**English Handbook**

**1. Grammar**

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| **Sentence Structure**: Sentences are divided into two parts: the subject and the predicate. The **subject** is who or what the sentence is about. The **predicate** tells you more about the subject or what it is doing. | |
| **Ex**. The man on the moon is staring at you. | **Subject**: The man on the moon.  **Predicate**: is staring at you |
| **Ex**. Hugging a porcupine can create problems for the hugger. | **Subject**: Hugging a porcupine  **Predicate**: can create problems for the hugger |

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| **Parts of Speech, etc.** | |
| **Noun**: person, place, thing or idea (Johnny Depp, Italy, cigar, hope)  **Pronoun**: word that stands in for a noun (I, me, mine, we, us, our, ours, you, your, yours, he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its, myself, ourselves, herself, itself, this, that, these, those, all, each other, most, several, many, nothing, one, such, etc.)  **Verb**: word that expresses action or states of being   * + - Action verbs express physical or mental activity: running, throwing, vomiting, remembering, believing, hating, loving     - State-of-being verbs, also called linking verbs, link the subject to another word in the predicate that tells you more about the subject. The most common linking verb is *to be* (am, is, are, was, were, being, can be, may be, has been, etc.). Other common linking verbs: appear, grow, seem, smell, sound, stay, taste, feel, remain, sound, turn.     - Helping verbs: verbs that help a main verb (be, has, have, having, had, do, does, , may, can, could, might, will, would, should, etc.).       * She should have called the police. ‘should have’ help the main verb ‘called’.   **Interjection**: expresses emotion and has no grammatical relation to the rest of the sentence (ah, hey, oops, uh-oh, whew, well, wow)  Ex. **Well**, stop that. | **Adjective**: Describes nouns and pronouns.   * **Note**: the most common adjectives are articles (a, an, and the), as in the car (‘the’ modifies ‘car’), and a cat (‘a’ modifies ‘cat’). ‘A/an’ are indefinite articles; ‘the’ is a definite article. * **Second note**: some words can be either pronouns or adjectives depending on how they are used.   + All children were on the bus. (‘all’ is an adjective describing children).   + All were on the bus. (‘all’ is a pronoun standing in for children).   **Adverb**: word that modifies verbs, adjectives, or adverbs   * The very bright bug flew quite quickly.   + ‘Very’ describes the adjective bright   + ‘Quickly’ describes the verb flew   + ‘Quite’ describes the adverb quickly   **Preposition**: a word that shows the relationship between the object of the preposition and another word (about, beneath, above, across, underneath, upon, during, except, for, past, within, from, for, since, without, at, along, etc.)   * The ground was beneath your feet. ‘Feet’ is the object of beneath, and is related to the ground * He talked on his cell during the show. ‘Show’ is the object of during, and is related to ‘talked’.   **Conjunction:** a word that joins words or word groups that are used in the same way (and, for, or, yet, but, or, so)  I like ice cream **and** bagels. |

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| **Clauses, phrases, etc.** | |
| **Clauses:** A group of related words that contains a subject and a verb. There are two kinds of clauses   * + **Independent**: contains a complete thought and can stand on its own as a full sentence: * This is a sentence. * Children should be used as forced labor.   + **Dependent**: contains a subject and a verb, but needs more information to finish its thought. * Although I am pointing this bazooka at you * Because she said she would never be your friend   **Combining an independent clause with a dependent clause**: as we know, subordinate clauses can’t stand on their own; they need an independent clause to finish their thought. Two rules here:   1. If the subordinate clause comes first, put a comma after it: Although I can’t stand the way you dress, I’ll still hang out with you. 2. If the subordinate clause is second, add nothing:   I’ll still hang out with you although I can’t stand the way you dress  **Combining two independent clauses has three rules**:   1. Put a semicolon between them:   *I flew to the moon; there was no green cheese.*   1. Put a comma and a conjunction between them:   *I flew to the moon, but there was no green cheese*.   1. Put a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb/transition with a comma between them:   *I flew to the moon; however, there was no green cheese.*  **Adverb clause**: dependent clauses that modify adjectives, adverbs, or verbs. Use commas after an adverb clause when it begins a sentence. Adverb clauses begin with subordinating conjunctions (after, although, as, as if, as long as, as soon as, as though, because, before, if, in order that, once, provided that, since, so that, than, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, wherever, while, etc.). These clauses answer how, when, where, why, to what extent, or under what condition something happens.   * **Because you ate my food**, I am going to eat your dog. The adverb clause describes why the dog will be eaten, and a comma sets it off because it comes first in the sentence.   I can see you **wherever you are**. The adverb clause describes where I can see you and needs no comma because it comes last in the sentence  **Fragments:** a group of words that looks like a sentence, but lacks a subject and a verb and does not express a complete thought:   * The machine controlling the government * Hoping all the time to win the lottery | **Adjective clauses**: dependent clauses that modify nouns/pronouns. Put commas around these only when they are not essential to the meaning of the sentence. Note: adjective clauses tend to begin with relative pronouns: that, which, who whom, whose   * The man **who gave you the bomb** is running away. ‘Who gave you the bomb describes man, and the clause has no commas because it’s important information. * Jarred Elevensies, **whose mother’s name was Twelve Elevensies**, hated the number eleven. In this case, commas surround the adjective clause because it is extra information.   **Phrase**: A group of related words that acts as a part of speech and does not contain both a subject and a verb.   * under the moon/a guitarist with no fingers   **Absolute Phrases:** A noun or pronoun with a participle (verb acting as an adjective) and any modifiers. The key with this one is that you always set it off with a comma:   * Having run out of food, the man experienced a severe existential crisis.   **Run-on Sentences**: Sentences that have two or more sentences put together in a grammatically incorrect way. There are two types:   * **Comma Splices:** This is when you put two or more independent clauses together using only a comma:   I went to the store, I bought some crackers.   * **Fused Sentence:** This is when you put together two or more independent clauses without any punctuation:   I went to the store I bought a soda I drank the soda the soda tasted good life was good hi how are you?  **Parallel Structure:** using parallel structure is a way to make your writing consistent and readable. The main idea is that you use the same grammatical form when discussing equal, or parallel, ideas.   * **Parallel:** I like to eat, to run, and to rock. * **Not Parallel:** I like to eat, running, and rocking out hard.   **Appositive**: a noun or pronoun (or phrase) placed next to another noun/pronoun in order to further describe it. **Note**: if the appositive is more than one word, set it off with commas. If it’s one word, no commas are need:   * *Only my friend Ted is a good guy*. ‘Ted’ further describes ‘friend. No commas needed. * *Steve, the dude who drools on himself, is thinking about moving*. ‘The dude who drools on himself’ describes ‘Steve’ and is more than one word, so commas are needed.   **Note**: You can start a sentence with a conjunction. But be careful: you have to make it work well. |
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**Important Conjunctive Adverbs & Transitions**: Using these will make you sound academic, whether you want to or not.

