrate that the core ideas for change are out there, but due to the nature of politics there is little initiative to push the legislation through that would implement those changes. It is apparent that the current system has a secure foundation and that a few simple modifications can bring the parole and probation systems up to good working order. I will prove that it can be done by making prompt decisions.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Evans, Donald G. "Community Engagement: A Challenge for Probation/Parole." *Corrections Today* 67.6 (2005): 117–19. Print.

This article poses a different view from most I have found. It covers how parole affects the people in the community where parolees are released. It describes categories of phases that are used in the proposed system: the protective phase, the preparative phase, and the productive phase. The article concludes with community guidelines. I will use a lot of the information found in this article because it is very different from the other information I found. I am most interested in nationwide community views. It will help me to show that this problem isn't found in just one state but many.

Frase, Richard S. "State Sentencing Guidelines: Diversity, Consensus, and Unresolved Policy Issues." *Columbia Law Review* 105 (2005): 1190–1232. Print.

This long article goes over different state policies in the United States. One of the larger challenges is in unresolved policy issues from state to state. Frase covers major conflicts that have been taking place in larger states where the parole system has a higher usage rate and need. One of the unresolved policy challenges is how to maintain balance in monitoring those on parole and probation. This article could be helpful in my research, though it is not one of the most important sources I intend to use. I enjoy having knowledge about the

sentencing process, and I will probably use the article for some statistics it offers.

Geerken, Michael R., and Hennessey D. Hayes. "Probation and Parole: Public Risk and the Future of Incarceration Alternatives." *Criminology* 31.4 (1993): 549–64. Print.

Geerken and Hayes address increased population in the jail system, and they focus on options to replace incarceration. The two options they cover are probation and parole, and they argue that probation and parole systems are more effective than many people (especially politicians) think. Their work will help me to argue the validity of the parole system. This article is also older, so it will help me create a timeline of the parole system through the years.

Lurigio, Arthur J., Angie Rollins, and John Fallon. "The Effects of Serious Mental Illness on Offender Reentry." *Federal Probation* 68.2 (2004): 45–52. Print.

This article is probably one of the most intriguing articles that I came across in my research. It presented the variable of mental illness in relation to prison reentry rates. Because my original idea came from a situation of parole and mental illness, I found this to be an especially relevant article. Lurigio and others describe ways that mental health professionals have now been brought into the criminal justice system at all stages of crime. They now play a major role in cases that have been impacted by mental illness. However, health professionals and people in the traditional criminal justice system (like prosecutors and judges) tend to see things differently; the authors argue that if the two sides find a way to work together, they will have immediate good effects on the system. Because my research focuses on what needs to change to have a positive impact, this article will play an important role.

Ward, Mike. "Probation Reforms Flounder at Capitol: Opponents Say Bills Would Create More Prisoners, not Fewer." *Austin American Statesman* 1 May 2005: A1. Web. 16 April 2007.

This article reports on proceedings held by the Texas State Senate to reform current parole and probation systems. Ward gives a few statistics based on the current system and the new system that will be put into place, a comparison I hope to use in my paper. He outlines several reasons for the necessary changes and quotes several senators on their opinions as well. Ward explains that jail building costs need to decrease, so any new system put in place will aim toward reducing the recidivism rate, which will take more involvement from the judicial system. Ward suggests that it is still unclear what will be done with the current parole and probation system. This is helpful research because it validates my opinion on the need for change. From this article, I will cite information concerning prison costs because this article gave more details on this issue than others.