

Name: _____ Class: _____

Topic: _____

Claim: _____

Guidelines for the Argumentative Research Paper

Format

1. Use MLA style. Follow the format of the model research paper.
2. The paper should be at least three typewritten, double-spaced pages, or about 800–900 words.
3. Cite at least two print sources (books, magazines, and/or newspaper) and at least one Internet source.
4. Include a header and a Works Cited page for the final copy.
5. Use a standard 12-point font such as Times Roman, Cambria, or Arial.
6. Use one-inch margins on all sides. Indent paragraphs $\frac{1}{2}$ inch by setting a tab. Leave one space after end punctuation.
7. Center the title. Center the page number on the bottom. Don't number the first page.

Timeline

1. Pick a topic and create a claim based on it. Make sure both are approved by _____.
2. Write notes from sources and record them on the forms provided by _____.
3. Create an outline for the paper and turn it in by _____.
4. Write a draft and turn it in by _____.
5. Schedule a conference to discuss your draft by _____.
6. Revise and turn in your second draft by _____.
7. Schedule a second conference if needed by _____.
8. Submit your draft of works cited by _____.
9. Edit and finalize your paper, cover page, and works cited by _____.
10. Turn in the final paper on _____.



Tips

1. When choosing your topic, think about how easy it will be to gather information about it from a variety of sources. Also, think about how strongly you feel about it. Don't choose a topic that doesn't genuinely interest you.
2. Keep track of every source from which you get information. It's much easier to write the bibliography when you have all the raw material rounded up.
3. If possible, type your paper on a word processor. This will allow you to add, change, move, and remove words, sentences, and whole sections more easily as you write.
4. Use a credible and confident voice. Take a stand, back it up. Don't forget to address the opposing point of view, but don't dwell on it. Instead, argue it and move on.
5. If you get stuck, ask for help. If you aren't ready to turn in one stage of your paper, ask for help. Almost anything can be sorted out, if you simply ask for help.

Guidelines for the Argumentative Research Paper (continued)

Grade

Your paper will be assessed based on the seven traits of writing (Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation) and the extent to which it makes a convincing argument overall.

What If

1. What if I miss a step or two in the process—such as getting the rough draft finished in time for feedback or keeping good notes about the works I've cited?
Your final paper will probably not be as good as it could be.
2. What if I don't know what to do next?
Ask me or a classmate for help. We have ideas that just might work.
3. What if I plagiarize? I mean, would you really know?
Yes. I know your voice, so I'll know if writing isn't yours. Besides, it's unworthy of you, not to mention illegal!
4. What if I don't have the minimum number of sources required? Maybe I found all the information I needed in one source?
It's important to consult multiple sources so that you get a variety of perspectives and become comfortable gleaning information from a variety of text formats.
5. What if I don't finish the paper by the due date?
Come to me and explain what is going on so we can work out a solution.

