

CHAPTER 8

OBJECTIVES

To write academic texts, you need to master certain skills.

In this chapter, you will learn to:

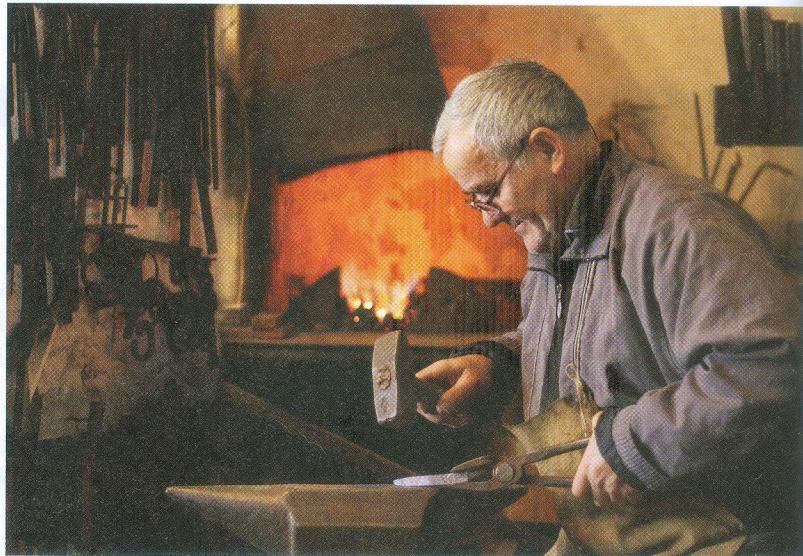
- Analyze an argumentative essay
- Construct an introduction for an argumentative essay
- Use transitions of contrast
- Identify and rebut opposing arguments
- Support your ideas using statistics
- Write, revise, and edit an argumentative essay about space travel

3. Write your essay. Be sure to include an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion.
4. Check your essay for errors.
5. Give your paper to your teacher for feedback.

Prompt: Compare and contrast two different cultures. You may choose to compare two countries or two cultural groups. For example, compare life in two different ethnic groups.

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

Need to practice more? Mark them ✓



After you have chosen a topic, begin writing your thesis and make a rough outline to organize your ideas.



Changes in technology have had a dramatic effect on many different areas of life, including the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

An **argumentative essay** is an essay in which you agree or disagree on an issue, using reasons to support your opinion. Your goal is to convince your reader that your opinion is right. Argumentation is a popular kind of essay question because it forces students to think on their own: They have to take a stand on an issue, support their stand with solid reasons, and support their reasons with solid evidence. At the end of this chapter, you will write an argumentative essay about whether it is wise or practical to attempt to send a human mission to Mars.

ANALYZING THE MODEL

The writing model is about the role of technology in the modern workplace.

Read the model. Then answer the questions.



Writing Model

REPLACED BY A ROBOT

- 1 Ever since the invention of computers, technology has done more and more of the job of the average worker. From mathematical calculations to mailing lists, computers have become more efficient, in more areas, than their human colleagues. Although some argue that computers will never replace people, others are concerned about the advanced robotic technology that computers make possible. Indeed, it is likely that the use of more and better robots will someday result in fewer jobs for humans. However, this should not be seen as a problem. Rather, as technology improves, employers in all fields should look to maximize their robotic workforce and minimize human error.
- 2 Until now, many have argued that robots can only replace humans in certain less-skilled jobs. They might, for example, be able to perform routine tasks on an assembly line. These opponents of a mechanized workforce may not be aware that technology has progressed in the areas of decision-making and creativity. Some robots' work in these areas is almost equal to that of humans. In fact, some interactive computers are so well-designed that it will soon be possible to talk with them almost endlessly before realizing that they are not human (Loftus). A computer even won the game show *Jeopardy!* not long ago. These computers are clearly capable of more than simple tasks.
- 3 Others argue that, even though computers may someday be able to approximate human behavior, humans will always be able to do the job better. While that may be true for a general-purpose robot, highly-specialized machines can often do specific tasks better than a

(continued on next page)

human being, no matter how well-trained. For example, human lawyers may miss important evidence. This is particularly true when sifting through millions of emails to prosecute crime in so-called “white collar” jobs. Robots, on the other hand, can sort through this information quickly and accurately. In fact, there is now a software program that can detect not just obviously illegal proposals, but also changes in style that can point to suspicious activity. The computer searches for a switch from a formal to an informal tone, or particularly urgent wording. Within seconds, the program can identify the most questionable language and alert investigators (Murray). In this case, human legal experts cannot begin to compete with their electronic colleagues.