accordingly    
also   
anyway   
besides   
certainly   
consequently   
finally   
furthermore   
hence   
however

incidentally    
indeed   
instead   
likewise

meanwhile   
moreover   
nevertheless   
next    
nonetheless   
now   
otherwise   
similarly   
still   
thereafter   
therefore   
thus   
undoubtedly

in addition   
in contrast   
for example   
for instance

of course   
as a result    
in other words   
as a result

no doubt

**Logical Relationship Transitions: Using these in your paragraphs will give help to expand your writing and speaking voice.**

**Similarity:** also, in the same way, just as … so, likewise, similarly

**Exception/Contrast:** but, however, in spite of, on the one hand … on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, in contrast, on the contrary, still, yet

**Sequence/Order:** first, second, third, … next, then, finally

**Time:** after, afterward, at last, before, currently, during, earlier, immediately, later, meanwhile, now, recently, simultaneously, subsequently, then

**Example:** for example, for instance, namely, specifically, to illustrate

**Emphasis:** even, indeed, in fact, of course, truly **Place/Position:** above, adjacent, below, beyond, here, in front, in back, nearby, there

**Cause and Effect:** accordingly, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus

**Additional Support or Evidence:** additionally, again, also, and, as well, besides, equally important, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, then

**Conclusion/Summary:** finally, in a word, in brief, briefly, in conclusion, in the end, in the final analysis, on the whole, thus, to conclude, to summarize, in sum, to sum up, in summar

**2.** **Essays** are the dreaded moment for most in any given class, especially English. There are, however, some essential beginner rules that will help you out if you learn them. Before getting into them, I want to discuss what an essay is. Although there are various types of essays, there is really only one thing any essay does: *it makes an argument*. Even if you are writing an autobiography, you are attempting to show the reader what they should believe about you, that something is true and you are going to prove it. All essays do this. The point your essay argues for is your *thesis*.

Your thesis is the point that you will prove in your essay. Without a thesis statement, especially in the U.S., essays are pointless, like a person who talks on and on, but you have no idea what they’re trying to say. **A thesis statement should be clear and complex**, which means it should have two or three reasons within it to show the reader what you will argue for (a simple thesis has no reasons and only a main point, like *dogs are great pets*, or *drugs are bad, mkayyy?*). You want to put two or three reasons in your thesis because: a) it tells the reader how you will argue, and b) it sets up your paragraphs. If you know your reasons in advance, you already know what your body paragraphs will be about.

**Note**: your thesis should be controversial on some level—it must be something you can argue for and which people will argue against. Trying to prove, for instance, that *the U.S. is a country in North America that borders Canada and Mexico* is not a particularly controversial thesis. Also, **avoid vague thesis statements**. Statements such as *I am going to tell you about this writer*, or, *This topic is controversial*, are not adequate. State the idea you wish to prove and how you’re going to do it. Once you have your thesis, you may want to rewrite it to fit into your essay later on.

Here’s an equation for writing a thesis statement: given that, due to, since, etc.

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| Topic | Argument | Because/since/etc. | 2 or Three Reasons | Thesis |
| Unicorn Meat | Unicorn meat is good for you | Because | Fills eater with love, has all essential vitamins and minerals | Unicorn meat should be a part of a healthy daily diet because it fills whomever eats it with love and contains all essential vitamins and minerals |
| Justin Bieber | Worst singer ever | Given that | His music causes brain damage, his songs are derivative, and his hair is frightening | Given that his music destroys children’s brains, his songs are derivative, and his hair creates long lasting psychological damage, Justin Bieber is certainly the worst musician to ever walk this earth. |

**An Essay Format**

**Intro**:

**Opening Hook**: An opening statement that grabs the reader’s attention and focuses her or his thought on the topic you will discuss. Avoid simplistic questions, rhetorical or otherwise.

**Statement of the Issues & Warrant**: Indicates the general topic and why it is important to discuss. Includes the different sides of the issues and why they disagree. Includes your basic premise/warrant behind your thesis.

**Complex Thesis statement**: A sentence or two that explains your main argument and provides two or three general reasons for why it is true (easiest to accomplish by using word ‘because’ in it)

**Historical Issues & Arguments**

In a well-rounded essay, it is a good idea to present an in-depth overview of why the issues are so important. While organization is up to you, here you’ll want to give a neutral account of the important history behind your issue, who are some of the key players in the arguments (who they are and why they’re important), and any other relevant information to help the reader understand why we are talking about this subject. Usually this will go before you make your argument.

**Body 1 (first evidence supporting thesis)**

**Topic Sentence**: Introductory sentence indicating central idea of paragraph. Must support thesis statement.

**Evidence** 1: First piece of information that proves the topic sentence. Includes quotes, summaries, paraphrases, statistics, etc. Always include a citation.

**Commentary 1**: Explanation of how or why the evidence proves the topic sentence.

**Evidence 2**: Second piece of information that proves the topic sentence is true. Always include a citation.

**Commentary 2**: Explanation of how or why the evidence proves the topic sentence.

**Concluding Sentence**: Wraps up your ideas or transitions into the next body paragraph

**2nd & 3rd Body Paragraphs**: Same format as Body 1, but providing more evidence to support your thesis

**Opposing Argument (gives neutral presentation of evidence from opposing view):**

**Topic Sentence**: Introductory sentence indicating central idea of paragraph. Must oppose thesis statement.

**Evidence** 1: First piece of information that disproves the topic sentence. Includes quotes, summaries, paraphrases, statistics, etc. Always include a citation.

**Commentary 1**: Explanation of how or why the evidence disproves the topic sentence.

**Evidence 2**: Second piece of information that disproves the topic sentence is true. Always include a citation.

**Commentary 2**: Explanation of how or why the evidence disproves the topic sentence

**Concluding Sentence**: Wraps up your ideas or transitions into the next body paragraph

**Refutation (explains with new evidence why opposing view is wrong):**

**Topic Sentence**: Explains why opposing argument is wrong

**Evidence** 1: First piece of information that disproves opposing argument. May include new evidence or refer back to previous evidence

**Commentary 1**: Explanation of how or why the evidence disproves the opposing argument.

**Evidence 2**: Same as evidence 1, but with a different piece of evidence

**Commentary 2**: Same as commentary 1

**Concluding Sentence**: Wraps up your ideas or transitions into the next body paragraph

**Conclusion**:

**Restatement** of thesis in a new way

**Summary** of important points

**Final thought**: a new idea that leaves the reader thinking about the ideas in the essay. Avoid simplistic questions, rhetorical or otherwise.

**Notes**:

* Assume your reader is generally intelligent but specifically ignorant of the topic you are discussing.
* Practice using transitions whenever possible—they make you sound like a college student and professors expect them.
* Generally speaking, you want to **avoid** **using ‘I’ or ‘you’ in your essays**. Keep your language formal and avoid using too many ‘I’ statements or talking to the reader directly.
* Avoid colloquial speech unless it is necessary for your topic or point.
* Maintain focus in your paragraphs—do what you say you are going to do in your thesis statement and topic sentences.
* Use transition sentences between major changes in ideas
* Never text message; again, always focus on using *formal* language.

