



Essay #5

HCC ENG DC 1301- Roberts

Short Argument Research Assignment – Due (B) Mon. Nov. 24th*

*(G) Due Tue. Nov. 25th

Purdue OWL:

In college you must be equipped to analyze the arguments of others and generate your own arguments, whether thought, spoken, or written. However, it is important to remember that logic is only one aspect of a successful argument. Non-logical arguments, which are statements that cannot be logically proven or disproved, are important in argumentative writing, such as appeals to emotions or values. Illogical arguments, on the other hand, are false and must be avoided.

Logic is a formal system of analysis that helps writers invent, demonstrate, and prove arguments. It works by testing propositions against one another to determine their accuracy. People often think they are using logic when they avoid emotion or make arguments based on their common sense, such as "Everyone should look out for their own self-interests" or "People have the right to be free." However, unemotional or common sense statements are not always equivalent to logical statements. To be logical, a proposition must be tested within a logical sequence.

The most famous logical sequence, called the syllogism, was developed by the Greek philosopher Aristotle. His most famous syllogism is:

Premise 1: All men are mortal.

Premise 2: Socrates is a man.

Conclusion: Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

In this sequence, premise 2 is tested against premise 1 to reach the logical conclusion. Within this system, if both premises are considered valid, there is no other logical conclusion than determining that Socrates is a mortal.

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- 12-point font & double-spaced
- Works Cited w. min. 5 sources
- Word Count min. 1,000 words
- Manage your time & use the process! No late papers!
- **Purdue Online Writing Lab** – use it: General Writing > Academic Writing > Establishing Arguments
- You *MUST* use the Purdue OWL MLA Works Cited format:
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- **Consider:** P.I.E. = Point, Illustrate, Explain (Claim, Support, Warrant); use Rhetorical Analysis, Compare & Contrast, Pros & Cons, Process, and Cause & Effect as you write and research.
- *USE* the organizational strategies found here for your research citations:
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/03/>

*Paper Topic Suggestions and Model Student Drafts and Revisions found below...

Forty Topic Suggestions: Argument and Persuasion

1. Dieting makes people obese.
2. Romantic love is a poor basis for marriage.
3. The war on terror has contributed to the growing abuse of human rights.
4. High school graduates should take a year off before entering college.
5. All citizens should be required by law to vote.
6. All forms of government welfare should be abolished.
7. Both parents should assume equal responsibility in raising a child.
8. Americans should have more holidays and longer vacations.
9. Participating in team sports helps to develop good character.
10. The production and sale of cigarettes should be made illegal.
11. People have become overly dependent on technology.
12. Censorship is sometimes justified.
13. Privacy is not the most important right.
14. Drunk drivers should be imprisoned on the first offense.
15. The lost art of letter-writing deserves to be revived.
16. Government and military personnel should have the right to strike.
17. Most study-abroad programs should be renamed "party abroad": they are a waste of time and money
18. The continuing decline of CD sales along with the rapid growth of music downloads signals a new era of innovation in popular music.
19. College students should have complete freedom to choose their own courses.
20. The solution to the impending crisis in Social Security is the immediate elimination of this anachronistic government program.
21. The primary mission of colleges and universities should be preparing students for the workforce.
22. Financial incentives should be offered to high school students who perform well on standardized tests.
23. All students in high school and college should be required to take at least two years of a foreign language.
24. College students in the U.S. should be offered financial incentives to graduate in three years rather than four.
25. College athletes should be exempted from regular class-attendance policies.
26. To encourage healthy eating, higher taxes should be imposed on soft drinks and junk food.
27. Students should not be required to take physical education courses.
28. To conserve fuel and save lives, the 55 miles-per-hour national speed limit should be restored.
29. All citizens under the age of 21 should be required to pass a driving education course before receiving a license to drive.
30. Any student caught cheating on an examination should be automatically dismissed from college.
31. Freshmen should not be required to purchase a meal plan from the college.
32. Zoos are internment camps for animals and should be shut down.
33. University students should not be penalized for illegally downloading music, movies, or other protected content.
34. Government financial aid for students should be based solely on merit.
35. Nontraditional students should be exempted from regular class-attendance policies.
36. At the end of each term, student evaluations of faculty should be posted online.
37. A student organization should be formed to rescue and care for the feral cats on campus.
38. People who contribute to Social Security should have the right to choose how their money is invested.
39. Professional baseball players convicted of using performance-enhancing drugs should not be considered for induction into the Hall of Fame.
40. Any citizen who does not have a criminal record should be permitted to carry a concealed weapon.

"Time for a New National Anthem"

(A Draft - Argumentative Essay)

Francis Scott Key was a Washington lawyer who witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry by the British in September 1814. The fort withstood the attack, and the sight of the American flag still waving "in dawn's early light" inspired Key to write the four verses of "The Star-Spangled Banner." He set the words to the tune of an 18th-century English drinking song. Over a century later, on March 3, 1931, an act of Congress designated "The Star-Spangled Banner" as our national anthem.