- 4 Finally, some say that it is morally wrong to replace human beings with robots. They argue that it is unethical to deprive real people of their jobs, merely for the sake of efficiency. If efficiency were the only concern, they might be correct. This argument, however, does not take into account the consequences of human failings in the workplace. In surgery, for example, a doctor’s arm may shake. A minimally invasive surgical robot, on the other hand, will always make the right cut (Manjoo). It would be truly immoral for society to be concerned about the doctor’s job at the expense of the patient’s health.
- 5 Increasingly, employers will need to decide when and how to replace human workers with computers. This decision is not easy, and a robot will not always be the right answer. However, it is clear that as computers approach human ability to reason, as specialized programs develop, and as robots become more reliable, there will be more circumstances in which replacing a person with a robot is not just the most efficient choice, but the most ethical one.

Sources:

1. Loftus, Jack. “Computer Nearly Passes Turing Test for Artificial Intelligence.”
2. Manjoo, Farhad. “Will Robots Steal Your Job?”
3. Murray, Peter. “Lawyers Object as Computer Program Does Job Better.”

Questions about the Model

1. In which paragraph does the writer give background information to help readers understand the issue?
2. Does the thesis statement mention both sides of the issue, or does it give the writer’s point of view only?
3. How many opposing arguments are given? Where are they given?
4. Where does the writer respond to the opposing arguments—in one paragraph or in separate paragraphs?
5. What is the function of the last paragraph?



Noticing Vocabulary: Collocations 2

In Chapter 6, you learned that collocations are words that are commonly found together, and that using collocations properly can improve your writing. You also learned to use noun-adjective collocations. In this chapter, you will learn to use other kinds of collocations, including adverb-adjective and verb-object collocations.

PRACTICE 1

Identifying Collocations

- A** These collocations are missing a word. Look back at the writing model, find the completed collocations, and use them to fill in the blanks. (Note: The part of speech of the missing word is in parentheses.)

1. _____ (v) tasks (*paragraph 2*)
2. _____ (adv) capable (*paragraph 2*)
3. _____ (adv) true (*paragraph 3*)
4. _____ (v) crime (*paragraph 3*)
5. _____ (adv) invasive (*paragraph 4*)

- B** Complete the sentences with the collocations from Part A.

1. The child said the work was too difficult for her, even though she was _____ of doing it.
2. In order to succeed in the workplace, employees must _____ assigned by their supervisors.
3. Politicians often try to avoid stating a position on controversial measures; this is _____ during an election year, when they do not want to do anything to anger voters.
4. The new mayor promised to aggressively _____ and make the community safe for law-abiding citizens.
5. With a laser, the doctor performed _____ surgery on the patient, who was able to go home the same day.

ORGANIZATION

Organizing your arguments effectively will help you convince readers to agree with the ideas and opinions you present in your writing. In an argumentative essay, you do not just give reasons to support your point of view. You must also discuss the other side's reasons and then **rebut** them. *Rebut* means to point out problems with the other side's supporting reasons in order to prove that your opponent's opinion is not right. Rebuttals are one of the key elements that a writer needs to organize in an argumentative essay.

THE ELEMENTS OF AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

An argumentative essay contains five key elements:

- An explanation of the issue
- A clear thesis statement
- A summary of the opposing arguments
- Rebuttals to the opposing arguments
- Your own arguments

You can organize the elements of an argumentative essay in several ways. You can use a **block pattern** or a **point-by-point pattern**. The outlines in the chart show how these two patterns can be used to structure an argumentative essay.

BLOCK PATTERN	POINT-BY-POINT PATTERN
<p>I. Introduction Explanation of the issue Thesis statement</p> <p>II. Body</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Block 1</p> <p>A. Summary of the other side's arguments B. Rebuttal to the first argument C. Rebuttal to the second argument D. Rebuttal to the third argument</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Block 2</p> <p>E. Your first argument F. Your second argument G. Your third argument</p> <p>III. Conclusion</p>	<p>I. Introduction Explanation of the issue, including a summary of the other side's arguments Thesis statement</p> <p>II. Body</p> <p>A. Statement of the other side's first argument and rebuttal with your own counterargument B. Statement of the other side's second argument and rebuttal with your own counterargument C. Statement of the other side's third argument and rebuttal with your own counterargument</p> <p>III. Conclusion—may include a summary of your point of view</p>

There are many variations on these two patterns. Which pattern you use will depend on your topic. With some topics, one pattern works better than others. The important thing is to present your side and rebut the other side in a logical and organized way.