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| **MLA Format** |
| **Font:** Never use a sans-serif font, which looks like this. Always use a font with serifs, such as Times New Roman, which this whole packet is formatted in, or Garamond, which looks like this.  **Heading & Title:** No title page is necessary. Rather, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course name, and the date on separate lines, double-spaced, and flush with the left margin. Double space again, and add the title. Do not italicize or underline your title! Double space again, and start your essay.  **Page Numbers**: Number all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner. Type your last name before the number, and put a space between your name and the page number.  **In-text Parenthetical Citations**: When quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing a source, you must cite that source. If you do not, you have just plagiarized the source, which means that you have in effect stolen it. While people are used to taking whatever they like from the internet these days, when the idea is not yours, you must cite it.  **Print Books/Articles:** (Author’s Last Name Page).  Gatsby’s parties were as regular as they were excessive, for “[e]very Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York. . .” (Fitzgerald 39).  Rules:  1.The quote should finish the sentence grammatically.  2. If you have two authors with the same last name, add the initial of the first name in the citation  3. If you change the sentence, put brackets around the part you change.  4. If you don’t quote the entire sentence, use a bracketed ellipses c to start or finish the sentence.  5. The final period goes after the citation.  **Books**:  If there is more than one author, give all of the authors’ last names, followed by the page number/s. If there are more than three authors, use ‘et al.’   * San Marin students are known for their odd ways (Swedlow, Hendrix, and Zappa 14). * Everything Mr. Swedlow says is true (Swedlow et al. 198).   **Quoting Dialogue**:  Rule: Put a single quote within the double quote for dialogue. All other rules apply:   * Jordan Baker clearly does not share Nick’s opinion of himself by saying “‘I thought you were rather an honest, straightforward person’” (Fitzgerald 177).   **Plays**:  For plays, provide a parenthetical citation that includes the title, the act, the scene, and the lines: (Romeo & Juliet 5.1.6-12)  **Newspapers:**  Print: Use author’s last name and page/section:   * According to some economists, “[g]lobal warming has fallen off of most people’s radar as financial burdens have increased” (Negri C2).   Online: Use author’s last name only or shortened version of title in quotes   * According to some economists, “[g]lobal warming has fallen off of most people’s radar as financial burdens have increased” (Van Halen). * According to some economists, “[g]lobal warming has fallen off of most people’s radar as financial burdens have increased” (“Global Warming”).   **Films**:  Use the title of the film in italics:   * According to one source, children today tend to actually do worse at each individual task when multitasking (*Digital Nation*). |
| **Works-Cited, Print**:  **Books**:  Single Author: Hawking, Stephen. *A Brief History of Time from the Big Bang to Black Holes*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.  Two Authors: Huppé, Bernard F., and Jack Kaminsky. *Logic and Language*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957.  Four or more + Authors: Baugh, Albert C., et al. *A Literary History of England*. Ed. Albert C. Baugh. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948.  Anthology/Compilation with editors: Cassill, R.V., ed. *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*. 4th ed. New York: Norton, 1990.  **Magazine Articles**  Print: Tolson, Jay. “The Battle That Changed the World.” *U.S. News and World Report* 24 Oct. 2005: 56-65.  Online: Rowe, Michael. “She Is No Homophobe.” *The Advocate*. 22 Nov. 2005. Web.19 Dec. 2005.  **Newspapers**  Print: Online: Wright, Steven. "Curriculum 2000 Draws Criticism." The Chronicle: the Independent Daily at Duke University. 25 Jan. 2001.  Online: Wright, Steven. "Curriculum 2000 Draws Criticism." The Chronicle: the Independent Daily at Duke University. 25 Jan. 2001. Web. 7 Nov. 2001  **Film**s:  **DVD**: Like Water for Chocolate [Como agua para chocolate]. Screenplay by Laura Esquivel. Dir. Alfonso Arau. Perf. Lumi Cavazos, Marco Leonardi, Regina Torne. 1992. Burbank, Calif.: Miramax Home Entertainment, 2000. DVD.  **Works-Cited, Online:** It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available on one date may no longer be available later. If a URL is required or you chose to include one, be sure to include the complete address for the site. (Note: The following examples do not include a URL because MLA no longer requires a URL to be included.) Remember to use n.p. if no publisher name is available and n.d. if no publishing date is given. ***An Entire Web Site***  Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). Name of Site. Version number. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available). Medium of publication. Date of access.   * The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008. Web. 23 Apr. 2008. * Felluga, Dino. Guide to Literary and Critical Theory. Purdue U, 28 Nov. 2003. Web. 10 May 2006.  A Page on a Web SiteFor an individual page on a Web site, list the author or alias if known, followed by the information covered above for entire Web sites. Remember to use *n.p.* if no publisher name is available and *n.d.* if no publishing date is given.  * "How to Make Vegetarian Chili." eHow.com. eHow, n.d. Web. 24 Feb. 2009.  An Article in a Web MagazineProvide the author name, article name in quotation marks, title of the Web magazine in italics, publisher name, publication date, medium of publication, and the date of access. Remember to use *n.p.* if no publisher name is available and *n.d.* if no publishing date is given.  * Bernstein, Mark. "10 Tips on Writing the Living Web." A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites. A List Apart Mag., 16 Aug. 2002. Web. 4 May 2009.   ***An Online Video***   * "Academy of Art University April 2009 Fashion Show." YouTube, 2009. Web. 29 June 2011. * "Daughter Turns Dad In." CNN Video. Online video clip. *CNN.com* 18 Dec. 2014. Web. 04 Apr. 2008. * "Free Speech Movement: The Cartop Ralley, Oct. 1-2, 1964." UC Berkeley Library Social Activism Sound Recording Project: The Free Speech Movement and Its Legacy. University of California at Berkeley. Library, Media Resources Center. 13 May 2001. Online audio clip. 02 April 2008. * "Gene Map of Brain Offers Hope for Alzheimer's, Autism." *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer.* PBS. KQED, San Francisco. 29 Nov. 2006. Web. 02 Dec. 2006. |

**4. Rhetoric: Arguments, Ethos, Pathos, Logos & Common Logical Fallacies[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Audience**: important to any argument is the intended audience, or your reader. Whom you are writing to should inform what you write, and you should always think about this before starting. The reader shows up in three places: in your mind as you write, in your words as your write them, and in reality as a person reads them. One big mistake many authors commit is to make assumptions about their audience that aren’t true. For instance, if I give a speech in which I talk about how awesome I am because I have all this money and then argue why poor people are lazy, I might regret it if it turns out that most of my audience is middle or lower class. Everyone has had the experience of making a joke or assertion to the wrong audience, and it’s always good to think about these things before you write (or joke). Ask yourself: who are they; where do they live; what is their culture; what is their ethnicity; what is their economic status; what is their language; what is their history; what is their society like?

