

MLA Argument Essay: Workshop

Author (Who wrote the essay): _____

Reviewer (Who's filling out this form about the essay): _____

Instruction

- Read your essays aloud. Make any notes on things to fix as you find them in the
- **STOP** and do this now before you go any further. Take turns and make sure everyone has read their draft out loud before you move on.

Instruction

- Trade papers and re-read the paper, and as you do, follow the instructions below. You will be writing things on this handout and on your partner's paper.

Do Some Preliminary Work

Yes No LOOK at the essay. Is the essay correctly formatted? If not, what needs to be fixed? Circle it on the essay or make a note here

Play with colors/highlight the body The body of the paper should be **very** colorful. If it's not, you didn't do the job.

- **Highlight all evidence in one color.**
Any quote, statistic, fact, or paraphrase from a source. If you're not sure if something is your classmate or a source, ask.

Things to look for or do as you go through the rest of this process

- **Clarity/Grammar:** Circle/mark any grammar issues you notice. You might just draw a wavy line under things that need some attention.
- **Formal wording:** Circle/mark every instance of I/me/my/you/your, etc. that is used in the essay except for those in quotes.

Introduction

Now go back to the beginning and read the introduction to do these things and answer these questions.

Yes No Does the introduction get you into the subject and topic of the essay? If no, any suggestions?

Yes No Is the thesis a clear statement that makes a claim about an issue and presents a strong argument, clearly indicating the value, importance, or reasoning for supporting the point of view offered?

Yes No Is it at the end of the first paragraph?

Thesis: Find the thesis—the sentence that explains what the writer’s main argument is. It should be at the end of the introduction, **but if you can’t find it there**, look at the conclusion. Is there a sentence there that really sums up the overall point of this essay?

Highlight the thesis in a different color wherever you find it—make a note that says “thesis” beside it in the margin.

If you couldn’t find it, finish this sentence about the essay:

In this essay, I think what you’re really trying to say is

STOP and re-read the rest of the draft to answer the rest of the questions.

Yes No Is the essay making an argument about an issue?

Yes No Does the final essay use at least three appropriate sources? Can you point to those in the paper? If not, then answer “no” here. If it only uses one or two, that’s still a no, but you can add a note about it here:

Yes No Is research smoothly integrated? If no, what places/things need improvement? Write “integrate” beside those in the margin of the paper.

Yes No Is research cited with correct parenthetical citations using smooth signal phrases? If no, what places/things need improvement? Write “fix citation” or “add citation” beside those in the margin of the paper.

Overall Development

Yes No Does the introduction set the context for the discussion that follows?
If no, what places/things need improvement?

Yes No Does the writer support the thesis with logical, clearly discussed points, using both evidence and their discussion and explanation to show ?
If no, what places/things need improvement?

Yes No Does it meet length requirements? At least 3 pages long. If not, what general things can be added?

Style

Yes No Does the style—voice, tone, sentence style, and word choice—reflect the type of writing expected in this essay? (No I/me/my/you, formal tone and word choice, and smooth integration of quotes.)

Reference Page

Yes No Are all sources correctly cited on the Works Cited page? If no, mark/circle things need to be fixed?

Yes No Are all sources used cited?

Yes No Are all sources cited used?

General Comments: What overall suggestions do you have for the writer?

What do you like? Is there anything you would like more of? Is there anything you feel doesn't belong? Overall thoughts and encouragement?

Instruction

1. **Today:** Return this sheet and the essay to your partner and talk about what you found. What is okay and what needs to be worked on. (You should go home with your essay and this handout about your essay)
2. **Homework/On your own:** Work on your essay before your draft is due to me. Use the comments here to guide you in terms of what to work on.
 - a. I suggest you go to the writing center and of course, **use Grammarly!**

Other things to help you improve:

- Read your paper out loud
- Use your computer to find all personal pronouns: I/me/my/you. If you find them in your writing—not quotes—revise your sentence to get rid of them. Who do you mean? Viewers? Readers? Consumers? Men? Women? Dragons? Sea Monsters?
 - Use Ctrl+ (Cmd+F on a Mac) to open up the search box and then just type in one pronoun at a time to search for it.
- Review my past comments on all of your writings. Are there things I've pointed out over and over? Look through this paper and your cover letter for those issues.
- **Read** your own writing like a reader. Hear what you're saying and how you're saying it.
- **LOOK** at your paper. Don't look at the words; look at the layout and shape. Make sure you're not losing points for format.