Complete the outline of the writing model on pages 153–154.

I. Introduction (explanation of the issue)

Thesis statement: _____

II. Body

A. Issue 1: Robot and human skills

1. Opposing argument 1: Until now, many have argued that robots can only replace humans in certain, less-skilled jobs.
2. Rebuttal to argument 1: Computer technology has now progressed in decision-making and creativity to be almost on a par with humans.
 - a. Conversational ability
 - b. _____

B. Issue 2: Robot and human behavior

1. Opposing argument 2:

2. Rebuttal to argument 2:

- a. Specialized legal task—failings of human lawyers
- b. Specialized legal task—strengths of computer research

C. Issue 3: Ethics of using robots

1. Opposing argument 3:

2. Rebuttal to argument 3:

- a. _____
- b. Patient's life is more important than doctor's job.

III. Conclusion

THE INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

There are several ways to write an introductory paragraph for an argumentative essay. In the writing model on pages 153–154, the introductory paragraph contains an explanation of the issue, which is a necessary part of an argumentative essay. However, you may also begin an argumentative essay with a more engaging introduction—for example, with surprising statistics, a memorable quotation, or a dramatic story. For instance, the writer of the model could have opened with a dramatization of a worker being dismissed because he's been replaced by a computer.

If you write an attention-getting introduction, you may need to explain the issue in a second introductory paragraph and write your thesis statement at the end of this (the second) paragraph.

This scene will become all too common in the near future. A highly educated employee walks into his office, ready to begin a new day at work. Instead of being given an interesting assignment, however, he is told that he is being dismissed—not because of economic problems or poor performance, but because he is being replaced by a robot. Computers taking over the workplace may seem like the plot of a melodramatic science fiction story, but in fact, it is quite real.

In the last decade, technology has developed

Thesis Statement

The thesis statement in an argumentative essay states clearly which side you are for.

Curfew laws are unfair and should be abolished.

In my opinion, stem cell research should receive the full support of our government.

A thesis statement often mentions the opposing point of view. Notice that the writer's opinion is expressed in the independent clause, and the opposing point of view is normally put into a subordinate structure.

SUBORDINATE STRUCTURE

Despite the claims that curfew laws are necessary to control juvenile gangs,

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

curfew laws are clearly unconstitutional.

SUBORDINATE STRUCTURE

Although there are reasons to be cautious with stem cell research,

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

I believe that its potential benefits far outweigh its dangers.

The Opposing Point of View

Expressions such as these are often used to introduce opposing points of view:

Some people feel that the United States should have a national health care plan like Canada's.

Many think that genetically engineered crops are a grave danger to the environment.

It may be true that the U.S. Constitution gives citizens the right to own weapons.

Transition Signals of Contrast

An opposing point of view can be connected to the writer's own point of view with transition signals of contrast.

Some people feel that the United States should have a national health care plan like Canada's; **however**, others feel that government should stay out of the health care business.

Although many think that genetically engineered crops are a grave danger to the environment, such crops can alleviate world hunger and malnutrition.

Supporters say that smokers should have a right to smoke **despite the fact that** smoking will most likely kill those who do it.

While it may be true that the U.S. Constitution gives citizens the right to own weapons, the men who wrote the Constitution lived in a different time.

PRACTICE 3 Adding an Opposing Point of View

- A** Rewrite the thesis statements to include an opposing point of view. Use expressions and transition signals of contrast.

1. Doctors or family members should never be allowed to "pull the plug".

Although some people believe that doctors and family members should never be allowed to "pull the plug," I believe that it is sometimes more humane to do so.

2. The sale of music containing lyrics that degrade women should be prohibited.

3. Television is the worst invention of modern times.

4. Environmental protection laws go too far.

5. The advertising industry performs many public services.

¹ **pull the plug:** let a person who is in an irreversible coma die by disconnecting him or her from life-sustaining machines

- B** Choose your own topic. Then write a thesis statement that expresses both sides of the issue.

