

Senior Argumentative Research Essay: Social Issues

A variety of social issues impact contemporary society in this country and throughout the world. These issues revolve around social justice and ethical, humane treatment of all mankind. You will have the opportunity to select an issue of interest to you and research its causes and possible solutions, formulating an educated opinion on it and compiling your research into an argumentative essay of 5-7 pages, plus a works cited page.

Below are the main objectives and an overview of the process:

- Select a topic of interest to you.
 - It must be approved by your instructor.
 - It may not be duplicated within the class.
- Complete the Cornell *Notes of Inquiry*.
- Research the issue in depth, formulating a thesis statement based on your position.
- Research relevant, reliable sources.
 - Find at least 8 viable sources and complete an adapted annotated bibliography.
 - Choose at least 5 of those sources to use in your essay.
- Save your sources along with their works cited information.
 - Each article should be saved as a document under your school ID or on Google drive for easy access at school and at home.
 - Name the file with the author's last name and title of article.
- Print out your articles (2-4 pages with MLA entry) and highlight important information.
 - You will submit them in a folder when you turn in your annotated bibliography and the final research essay.
- Take relevant notes that explain and support your thesis.
- Organize and compile your notes to write a rough draft of your essay & a works cited page.
- Type a final copy of your essay and works cited page according to MLA guidelines.
- Avoid plagiarism. If your information came from an outside source, you must give credit to the source when you write your essay.
- Meet all deadlines outlined in the research calendar.

See the *Research Calendar* for deadlines!

Useful links: [GALE Database Link at AHS](#) **Online Databases:** You may use Alvin ISD's online databases to find magazine and newspaper articles. Use the following user name and password: **user name: alvinisd**
Password: lonestar

- [Brazoria County Library Link for more GALE and Ebscohost databases](#)
- [Purdue OWL: Link for MLA Formatting](#)
- [Identifying and Eliminating Plagiarism](#)
- [MLA Parenthetical Documentation: The Basics](#)
- [MLA Sample Works Cited Page](#)

Overall, the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) is an excellent resource to use throughout the research process. Access it through Google.

Sample Outline/ Format:

- I. Introduction: Set up and state your claim.
 - A. Begin with an anecdote, attention-getting device, relevant statistic, or other hook. (optional)
 1. If you can't think of a great hook, begin with background information or a brief explanation of the issue.
 - B. What basic background information do we need in order to understand your claim?
 - C. Provide a brief explanation of the issue.
 - D. State your claim in your thesis at the end of this paragraph.
- II. Historical Context/ Background Information
- III. Human Interest Story
 - A. Put a personal face on the issue.
 - B. News story
 - C. Relate a story that you find in your research.
- IV. 1st Point and Supporting Evidence: Prove your argument.
 - A. Your topic sentence should help the reader better understand your claim/ the paper's topic.
 - B. Use compelling evidence that will enable the reader to understand your point of view.
 - C. Explain/ expound upon your topic sentence.
 1. Introduce and state evidence from your sources.
 2. Explain your evidence: What does it mean, show, or prove?
 - a) This includes educated opinion statements from you!
 - D. Transition to the next supporting reason.
- V. 2nd Point and Supporting Evidence: See explanation under 1st Point and Supporting Evidence.
- VI. 3rd Point and Supporting Evidence: See explanation under 1st Point and Supporting Evidence.
 - A. You may want to save your strongest analytical points for the end of your essay, using them to drive your conclusion.
- VII. Concession/Counterargument: Make your argument more objective and reasonable.
 - A. Briefly provide an overview of the opposing argument/s.
 - B. Include a counterargument when there are compelling arguments against your stance.
 - C. This should show the reader that you are logical about your topic, not just emotional.
- VIII. Conclusion & Call to Action: Briefly sum up your essay's overall claim and supporting evidence.
 - A. Thematic statement about mankind.
 - B. Call to action: This is the larger point you want to make about your topic.
 - C. Your "So What" paragraph: What information should you or I take away from this?
 - D. Illustrate to your instructor that you have thought critically and analytically about this issue.
 - E. Possible solution/s to the problem.

Works Cited page

- You must include at least 5 sources which you used in your essay.
- Use proper MLA formatting.
- Use a hanging indent.
- Alphabetize your entries.

Name: _____

Pd: _____ Date: _____

Source Sheet # ____: Research Notes

Works Cited—Author: United Nations

Title of Article: “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights”

(All Works Cited information should be saved on a word file with your annotated bibliography and/or with your articles.)

Research Notes for the following categories subtopics: Introduction; Historical Context; Background; Human Interest; Supporting Evidence; Counterargument; Solution; Call to Action; etc. INCLUDE PAGE NUMBERS IF APPLICABLE. Put QUOTATION MARKS around DIRECT QUOTES.	Label the category subtopic:
The United Nations “strive[s] by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction”.	Background
They believe that all humans deserve freedom, equality, and dignity.	Background
They are against slavery.	Background
“Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.”	Background
“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”	Background
Everyone deserves an education.	Background

Rubric for Final Typed Essay—110 total points

Essay set up in proper MLA format	10 pts		
1. Introduction with Thesis	10 pts		
2. Historical/Background Paragraph with Parenthetical Documentation	10 pts		
3. Human Interest Paragraph with Parenthetical Documentation	10 pts		
4. 1 st Point and Supporting Evidence with Parenthetical Documentation	10 pts		
5. 2 nd Point and Supporting Evidence with Parenthetical Documentation	10 pts		
6. 3 rd Point and Supporting Evidence with Parenthetical Documentation	10 pts		
7. Concession/Counterargument with Parenthetical Documentation	10 pts		
8. Call to Action/Conclusion	10 pts		
Works Cited page in proper MLA format	20 pts		