**Context**: Context has to do with the reader’s knowledge in many ways. How you read an argument often depends on your context. For instance, in many cultures, it is not polite to stare someone straight in the eyes when speaking, though this is considered to be a sign of honesty in the U.S. If you didn’t understand that, you might misread the context and assume a person looking away was being dishonest or disrespectful, and vice versa. Knowing the cultural, social, historical, and political context of a sign, an essay, a movie, a political speech, or any other text is important to knowing what the argument is. Knowing your context can be the difference between convincing your audience and alienating it.

**Toulmin Argument:** Derived from British philosopher Stephen Toulmin, the Toulmin argument provides a good way to think about how to structure an argument. Here are the steps involved:

**1. Make a Claim**: your argument must begin with a statement that is controversial (can be argued against) and which you hope to prove, otherwise called a thesis. The claim is the starting point that you will support later with arguments, evidence, emotional appeals, and so on. It is where most arguments begin. Examples of such claims are: *democracy is the best form of government*; *global warming is not a proven fact*; *high school produces drones rather than thoughtful citizens*; *eating unicorn meat will fill you with love*. Ok, the last one might be more difficult than others, but you get the point. The claim must be a statement and never a question; rather, it answers a question.

**2. Determining Your Warrants**: a warrant is a connection between the claim and the evidence. It’s what ‘warrants’ or allows you to make the claim you do using the evidence you do. As such, the warrant shows what your basic assumptions are for using the evidence. For instance, if your claim is *never eat rat poison*, your evidence might be that rat poison kills people. The warrant would be something like this: *it is bad to die from poison*. Surely, few people would argue with you here. However, other warrants are less clear. Let’s look at the following:

**Claim**: The U.S. should invade Iran

**Evidence**: Iran is known to be developing nuclear weapons and to have aided terrorism against our allies and us

**Warrant**: Aggressive countries that develop nuclear weapons are a risk worth going to war to prevent

Here, the warrant is more of a problem because though many will agree that the actions Iran has taken are not desirable, others might disagree with a military solution and propose a more international or economic approach. If your audience doesn’t agree with your warrant, they aren’t going to buy your evidence or claim, so you need to figure it out to see if you have a good chance of convincing your readers of what you want to prove. This will also help you to anticipate opposing views.

**3. Offer Evidence and Good Reasons**: Without evidence and reasons, your claim is just an opinion. Your job in an argument is to prove your claim. There are various ways to do this, including everything found in ethos, pathos, and logos. Evidence includes examples, personal stories, facts, statistics, authorities, and so on.

**4. Know Your History**: Part of providing evidence for an argument requires knowing the history of the argument. If you make a claim without knowing the background, you may say something that has already been shown to be untrue. Think of it like entering a conversation—if you just begin talking, you might look a bit foolish because you aren’t aware of everything that’s already been said and covered. Research into the background of an issue will help you to gather evidence, find opposing views, and create a stronger argument. For instance, if your claim is that the drinking age in the U.S. ought to be lowered, you should probably look into the history of the law around the issue, how other countries approach the issue, and what the psychological, social, and legal issues are. Without knowing such things, your argument becomes limited and unconvincing.

**5. Anticipate Opposing Views**: When writing an argument, generally speaking, your argument will be weak if you don’t take into account what people who disagree with you will say. Let’s say that your claim is that global warming isn’t a real problem. You then back it up with evidence from a scientist as evidence. However, a reader might have evidence from other scientists showing the opposite point. Now you will need to show why those other scientists are wrong. If you can’t do that, you will need to rethink your claim or, possible, qualify it. See templates for qualifiers.

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| **Logos** (Greek for 'word, reason, theory') arguments based on facts, evidence, or reason (or all of the above). Some logos arguments are based on hard evidence, and some on general reason and common sense. Hard evidence tends to be evidence taken from the sciences, or from scholarly research (historical, sociological, etc.). The evidence functions as the proof to support a statement made. Providing extensive research and large numbers of facts is often a good way to argue, or convince someone of a truth. Statistics and polls are commonly used facts, but one must be careful: both can be manipulated to say many things, which is why who is providing a statistic and how they got it is often more important than the statistic itself. Testimonies and interviews are also forms of evidence (think of a trial). Other forms of logos use reason and common sense: these arguments avoid contradiction and include a claim plus its reason. For instance, if you say we shouldn’t go to school because it’s 4 a.m., most people will find this a reasonable claim in most cases. Arguments often are based on degree (more vs. less), analogy (x is similar to y), and precedent (how things have happened in the past). Logos is generally about an argument—getting people to believe a truth.   * Uses either hard evidence or reason * Historical, statistical, scientific, and theoretical facts are used as support * The conclusion follows from the premises * Does not rely on emotion, image, or popularity for support * Avoids logical fallacies * Goal is to argue for a truth | **Pathos** (Greek for 'suffering' or 'experience') is best understood as an argument that attempts to get at the audiences emotions. If you’ve ever given a homeless person money because you felt bad, you were convinced in some way by a pathos argument (perhaps because of what he said, or his sign, or the way he looked). An appeal to pathos often causes an audience not just to respond emotionally but also to identify with the writer's point of view--to feel what the writer feels. This is why speakers often tell a personal story: the goal is to get you to identify with the speaker and feel what he or she felt. In this sense, pathos evokes a meaning implicit in the verb 'to suffer'--to feel pain imaginatively. In other words, using pathos is often about getting the audience to relate to you and what you’ve gone through. Pathos often relies on images, stories, glittering generalities, loaded words, humor, and personal narratives to make its case. Pathos is often effective for persuasion than argument, which is why politicians will always use it—they want you to vote for them, not just believe what they say.   * Emotional responses are the goal * Use of connotation over denotation * Heavy emphasis on image-based language * Uses catch-phrases, slogans, symbols, and sound-bites instead of facts * Glittering generalities and loaded words are often used * Relies on audience’s beliefs and often appeals to highly charged topics * Goal is to get people to act |
| **Ethos** (Greek for 'character') refers to the trustworthiness or credibility of the writer or speaker, or their character. The key question in ethos is whether we can trust the speaker. This can be a matter of their background, ethnicity, dress, training, friends, diction, or any other element that allows us to believe that they are legitimate speakers on a given topic. Ethos is often conveyed through tone and style of the message and through the way the writer or speaker refers to shared beliefs (using shared beliefs is a good way to get the audience to see you as a member of their group). It can also be affected by the writer's reputation as it exists independently from the message--his or her expertise in the field, his or her previous record or integrity, and so forth. If you’ve ever not been believed because of how you speak or who you are, your character, or ethos, was discounted. For example, when you feel very sick, you generally think of the doctor as the best person to treat you because of her credentials (and you also assume that she will be dressed like a doctor when you see her, not, for instance, a NASCAR driver). Conversely, people often generally disregard much of what politicians say because many Americans judge politicians as not having a high quality of character, but we still expect them to speak and dress a certain way, as well as to say things we agree with (a doctor, on the other hand, can say things we don’t agree with, but we’re more likely to accept them because of her status). As a speaker or writer, you want to establish your credibility with the readers, and you do so by your speech, presentation, dress, stories, knowledge, and so on.   * Need to establish credibility and legitimacy with the audience * Use of shared beliefs * Use speech, dress, knowledge, credentials, stories, ethnicity, history, symbols, etc. * Often try to get the audience to identify with the speaker (“we’re similar”) * Goal is to get people to believe in you as a credible speaker | |

**Logical Fallacies:** There are a number of ways of arguing that are considered fallacies. The reason is that they often employ bad, false, or misleading arguments, and thus take us off the track of making a valid point. You generally want to avoid these fallacies because they weaken your overall argument, and it’s good to be aware of them because they point out problems in another person’s argument.