TRY IT OUT!

Work with a partner. On a separate sheet of paper, write three supporting arguments for the writer's point of view in each thesis statement.

1. Censorship of the arts is always wrong.
 - a. Freedom to express oneself is a fundamental right stated in the U.S. Bill of Rights.
 - b. Public morality is relative—what is objectionable in some cultures is acceptable in others.
 - c. Many masterpieces—books, sculptures, and paintings—would be banned.
2. Violence in video games, movies, and television programs should be censored.
3. Despite the fact that education's primary responsibility is to train minds, not bodies, I believe that schools should require students to practice a sport at least one hour each day.
4. Although some people think that curfew laws will help control teenage gangs, they are wrong for several reasons.
5. Engaged couples should be required to take marriage preparation classes for one full year before their wedding.
6. Your own topic:

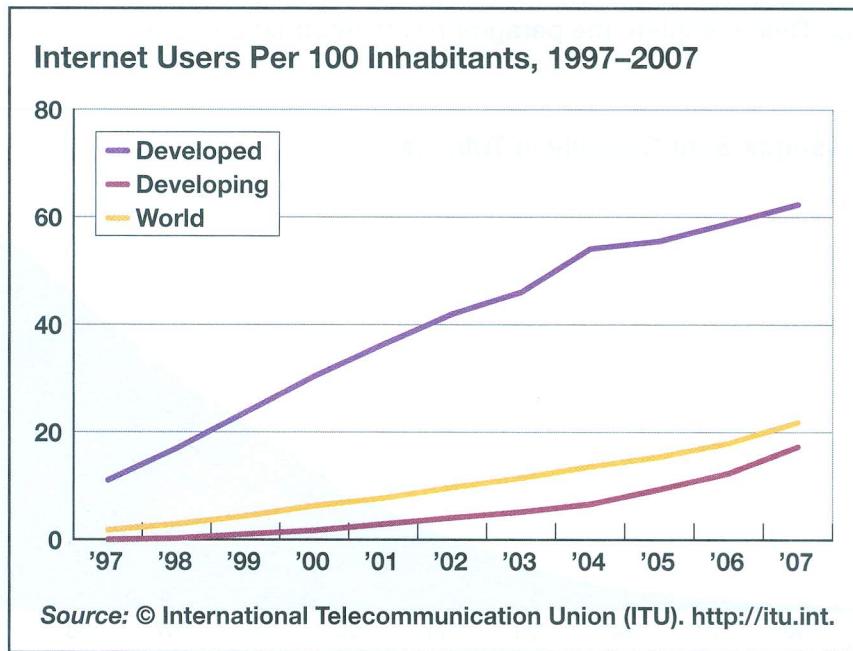
STATISTICS AS SUPPORT

When you write an argumentative essay, you need to support your opinion with strong supporting details. In Chapter 3, you learned that quotes and examples can be effective support. Another kind of support that can be particularly helpful in argumentative writing is statistics, sets of numbers that show patterns of events or behaviors. Statistics are especially useful in argument because they are fact-based and hard to argue against.

ANALYZING THE MODEL

The writing model uses statistics from the graph "Internet users per 100 inhabitants, 1997–2007." As you read the model, notice the expression used to report the source of information. You must cite the source of any statistical data you use in your writing.

Study the graph and read the model. Then answer the questions.



Writing Model

... X 1 2 3 4 5 6 ▲

The Digital Divide

According to statistics from the International Telecommunication Union, Internet use is increasing worldwide. Moreover, although a wide gap still exists between developed and developing countries, that gap may be closing. In 1997, developed countries had Internet access at a rate of 11 users per 100 inhabitants, whereas developing countries had zero users. By 2002, the developed world had 42 users for every 100 inhabitants, and the developing world had only four. By 2007, however, the increase in the developed world had slowed, adding only 20 users per 100 in five years, compared to the 31 added between 1997 and 2002. At the same time, the developing world was increasing in its rate of Internet spread, to 22 out of every 100 by 2007, an increase of 18 in five years, compared to four in the previous five years. While the digital divide is still certainly a reality, if the 1997–2007 trends continue, the developing world may soon catch up.

