**Persuasive Essay**

**First Draft**

Imagine that you are writing an article for one of your favorite magazines, in which you are trying to persuade the readers of something that is based on your opinion.  Consider the aspects of the audience who reads this magazine, which should guide the choices you make to write for that specific audience. Keep in mind all we have discussed about persuasive techniques in class.

In your Word document, first, briefly answer the following questions.  Then, write your essay.  The body of your writing (after you answer these questions) should be between 400 and 500 words.  Follow the guidelines for paper writing on the syllabus and use MLA format.

* **What is the purpose of your writing?**
* **Describe the audience for whom you are writing in detail.**
* **Describe the persuasive appeal(s) you will use (ethos, pathos, logos), and why you think these will be effective.**

You **SHOULD NOT** consult outside resources for this draft, but you will for your second draft.  You can be thinking now about what types of sources you might use to back up your claims.  If you do consult any sources at this stage, which you SHOULD NOT DO, be sure to quote and cite them appropriately!

**Topic Selection:**

Be sure your topic is one that is truly arguable and that reasonable people may disagree with. Since you cannot consult sources for the first draft, choose a topic about which you are passionate and know a great deal. Also, be sure your topic isn’t too broad and is narrow and focused enough that you can adequately argue it in a short paper. Do not pick a topic that is overdone like arguing about the death penalty, abortion, or legalizing marijuana.

**Some examples of topics that would fit the description above.**

\*Who will win the Super Bowl?

\*Are Pit Bulls dangerous dogs?

\*Should school districts fund music education in public schools in times of budget crises?

\*Should illegal immigrants be deported?

Get the idea?  Pick something you know something about and go for it!

**Writing in Context: Persuasive Essay Rubric**

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| **CONTENT**  The writing demonstrates knowledge of and passion about the subject and it captures the reader’s interest.  The ideal essay uses appropriate persuasive approaches and addresses counter argument(s) in order to strengthen the argument. The writing is designed to appeal to a specific audience.  **Adequate and strong sources enhance the argument. The author has situated his/her opinion in the context of the current conversation about the topic. The content has improved.** | Writer demonstrates **proficient to masterful** content.  (20-25 pts) | Writer demonstrates **developing to proficient** content.  (15-20 pts) | Writer demonstrates **weak to developing** content.  (10-15 pts) |
| **ORGANIZATION**  The essay’s components connect clearly to one another. The writing is not choppy, but engages the reader with a consistently strong internal structure that organizes the argument and purposefully moves the reader easily through the text.  Through appropriate transitions and ordering of ideas, it is obvious how the individual paragraphs and parts of the essay relate to one another, and the reader is never confused. **The organization has improved.** | Writer demonstrates **proficient to masterful** organization.  (20-25 pts) | Writer demonstrates **developing to proficient** organization.  (15-20 pts) | Writer demonstrates **weak to developing** organization.  (10-15 pts) |
| **STYLE and VOICE**  The tone of the language reveals the writer’s passion and conviction about the topic and makes the argument interesting.  The essay does not include cliché but is unique and engaging to the reader.  The writing fits an academic context. **The writer integrates sources in a natural, logical manner. The style and voice have improved.** | Writer demonstrates **proficient to masterful** style and voice.  (20-25 pts) | Writer demonstrates **developing to proficient** style and voice.  (15-20 pts) | Writer demonstrates **weak to developing** style and voice.  (10-15 pts) |
| **GRAMMAR and CONVENTIONS**  Vocabulary and word use are consistently precise, vivid, varied, and create sharp images in the reader’s mind. Sentences are all well-crafted and consistently varied in structure, length, and beginning. The writer demonstrates a firm, unerring grasp of the conventions of written English (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, paragraphing). The writing is virtually error-free.  The writer has used MLA format. **The writer correctly integrates and cites sources.  Works Cited is complete and correctly formatted. The grammar has improved.** | Writer demonstrates **proficient to masterful** grammar & conventions.  (20-25 pts) | Writer demonstrates **developing to proficient** grammar & conventions.  (15-20 pts) | Writer demonstrates **weak to developing** grammar & conventions.  (10-15 pts) |
| **TOTAL** |  | | |

\*\*Bold font refers to second and final drafts.