Ever since then, people have been complaining about both the words and the music of the anthem. Some are bothered that the first stanza ends in a question. Others are troubled by all the depressing references to war, such as "Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution." A lot of people don't even know what the lyrics are about. On top of that, the song is very difficult to sing. The low notes are too low, and the high notes are too high. For all these reasons, people have recently been talking about replacing "The Star-Spangled Banner" with a new national anthem. Many songs have been considered, but the best choice is "America the Beautiful."

"America the Beautiful" would make an excellent national anthem. Already it is very popular in our ball parks, school assemblies, and official state functions. The music is simple, dignified, and easy to sing. The lyrics celebrate our heroes, our future, and our land. The song expresses pride in America, but it is not warlike. It is idealistic, like the American people themselves.

Certainly "America the Beautiful" is more popular than "The Star-Spangled Banner." "The Star-Spangled Banner" is hard even for professional singers to sing. It has a range of 12 notes, three more than "America the Beautiful." No matter what key it starts in, it ends up going too high or too low for most people. The lyrics are all about war, and they are very confusing in places. For example, I doubt if anyone knows what these lines mean:

No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave.

And does anybody really believe that red rockets and bursting bombs express the true spirit of America?

Other songs have been suggested as replacements for "The Star-Spangled Banner," but clearly "America the Beautiful" is the best choice. There is "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," but that is also all about war, and "The Stars and Stripes Forever" doesn't have any lyrics to accompany it. I suppose "My Country 'Tis of Thee" is nice enough, but the British have already used the tune for *their* national anthem. Some people would like to see a more modern song adopted, such as "Born in the U.S.A." by Bruce Springsteen. But can you imagine what it would be like to start a ballgame with the line, "You end up like a dog that's been beat too much"!

Evaluating the Draft

1. The introductory paragraph of "Time for a New National Anthem" is rather long. Which details in the introduction do you think should be moved to a body paragraph or eliminated altogether?
2. Based on your reading of the rest of the draft, revise the introduction to "Time for a New National Anthem." Feel free to delete unnecessary details and add information that you think is important.
3. Are you satisfied that the author of "Time for a New National Anthem" has arranged the body paragraphs clearly and logically? Briefly explain your response.
4. Provide an overall evaluation of this draft by responding to the following questions:
 - Is the argument convincing?
 - Are the main points adequately supported?
 - Does the conclusion emphasize the writer's central idea?

"Time for an Anthem the Country Can Sing" (REVISED ARGUMENT)

by S. Wilson

The music was composed as a drinking song for an 18th-century London social club. The words were written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key to commemorate a battle. And on March 3, 1931, "The Star-Spangled Banner" officially became the national anthem of the United States. Ever since then, people have been complaining that the tune is unsingable and the lyrics are offensive. In response to these complaints, a bill was recently filed in Congress to replace "The Star-Spangled Banner" with "America the Beautiful" as our national anthem. For a number of reasons, this bill deserves wide support.

"The Star-Spangled Banner" can be as painful to listen to as it is difficult to sing. Even professional singers have difficulty with its 12-note span, rumbling at "Oh! say, can you see" and screeching at "the rockets' red glare." In a way, however, such rumbles and screeches are fitting, for the lyrics are bloody, confusing, and war-stained. Does anyone really believe that red rockets and bursting bombs express the true spirit of America? And all that talk of of "the foe's haughty host," "the gloom of the grave," and "the war's desolation" is far from being rousing and inspirational.

Over the years, other songs have been recommended as replacements, but most of these are just as inappropriate as the present anthem. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," for instance, is also a war tune, and John Philip Sousa's stirring march "The Stars and Stripes Forever" has no lyrics at all. "My Country 'Tis of Thee" is sweet and dignified, but the music belongs to the British national anthem, "God Save the Queen." And finally, among recent contenders, Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." has a terrific beat, but its lyrics are better suited to a requiem than to an anthem. Just imagine how disconcerting it would be to start a ball game with the line, "You end up like a dog that's been beat too much."

Clearly, "America the Beautiful" deserves to be our national anthem. For years now, it has been gaining popularity in school assemblies, at official state functions, and even in our ball parks. The music is simple, dignified, and--most important--easy to sing. The lyrics celebrate our history ("O beautiful for pilgrim feet . . ."), our land ("For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain"), our heroes ("Who more than self their country loved"), and our future ("That sees beyond the years"). It is proud but not warlike, idealistic without sounding silly.

Oh! say, it's time "The Star-Spangled Banner" was put to rest. Surely our flag will continue to wave "O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave" without benefit of this windy tune. Let us have a national anthem that the whole country can sing. Let us sing, with pride, "America the Beautiful."