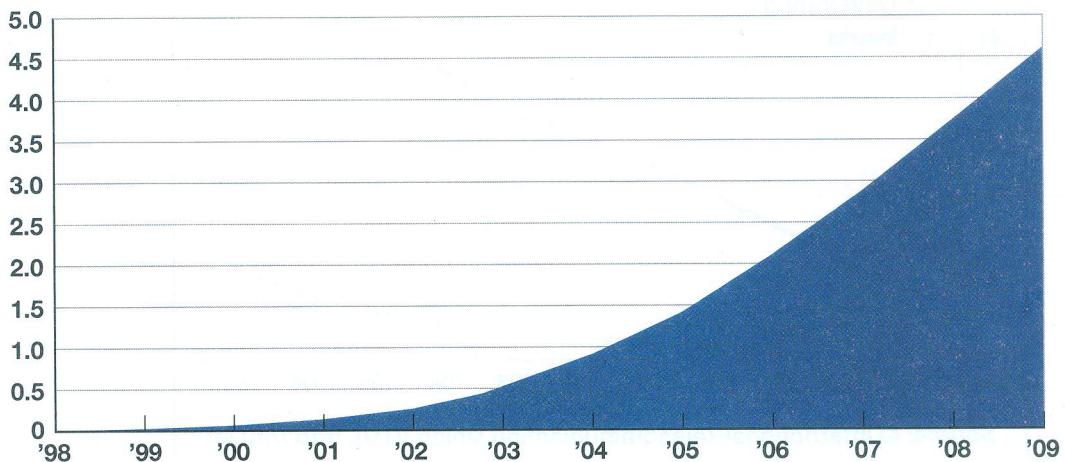
Source: Paragraph based on International Telecommunication Union (ITU). <http://itu.int>.

Questions about the Model

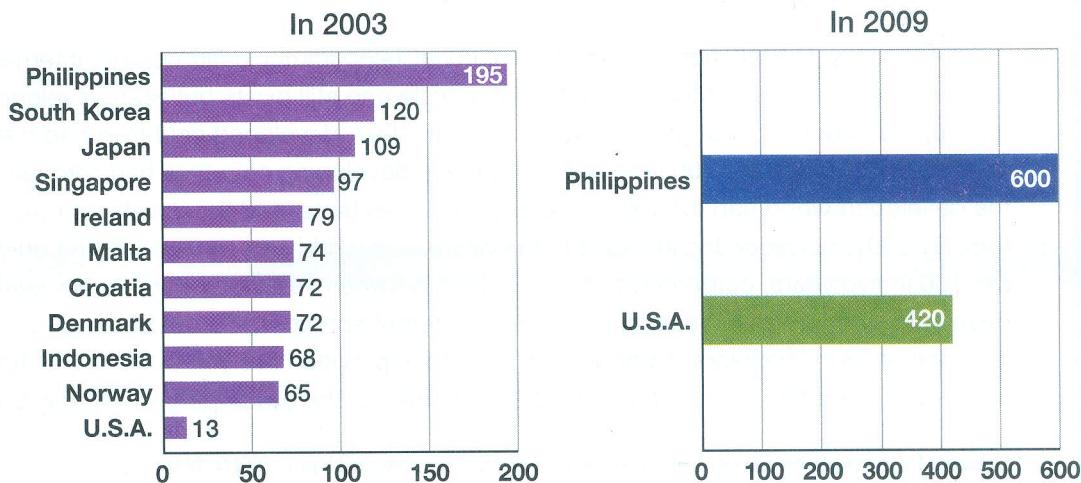
1. What is the topic sentence of the paragraph? Underline it.
2. What is the source of the statistics used to support this idea?
3. What reporting expression is used to identify this source?
4. What is the graph measuring?

PRACTICE 4**Using Statistics**

Study the graphs. Then complete the paragraph with information from the graphs.

SMS Text Messages Sent Globally in Trillions

Source: From the TomiAhonen Almanac 2010, by Tomi T. Ahonen.
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Messages Sent Per Mobile Subscriber Per Month

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The printing, copying, redistribution or retransmission of this Content without
express written permission is prohibited.

