

Essay

Introduction

You are a religious leader concerned about the teaching of evolutionary biology in high schools. You think that only God could explain the existence of life. The local school board is accepting public submissions on the issue.

Purpose

The purpose of this assignment is to help you practice the following skills that are essential to your success in this course and others.

1. Charitably explaining arguments about issues of public importance.
2. Explaining difficult concepts in your own words.

Task

Write a short letter to the school board using the design argument to prove that intelligent design should be taught in biology classes. Your letter must do the following:

- Use the design argument (and no other argument) to argue that God exists.
- Explain all the premises/steps of the design argument. Use a simple example like Paley's watch to discuss these premises. Picking a different example is encouraged.
- Avoid attacking the design argument. Your job is to prove God's existence regardless of your personal opinion.

Word Count

Your submission must be 500-750 words long. Essays shorter than 500 words or longer than 750 words will lose points.

Further Instruction

- This assignment covers material contained in Ch.2.
- Note that this is a letter. Include all appropriate letter headings, salutations, etc.
- The members of the school board are not philosophers. Your job here is to explain a piece of complex philosophy to smart lay people. Use examples, simple vocabulary, etc.
- Use simple examples when explaining the premises/steps of the Design Argument. Paley's use of the watch example is key. You are free to use other examples of artifacts, but you must explain to the reader how he convinces us that an artifact has a purpose before you can explain how he applies this result to nature.
- Set aside your personal beliefs in completing this assignment. You might be a committed atheist. But you are not being asked to defend your own views. You are being asked to explain the Design Argument regardless of whether you accept its conclusion.

Due Date

Please consult the syllabus and course website for the due date.

Late Submissions

Per the policies outlined in the syllabus, late work will not be accepted. Any request for special treatment will be ignored. If you foresee difficulties submitting work on time, either because of personal or work commitments, then you should start this paper early and submit it early.

Plagiarism

Please review the plagiarism policy on the syllabus. It is critical that you prepare your assignment by yourself. Use only the textbook and handouts—it will take you less time to work through these materials than to find and read other sources. I will be checking for significant overlaps between submission as well as checking answers against Wikipedia, internet search results, standard essay sites, etc. If you include material in your essay without citing it, you will receive 0 for the assignment. A second violation will result in a 0 for the course, a report to the Dean, and a petition for a note to be added to your permanent academic record.

Format

Submit your works by first clicking on the relevant assignment in Blackboard. Click on 'browse computer' and upload your document as a .doc, .rtf or .pdf file. Do not send it to me by e-mail or through Blackboard's messaging application.

Grading

Please find the rubric and explanation of it [here](#).

Resources

Please find links to writing resources [here](#)