***Ad hominem* (attacking the person):** Ad hominem (translates as ‘to the man’) arguments work by attacking the person rather than the issue. For instance, if a politician gets up and says we need to reform our tax system, someone who calls that persona a liar and a cheat has basically gone after the politician as a person rather than her argument. These are fairly common and you see them all the time in political ads. You often here them personally, as well; for instance, let’s say you hear the following: ‘I wouldn’t listen to that dude because he totally cheated on his girlfriend.” It might turn out that he just figured out how to solve world hunger, but you’ll never know if you don’t listen to him. However, if he’s asking you out, then you might want to think about that information. This leads us to an important point: if the issue *is* the person’s character, then negative information is relevant. If it’s not, then ad hominem attacks sidetrack you from what you’re talking about. These arguments don’t invite discussion and are generally a type of scare tactic.

**Either-or Choices:** Either-or fallacies usually take a complex situation and boil it down to two radical options. You hear them all the time from your parents: “Either you clean your room, or I’m going to blow your phone up.” Of course, there are other alternatives, but the person wants you to feel like things are so insanely dire that you have to do what he says. President George W. Bush made a famous statement after the September 11 attacks when he said “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." Some thought that there were other ways of looking at the issue, but the statement left no room for such ideas. Like the ad hominem, either-or arguments are scare tactics trying to get you to act from fear rather than thoughtful insight.

**Slippery Slope:** Another common argument that works on the basis of fear is the slippery slope. If you imagine a slippery slope, you get the idea: take one step down and you’ll slide powerlessly to the bottom. A common one teens hear is that if they try marijuana, they will turn into drug fiends within a few days. Another version is that the legalization of gay marriage will lead to the legalization of polygamy and other unwanted forms of marriage. It is a good idea to show consequences, such as an increase in likelihood to try other drugs if you try marijuana at a young age, but that’s different than saying you necessarily will do so.

**Bandwagon Appeals:** Bandwagon appeals are basically forms of peer pressure: everyone else is doing it, so why don’t you? Here, it’s usually the kid’s argument: “everyone else got a car for doing the dishes, so why can’t I?” Bandwagon appeals don’t always have bad intentions, such as the adds to get kids to not smoke cigarettes, but they often don’t invite thoughtful or critical analysis of the situation and they tend to work on your fear of being left out rather than your understanding of the issues.

**Appeal to False Authority:** This fallacy occurs when someone tries to demonstrate the truth of a proposition by citing some person who agrees with it, even though that person may have no expertise in the given area. For instance, some people like to quote Einstein's opinions about politics (he tended to have fairly left-wing views), as though Einstein was awesome at politics because he was awesome at physics. Of course, it is not a fallacy at all to rely on authorities whose expertise relates to the question at hand, especially with regard to questions of fact that could not easily be answered by average person. But when you see, for instance, a sports star or a famous actor used to support a policy about how we should help out, say, a foreign country, you should question whether this person should be listened to on this subject.

**Dogmatism:** A dogmatic statement is one that assumes that there’s only one point of view and the rest are false. These sorts of statements are generally single-minded and persuasive only to the already persuaded. A dogmatic position isn’t an argument, but merely a statement. Some positions, of course, are socially accepted as true, such as the idea that slavery is bad, and so a dogmatic approach to this is not considered problematic. But most issues are not like this, so be careful about using and hearing dogmatic statements.

**Moral Equivalence:** This fallacy works by saying that two unequal things are the same. For instance, everybody loves to use Nazis as examples, and so you’ll often hear people say that when someone does something that is unfair or controlling, he’s a Nazi. This is both untrue and disrespectful to those who suffered under the Nazis, but it happens more often than it ought to. Similarly, government programs are sometimes called totalitarian or fascist when there is a distinct difference between the two. Your first question should be: are the two cases the same in moral terms? If the answer is no, then the equivalence is false.

**Hasty Generalization:** Here a person uses a small amount of information to make a general point. For instance, if your iPhone breaks just after you get it and you conclude that iPhones suck, you’ve generalized from one experience to all experiences. Be careful about using too little information to make a general claim.

**Faulty Causality:** In this case, a person concludes that one thing is caused by another thing, when it isn’t. For instance, if you hear dishes crash on the ground and then you see the cat running away, you might assume the cat did it. However, it might very well be your sibling, and the cat just freaked out from the noise. Similarly, people often blame their inability to get things done on other events, when, in fact, those events had nothing to do with it. To prove causality needs precise evidence, and sometimes that evidence is surprising. For instance, doctors now think that old people who fall and break their legs sometimes don’t; often, their leg breaks and then they fall.

**Begging the Question/Circular Argument:** Here, what’s happening is that the very issue in dispute is being claimed as true without proof. For instance, if your parents accuse you of throwing a party while they were away for the weekend, and you respond with something like, “You know me—I’d never do that. What’s for dinner?” You’re not proving anything, but just assuming innocence because, well, you’re that kind of person. Or, let’s say your parents tell you to listen to them more, and you ask why, and they say “Because we’re your parents!” Hopefully, you already knew that, and your question was about why you should listen to them on this subject, not whether they’re your parents, which is possibly an entirely different and more disturbing subject. Begging the question is a kind of circular argument, and it happens all too often, such as telling someone they shouldn’t break the law because it’s illegal. Duh.

**Equivocation:** This one is a favorite among young and old alike, a kind of lying by playing with definitions. Equivocation basically means using a very specific meaning of a word to get out of a situation. For instance, if you use a bathroom pass for, say, forty minutes, and I mark you absent because you weren’t here, you might respond, “but I was here,” using the sense of here as ‘on campus’ when you knew I meant ‘in class’. Words have a number of meanings, and humans are quite sly at playing tricks with those meanings to get out of a situation.

**Non Sequitur:** In this case, we have a fairly simple fallacy where one thing just doesn’t follow from the other. Here, the warrant doesn’t support the claim. If your partner says something like, “If you really loved me, you’d buy me a new car,” the warrant in that case is that *true love means buying people new cars*, which is a bit absurd. Another non sequitur are might be a student who thinks she deserves an A because she worked really hard. The assumption is that a top grade is for effort, not product, when in fact the reverse is true. Be careful about your warrants when making arguments!

**The Straw Man:** These arguments are really about avoiding the issue. A ‘straw man’ is a target someone sets up in order to avoid talking about the real issue, generally an easier target than the one at hand. For instance, let’s say a teacher tells a noisy student to be quiet, and the student responds that the teacher is unfair and always picking on him. Now, the issue is the current talking, but through a clever diversionary tactic, the student changed the subject to fairness. Or let’s say that students in a class ask their teacher to have more discussion time about the topics covered, and the teacher responds that all kids want to do is talk. The teacher didn’t deal with the real issue, which is discussing the topic, and changed the subject to student chattiness. Each case is a straw man, an easy issue that avoids the real topic.