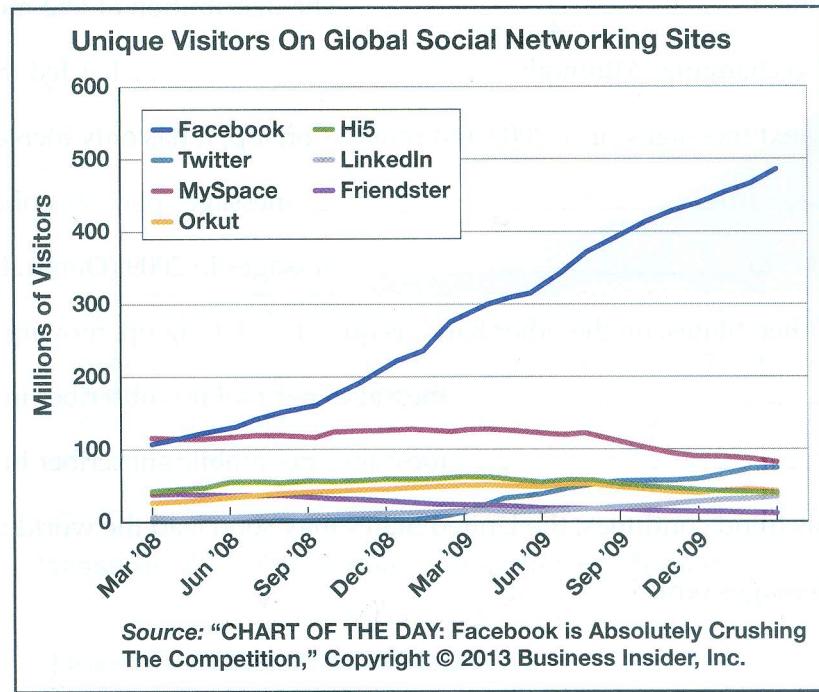
Text Message Use

According to _____, global text messaging
1. has _____ since 1998. Each year brings
2. dramatic change. In 2007, the nations of the world sent just under
3. text messages, whereas in 2008, they sent
almost _____. The distribution of text messages is
4. also changing. Although _____ has led the world
5. in text messages since 2003 and remains on top, it has only increased its
usage from _____ messages per subscriber in
6. 2003 to _____ messages in 2009 (Dimacali). The
7. United States, on the other hand, is quickly catching up, moving from
8. messages per mobile subscriber in 2003 to
9. messages per mobile subscriber in 2009. If
this trend continues, the United States may soon lead the world in text
messages sent.

TRY IT OUT!

Choose a graph and, on a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph explaining its significance. Follow the instructions.

- Decide what main idea the graph illustrates, and write this idea as a topic sentence.
- Write five to ten supporting statements, using the statistical information shown in the graphs.
- Use a reporting verb or phrase to identify the source of your statistics.
- Write an in-text citation in the proper form at the end of your paragraph.



U.S., Non-U.S., and Worldwide Online Advertising Spending on MySpace and Facebook, 2009 and 2010 (millions and percent change)			
	2009	2010	Percent change
MySpace			
U.S.	\$465	\$360	-23%
Non-U.S.	\$25	\$25	3%
Worldwide	\$490	\$385	-21%
Facebook			
U.S.	\$335	\$450	34%
Non-U.S.	\$100	\$155	65%
Worldwide	\$435	\$605	39%

Note: Percent change based on unrounded figures
Source: Courtesy of eMarketer.com.

In academic writing, argument requires evidence researched from outside sources, such as books, scholarly journals, personal interviews and experiments, and the Internet. Learning to do research and evaluate sources is an important academic skill.

See Appendix E, pages 312–319, for information on doing research and evaluating sources.

Applying Vocabulary: Using Collocations 2

Before you begin your writing assignment, review what you learned about collocations on page 155.

PRACTICE 5 Using Collocations

- A** Work with a partner. Answer the questions. Use the collocations in your answers.

1. What types of **crime** do you think should be **prosecuted** most aggressively?
2. Have you (or anyone you know) ever had **minimally invasive** surgery? What kind?
3. Some people believe that technology makes people stupid, and that this is **particularly true** of text messaging. Do you agree or disagree?
4. Most people have household tasks that they enjoy and others that they hate. Which household **tasks** do you most (or least) like to **perform**?
5. Some people think that technology is already as advanced as it can get, while others believe that we do not yet know what computers are **clearly capable** of. What do you think?

- B** Write your own sentences using the collocations from the box.

clearly capable	perform tasks
minimally invasive	prosecute crime
particularly true	

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment for this chapter is to write an argumentative essay in response to this question: Is it worth the expense and risk to make a human flight to Mars? Use the writing model on pages 153–154 to help you. You can also use the model on page 161 if you are planning to include statistics in your argument.

Before you begin this writing assignment, research the topic to get ideas and supporting reasons for both sides of the argument. The readings for this chapter on pages 286 and 288 of Appendix A provide information you will need to write your essay. Read the two articles, “Why We Should Send a Manned Mission to Mars” on page 286 and “Let’s Not Go to Mars: Why a Staffed Mission Is Impractical” on page 288. Then answer the questions. When you have read both articles and answered the questions, follow the steps in the writing process.



Prewrite

STEP 1: Prewrite to get ideas.

- After you have finished the readings and their exercises, you will need to decide which side of the argument you agree with. Use freewriting to help you clarify your thoughts on the topic.
- Write as much as you can on the topic. Include any facts, details, statistics, and examples that you researched or that come to your mind.
- Read your freewrite and circle the ideas you would like to develop.



Organize

STEP 2: Organize your ideas.

- Decide whether you will use block or point-by-point organization.
- Write your thesis statement. Your thesis statement can state either just your point of view or both points of view. If it states both points of view, connect them by using transition signals of contrast.
- Develop an outline. Write your thesis statement at the beginning of your outline.



Write

STEP 3: Write the first draft.

- Before you start writing, decide on the best type of introductory paragraph for your topic: an explanatory paragraph or an attention-getting introduction.
- Using your outline, write the first draft.



Revise

STEP 4: Revise the draft.

- Review the content and organization of your draft. Do not try to correct errors in format, mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, and spelling), grammar, and sentence structure at this stage. You will do this in Step 5.

- Begin by reading over your paragraph to get a general overview. As you read, check to make sure that
 - your essay has a thesis statement that is appropriate for an argumentative essay;
 - you have supported your arguments with facts, quotations, statistics, or examples;
 - you have summarized the opposing viewpoints;
 - you have rebutted the opposing viewpoints.
- Make notes in the margin about anything you want to improve.
- Ask a classmate to read and give you feedback on your first draft using the Chapter 8 Peer Review on page 335.
- Discuss your classmate’s suggestions and decide which ones to take.



STEP 5: Edit and proofread the draft.

- Make sure that you have identified all of the corrections you want to make in content and organization. Then review your essay for errors in format, mechanics, grammar, and sentence structure. Use the Chapter 8 Writer’s Self-Check on page 336 to help you.
- When you find an error, make a note on your paper using the correction symbols from Appendix D on pages 309–311.



STEP 6: Write a new draft.

- In your new draft, include the changes you identified in Steps 4 and 5.
- Proofread your new draft again carefully. Make sure it is neat and error free.
- Hand in your essay to your teacher.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

In this chapter, you learned to:

- Analyze an argumentative essay
- Construct an introduction for an argumentative essay
- Use transitions of contrast
- Identify and rebut opposing arguments
- Support your ideas using statistics
- Write, revise, and edit an argumentative essay about space travel

Which ones can you do well? Mark them

Which ones do you need to practice more? Mark them



TIMED WRITING

In this expansion, you will write an argumentative essay in class. As you write, focus on using the writing process steps that you learned in this chapter. You will have 50 minutes. To complete the expansion in time, you will need to budget your time accordingly. Follow this procedure.

1. Read the writing prompt (or the prompt your teacher assigns) carefully. Make sure you understand the question or task. You may want to underline the key words in the prompt. (5 minutes)
2. Brainstorm to get ideas, choose a thesis and make a rough outline to organize your ideas. (10 minutes)
3. Write your essay. Be sure to include an introductory paragraph with your thesis statement, body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. (25 minutes)
4. Check your paragraph for errors. Correct any mistakes. (10 minutes)
5. Give your paper to your teacher.

Prompt: Write an argumentative essay on this topic:

- What is the most important technology in society today?



REBUTTING AN ARGUMENT

Look back at the writing model “Replaced by a Robot” on pages 153–154. Think about the topic of replacing workers with robots. Why might someone disagree with the author’s opinion? Write a short essay in which you oppose the arguments made in the model. Summarize the model briefly. Then make sure to clearly disagree in your response to the model. Support your position with examples and ideas both from the model and from supporting strategies you learned in this chapter.