**Faulty Analogy:** Sometimes analogies are helpful for thinking about things, such as Forrest Gump’s box of chocolates analogy. Mama had a good point in some ways, though she might have pointed out that some of those chocolates might be filled with poison. However, sometimes analogies go too far or just don’t work. For instance, if Forest continued by saying something like, “therefore, the world was created in a candy factory maker, and skin is made of different kinds of chocolate,” you might not be hearing that so often. Faulty analogies assume that because two things are similar in one way, they are similar in other ways. For instance, saying that people who have to have coffee in the morning are like alcoholics is faulty because while each certainly is an addiction, the addictions are drastically different in their effects on people’s health and lives.

**Sweeping Generalization:** This is the fallacy of making a sweeping statement and expecting it to be true of every specific case -- in other words, stereotyping. Example: "Women are on average not as strong as men and less able to carry a gun. Therefore women can't pull their weight in a military unit." The problem is that the sweeping statement may be true (on average, women are indeed weaker than men), but it is not necessarily true for every member of the group in question (there are some women who are much stronger than the average).

**4. Common Literary Elements**

**Allegory**: A representation of abstract ideas or principles by characters, figures, or events in narrative, dramatic, or pictorial form and can often be an extended metaphor for a specific historical or political event.

**Alliteration**: A stylistic device, or literary technique, in which successive words (more strictly, stressed syllables) begin with the same consonant sound or letter.

**Antagonist**: The character or force that struggles against or blocks the protagonist. Often, but not always, the villain.

**Anthropomorphism/Personification:** The attribution of human characteristics to non-human entities, including inanimate objects, animals, feelings, etc. Note: “anthropomorphism” tends to have a critical implication, suggesting that something false is going on.

**Assonance**: The repetition of vowel sounds within a short passage of verse.

**Characterization**: Process of revealing the personality of a character. Writer reveals characterization in the following ways: ***Direct*:** tells reader directly what character is like. ***Indirect*:** describes how character looks and dresses; lets reader hear character speak; reveals character's private thoughts and feelings; reveals character's effect on other people--shows how other characters feel or behave toward the character; shows the character in action

**Conflict**: The conflict is the central struggle or issue in any given story, without which the story would be uninteresting. There are two main types: 1) EXTERNAL CONFLICT: characters struggle against outside forces such as another character, society, or nature. 2) INTERNAL CONFLICT: struggle between opposing needs, desires, or emotions within a person; takes place entirely within a character's mind.   
**Note**----Can have both types of conflict within a single work.

**Connotation:** The set of associations implied by a word in addition to its literal meaning.

**Consonance**: The repetition of consonant sounds in a short sequence of words.

**Denotation**: The literal dictionary meaning(s) of a word as distinct from an associated idea or connotation.

**End Rhyme**: A rhyme in the final syllable(s) of a verse.

**Extended Metaphor**: A metaphor which is drawn out beyond the usual word or phrase to extend throughout a stanza or an entire poem, usually by using multiple comparisons between the unlike objects or ideas.

**Figurative Language**: The use of words, phrases, symbols, and ideas in such as way as to evoke mental images and sense impressions. Often employs symbols, metaphors, and similes.

**Flashback**: A scene that interrupts the normal chronological sequence of events of a story to depict something that happened at an earlier time.

**Foil**: A character who serves as a contrast to another. Often a minor character functions as the foil to bring out specific traits of a major character.

**Foot**: A unit of rhythm or meter; the division in verse of a group of syllables, one of which is long or accented.

**Foreshadowing**: The use of clues to hint at events that will occur later in a plot.

**Genre**: Category to which a literary work belongs. Some examples of popular genres include: western novel, gothic/horror fiction, detective fiction, romance, fantasy.

**Irony**: A contrast or discrepancy between expectations and reality. Three major categories of irony:

* VERBAL IRONY--occurs when a writer or speaker says one thing but really means the opposite.
* SITUATIONAL IRONY--occurs when what actually happens is the opposite of what is expected or appropriate.
* DRAMATIC IRONY--occurs when the audience or the reader knows something important that a character in a play or story does not know.

**Iambs**: A metrical foot consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable or short syllable followed by a long syllable.

**Hyperbole:** uses exaggeration to express a strong sentiment or create a comic effect.

**Imagery**: The use of expressive or evocative images in poetry, art, literature, or music.

**Internal Rhyme**: Also called middle rhyme, a rhyme occurring within the line. The rhyme may be with words within the line but not at the line end, or with a word within the line and a word at the end of the line.

**Metaphor**: A rhetorical trope defined as a direct comparison between two or more seemingly unrelated subjects. This device is known for usage in literature, especially in poetry, where with few words, emotions and associations from one context are associated with objects and entities in a different context.

**Meter**: A measure of rhythmic quantity in poetry, or the organized succession of groups of syllables at basically regular intervals in a line of poetry, according to definite metrical patterns. The unit of meter is the foot.

**Mood**: The overall emotion created by a work of literature. It usually can be described with one or more adjectives. Ex: eerie, angry, peaceful.

**Ode**: A form of stately and elaborate lyrical verse, usually of a serious meditative nature and having a formal stanzaic structure.

**Onomatopoeia: U**se of a word whose sound imitates or suggests its meaning

**Oxymoron:** Combines apparently contradictory or opposing ideas--living death, cruel love.

**Personification:** A kind of metaphor in which a non-human thing or quality is talked about as if it were human. **Plot**: A series of related events that make up a story   
**Plot Outline:**

1. EXPOSITION: introduces the characters, setting, and usually the major conflict
2. CONFLICT: struggle between opposing characters or opposing forces.
3. RISING ACTION: complications/problems that arise as the characters take steps to resolve the conflict
4. CLIMAX: the turning point or crisis: the highest point of the story, when the outcome of the conflict is decided; the moment of greatest emotional intensity or suspense
5. FALLING ACTION: unravels the complications
6. RESOLUTION or DENOUEMENT: when all of the conflicts/problems are solved and the story is "closed," the conclusion

**Point of View**: The perspective from which a story is told. There are three points of view.

* First Person: Narrator speaks directly of her or himself (or of themselves) and uses I/We
* Second Person: Narrator speaks directly to the audience and uses You
* Third Person/Omniscient: Omniscient means ‘all knowing’, and the narrator in this case knows what is going on in everyone’s head, using He/She/It/They

**Protagonist**: The main character, the person whose conflict sets the plot in motion. Most are dynamic characters who change in some important way by the end of the story. Usually, but not always, the hero.

**Rhyme Scheme**: The pattern established by the arrangement of rhymes in a stanza or poem, generally described by using letters of the alphabet to denote the recurrence of rhyming lines.

**Rhythm**: An essential of all poetry, the regular or progressive pattern of recurrent accents in the flow of a poem the rise and fall of stresses on words in the metrical feet.

**Setting:** Time and location in which a story takes place. Sometimes setting also creates the conflict, helps to create atmosphere or mood, and/or introduces the characters.

**Simile**: Makes a comparison between two seemingly unlike things by using a connective word such as *like, s than,* or *resembles*. Note: similes ***are*** metaphors, but they are written in a different form.

**Slant Rhyme**: Sometimes known as half or off rhyme, a rhyme in which the sounds are similar, but not exact often using consonance or assonance.

**Sonnet**: A fixed form consisting of fourteen lines of 5-foot iambic verse at times following a strict rhyme scheme.

**Stressed**: To place emphasis on a syllable or word in pronouncing or in accordance with a metrical pattern.

**Symbol**: A symbol is a graphical, written, vocal or physical object which represents another, usually more complex, physical or abstract object, or an object property.  
**Suspense**: A feeling of uncertainty, curiosity, or anxiety about what will happen next in a story   
**Tone**: The attitude a writer takes towards the subject of a work, the character in it, or the audience. It is conveyed through the writer's choice of words and descriptions of characters and setting; usually can be described with adjectives such as amused, angry, sarcastic, and solemn.

**Theme**: A story's central idea or insight. It is NOT the same as the subject of a work, which can be stated in one word---love, fear, growing-up. Theme is the writer's view of the world or a revelation about human nature. THE THEME MUST BE STATED IN AT LEAST ONE SENTENCE.

**6. Templates to Declare the Writer’s Position[[2]](#footnote-2)**

*The following templates help writers introduce and discuss your own ideas as a writer (‘I’) when writing a paper that requires the writer’s response to or stance/position on a topic. Furthermore, these templates help writers agree, disagree, or both agree and disagree with sources in order to declare their position relative to the views they’ve summarized or quoted.*

**On Using “I”:**

“I” can be used in well-grounded and well-supported arguments just as those that don’t use “I”. Some occasions may warrant avoiding first person (“I”). Overuse of “I” can also result in a monotonous series of “I” statements—“I believe, I think, I argue”. It is a good idea to mix first-person assertions with assertions that signal your position without using “I”. Many times the use of “I” is appropriate; however, check with your professor.

**Note: DO NOT** introduce quotations by saying something like “A quote by X says.” Introductory phrases like these are both redundant and misleading.

**Signaling who is Saying What in Your Own Writing. Good for Introducing Evidence**

* X argues \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s central insight is that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* According to X, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* According to both X and Y, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* As X points out, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s main point here is that, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Politicians, X argues, should \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* One of X’s main points is that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X tends to view \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* The main issue involved in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Signaling Your Own Position**

* My own view, however, is that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s assertion that \_\_\_\_\_does not fit the facts.
* Anyone familiar with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ should agree that \_\_\_\_\_ .
* But \_\_\_\_\_ are real, and are arguably the most significant factor in \_\_\_\_\_.
* Most athletes will tell you that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Disagreeing, with Reasons**

* I think X is mistaken because she overlooks \_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s claim that \_\_\_\_ rests upon the questionable assumption that \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I disagree with X’s view that \_\_\_\_ because, as recent research has shown, \_\_\_\_\_.
* X contradicts himself/can’t have it both ways. On the one hand, he argues \_\_\_\_. But on the
* other hand, he also says \_\_\_\_\_.
* By focusing on \_\_\_\_\_, X overlooks the deeper problem of \_\_\_\_\_.
* X runs into a contradiction when she/he states that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X claims \_\_\_\_\_, but we don’t need him to tell us that. Anyone familiar with \_\_\_\_\_\_ has long known that \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X has entirely missed the point by focusing on the issue of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Agreeing**

* X is surely right about \_\_\_\_\_ because, as she may not be aware, recent studies have shown that \_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s point about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is central to any discussion of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s theory of \_\_\_\_\_ is extremely useful because it sheds insight on the difficult problem of \_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s view is correct because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X’s argument is undeniable given that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I agree that \_\_\_\_\_, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe \_\_\_\_.
* Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that it basically boils down to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I agree, as X may not realize, that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X is right that \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* The evidence shows that \_\_\_\_.

**Agreeing and Disagreeing Simultaneously**

* Although I agree with X up to a point, I cannot accept his overall conclusion that \_\_\_\_\_.
* Although I disagree with much that X says, I fully endorse his final conclusion that \_\_\_\_\_.
* Though I concede that \_\_\_\_\_, I still insist that \_\_\_\_.
* X is right that \_\_\_\_, but she seems on more dubious ground when she claims that \_\_\_\_\_.
* While X is probably wrong when she claims that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, she is right that \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Whereas X provides ample evidence that \_\_\_\_, Y and Z’s research on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_ convinces me that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ instead.
* I’m of two minds about X’s claims that \_\_\_\_. On the one hand, I agree that \_\_\_\_. On the other hand, I’m not sure if \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* My feelings on the issue are mixed. I do support X’s position that \_\_\_\_, but I find Y’s arguments about \_\_\_\_\_ and Z’s research on \_\_\_\_ to be equally persuasive.

**Indicate Multiple Perspectives—“I” versus “They” --**Point-of-view clues in the text that clearly separates the views of the writer (“I”) from those of source authors (“they”).

* X overlooks what I consider an important point about \_\_\_\_.
* My own view is that what X insists is a \_\_\_\_ is in fact a \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I wholeheartedly endorse what X calls \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* These conclusions, which X discusses in \_\_\_\_\_\_, add weight to the argument that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Entertaining Objections --**Notice that the following examples are not attributed to any specific person or group, but to “skeptics,” “readers,” or “many”. This kind of nameless, faceless naysayer is appropriate in some cases.

* Yet some readers may challenge my view that \_\_\_\_\_\_. After all, many believe that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Indeed, my own argument that \_\_\_\_\_ seems to ignore \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_.
* Of course, many will probably disagree with this assertion that\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Some, however, argue that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* On the other hand, many would argue that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Those in the opposing camp would state that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* One important counterview to my own would be that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* But though the evidence is strong, there are those that would contend that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Naming Your Naysayers**

* Here many \_\_\_\_\_\_ would probably object that \_\_\_\_\_.
* But *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* would certainly taken issue with the argument that \_\_\_\_\_.
* *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*, of course, may want to dispute my claim that \_\_\_\_.
* Nevertheless, both followers and critics of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will probably suggest otherwise and argue that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**To minimize stereotyping…**

* Although not all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ think alike, some of them will probably dispute my claim that \_\_\_\_.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are so diverse in their views that it’s hard to generalize about them, but some are likely to object on the grounds that \_\_\_\_\_.
* Of course, not all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ would completely agree with the claim that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but many do propose that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Making Concessions While Still Standing Your Ground**

* Although I grant that \_\_\_\_\_, I still maintain that \_\_\_\_.
* Proponents of X are right to argue that \_\_\_\_\_. But they exaggerate when they claim that \_\_\_\_\_.
* While it is true that \_\_\_\_\_\_, it does not necessarily follow that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Certainly, X makes a good point about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. However, what is missed here is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* On the one hand, I agree with X that\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. But on the other hand, I still insist that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Indicating Who Cares**

* X used to think \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. But recently [or within the past few decades], \_\_\_\_\_\_ suggests that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* This interpretation challenges the work of those critics who have long assumed that \_\_\_\_.
* These findings challenge the work of earlier researchers, who tended to assume that \_\_\_\_\_.
* Recent studies like these shed new light on \_\_\_\_\_\_, which previous studies had not addressed.
* These findings challenge X’s common assumption that \_\_\_\_\_.
* At first glance, X might say \_\_\_\_\_\_. But on closer inspection, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Why Your Claim Matters**

* X matters/is important because \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Although X might seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in terms of today’s concern over \_\_\_.
* Ultimately, what is at stake here is \_\_\_\_.
* These findings have important consequences for the broader domain of \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* My discussion of X is in fact addressing the larger matter of \_\_\_\_\_.
* These conclusions/This discovery will have significant applications in \_\_\_\_\_ as well as in \_\_\_\_\_.

**Using Qualifiers**

* **For the most part**, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are known to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* There are **few** that would see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as the correct way to kiss another human.
* Given the argument, it is **possible** that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* **Rarely** do we see people eating \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_for dinner.
* **It seems to be true** that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* **Some** could argue for the view that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* If we continue down this road, **it may be the case** that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* According to the argument so far, **sometimes** people can be said to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* The view is **more or less** true; however, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* **Generally Speaking**, the belief in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is not supported by the evidence.
* **In some cases**, countries really do \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but in others, they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* **Many** agree with the concept of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* **In the main**, the proposition that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ holds true.
* **Most** would agree with the notion of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as correct.
* **Perhaps** we should take a closer look at the argument for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* **On average,** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is not the case.

**So What and Who Cares**

* Although X may seem of concern to only a small group of \_\_\_\_\_\_, it should in fact concern anyone who cares about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Despite the fact that large numbers of people are unaware of the issue of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we should all be more concerned because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* An essential issue often left out of the discussion is the problem of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, without which we miss entirely \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**7. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism, which is defined as using a source without properly citing it, is a huge issue in both high school and college, and the ramifications of getting caught can be pretty tough: from losing a grade for a paper to getting expelled. The problem is so huge that it is now standard in colleges and many high schools to use a plagiarism detection program, such as Turnitin.com, that scans your documents in a few minutes and shows any sources that you used without citing them. Some students are ignorant of the issue, while others look at anything they read as akin to finding money on the street: no one here is claiming this cash, so why not take it? That’s a false analogy these days because people do claim what they write, and it’s fairly easy now to catch plagiarism. Whatever your position on plagiarism, there are a few good reasons to avoid it:

1. Your teachers and professors don’t want you to do it and will punish you if you get caught.
2. You can get punished. Did I mention that already?
3. You lose credibility as an author, or ethos, by pretending to have written something you didn’t.
4. You may be seen as a dishonest person in the eyes of your teachers, which can have long-term consequences.
5. Part of your job as a student is to learn how to be a good writer and researcher, and citing your sources is one of the basic requirements of that job.

So what counts as plagiarism?

1. Copying sentences, information, phrases, and paragraphs into your writing and not quoting and/or citing them. Even something as small as a three-word phrase, when not quoted, is plagiarism. Always quote text you use, and always cite information you paraphrase.
2. Incomplete paraphrasing. Many times a student will cite a source they’ve paraphrased, but the paraphrase is so similar to the original material that she might as well have just copied it. Be sure to paraphrase ideas into your own words so that they are clearly different from the original.

What to cite:

1. Direct quotes
2. Generally unknown statements or facts
3. Arguments or views directly from others
4. Images, graphs, charts, statistics, etc. from a source

What not to worry about:

1. Common knowledge (Barack Obama is the president; humans need to hydrate; school sucks, & etc.)
2. Facts generally known (America was attacked on September 11th, 2001; San Marin High School is in Novato, CA; somebody is trying to figure out a way to text without being caught right now; & etc.)

And, so far, I’ve *never* read anything written by a student that was accidentally *exactly* the same as what someone else had written.

**Principles of Productive Classroom Discussions**

Behavior - mutual respect guides all behavior:

1. One person speaks at a time.
2. Respect everyone’s right to have an opinion.
3. Focus on the idea, not the person.
4. Avoid inappropriate language.
5. Don’t sabotage the discussion with outbursts, sarcasm, or attempts at humor.
6. Don’t have side conversations.
7. Take notes and write down your ideas so that you have them when your time comes to talk.
8. Speak loudly and clearly so that everyone can hear you.
9. Be confident in expressing your point-of-view but be open to other ideas. *“The mark of an educated mind is to entertain an idea without accepting it.” – Aristotle.*

Skills

1. Practice Active Listening. Good listening takes effort.
2. Ask for clarification.
3. Build on others’ ideas.
4. Challenge other ideas respectfully.
5. Support ideas with evidence, if possible, from the text.
6. Elaborate – don’t assume we know what you’re thinking.
7. Synthesize – make connections among ideas.
8. Develop big questions. Often the key to finding a solution is to ask the right question.

**Academic Conversation Templates**

|  |
| --- |
| 1.) **Elaboration & Synthesis**   * I’m a little unclear about \_\_\_\_\_\_; could you\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? * Your point about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is interesting—are you saying that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_? * That’s an interesting point; can you\_\_\_\_\_\_? * That’s an interesting point; how does \_\_\_\_\_\_ fit in with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? * Can you clarify what you mean by \_\_\_\_\_? * I’m not sure I’m following; is your point that \_\_\_\_\_\_?\_ * I like your point about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_; how do you think \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ fits in with it? * \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_\_ seem to be talking about the same thing, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. |
| 2.) **Agreement/Addition**   * I really like what you’re saying about \_\_\_\_\_\_ . It makes me think \_\_\_\_\_\_. * I hadn’t thought about \_\_\_\_\_\_ before; it’s really interesting because\_\_\_\_\_\_ . * I’d like to add to what \_\_\_\_\_says about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * Can I piggyback on what \_\_\_\_\_ is saying? |
| 3.) **Alternative Views/Disagreements**   * My view is different than \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; I think that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * I see where you’re coming from, but I think that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * I disagree with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * I wonder if \_\_\_\_\_ is rather the case because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * I have a different theory about \_\_\_\_. I think that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * I have a different hypothesis about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The evidence suggests \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * My view is different; I think that \_\_\_\_\_\_. |
| 4.) **Staying on Topic**   * I think these are good points, but getting back to the main question\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. * \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has an interesting point about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but how does it relate to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_? * Moving back to the original question, isn’t the main point that\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? |

1. Adapted from *Everything’s an Argument*, 4th edition, by Andrea A. Lunsford and John J. Ruszkiewicz. I highly recommend buying the latest edition as preparation for college. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Adapted from *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing,* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. I recommend purchasing this to prepare you for college. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)