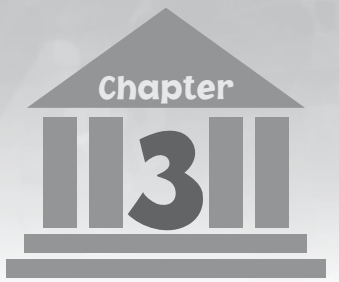
Writing for Different Purposes



To help students understand the different purposes and types of writing that are important in social studies, I start by having them close their eyes and imagine their "dream cars."

> *If you had all the money you would ever need, what car would you have in your driveway? Think about what it would look like, how it would drive, how fast it could go, what technology it would have … Everything!*

When they have fully visualized all of its details and are totally enthralled by their imagined dream cars, I say:

> *Now, drop the engine out. What do you have now?*

After the chorus of moans, I go on to explain that they have, from all appearances, what look like fabulous cars. Each car has wheels, doors, and every high-tech, computerized, luxury option possible, but it has no engine and no power. It won't go anywhere. It won't take them anywhere. It will just sit in the driveway and rust. The same is true with writing. I go on to say:

> *You can have words on paper—even correctly spelled words. You can have indented your paragraphs properly and adhered to your margins and included a title. So now it looks like great writing, but writing has to have a motor. It has to be powered and have an objective. If it does not, it's simply words on paper without purpose. The words in any writing have to accomplish something such as describing an idea, explaining a procedure, or presenting a comparison of two or more subjects. Perhaps what the words need to do is to persuade readers to agree with your views about an issue. If they don't, it is like the car that just "looks" like a car: a piece of writing with no engine.*

In the same way that the engine powers a car, it is the purpose that drives a piece of writing. This discussion, of course, is a lead-in to an examination of the different purposes of writing. In the previous chapter, compare and contrast was the purpose of writing used for the example lesson. Compare and contrast is one of six categories of writing that will be examined in this book. This chapter will examine the other five in greater detail.

Categories of Writing Purposes

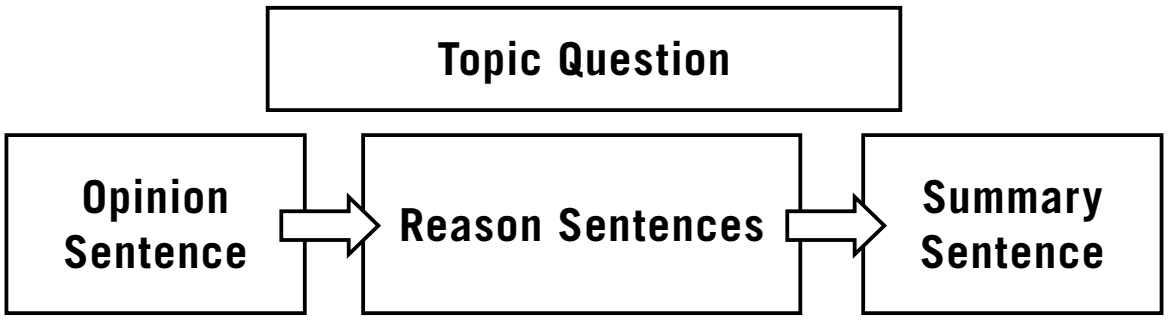
- opinion, persuasive, and argumentative
- informative/explanatory
- narrative
- descriptive
- cause and effect
- compare and contrast

Opinion, Persuasive, and Argumentative

Opinion pieces are where a writer aims to share his or her opinion, relying on feelings and stating what he or she thinks and why. In a persuasive piece, the writer aims to convince or persuade the reader to agree with his or her perspective by blending facts with opinion. Only the writer's point of view is presented. Unlike persuasive writing, a formal argument addresses multiple sides of an issue. Writers aim to get readers to accept their sides by presenting claims and counterclaims. The piece relies on reasons and credible data that support the argument. Arguments are more formal and maintain objective third-person points of view.

Opinion Pieces

Opinion pieces will be an easy purpose for students to grasp, as the writing provides the reasons that support students' opinions. The organization of the opinion is key to success of this writing purpose. The student must be given the structure with which they build their opinion pieces. First, students must introduce the topics they are writing about. Then, they provide the reasons that support their opinions in the bodies of the texts. Finally, they should include closing statements to their opinion pieces. You can follow the steps of this pattern with beginning students: opinion sentence, reason sentences, and summary sentence.



Opinion Sentence

Write an opening sentence clearly stating your opinion (what you think). Include key words from the topic question in your sentence. Use one of the sentence stems to start:

- I think ...
- I don't think ...
- I believe ...
- I don't believe ...
- In my opinion ...

Note: With advanced students, add these sentence stems:

- From my point of view ...
- I question whether ...
- I maintain that ...
- I (dis)agree with ...

Reason Sentences

Continue by writing two or more sentences with the reasons that support your opinion (why you think what you think). Use one transition (linking) word with each sentence:

- first
- second
- also
- next
- finally
- in addition

Note: With advanced students, have them write more than two sentences and give them these transition phrases to help them elaborate on their reasons:

- as an example
- for a case in point
- for instance
- in fact
- therefore
- despite
- on the other hand
- moreover
- besides
- furthermore

Summary Sentence

Finish by writing a sentence where you summarize the reasons for your opinion.

Note: More advanced students need to make sure that their summary sentences summarize and support the reasons given in the paper.

After reading a short article on Thomas Edison, a topic question could be: *In your opinion, what were the characteristics of Thomas Edison that helped make him a success?* The text on the following page is an example of a response:

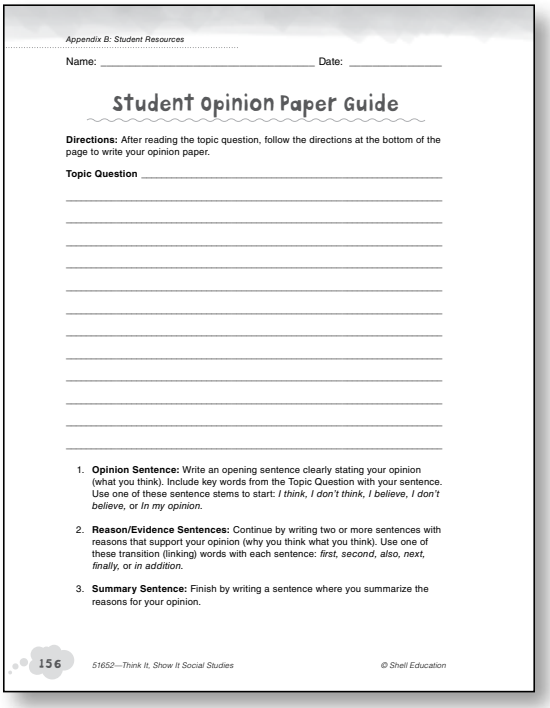
> In my opinion, there were two characteristics that helped make Thomas Edison a success. First, his curiosity led him to start experimenting at a young age. As a boy, he set up a laboratory in a baggage car of a train he worked on, so he could experiment in his spare time. Second, he had many failures with his experiments, but he never gave up. His first patent in 1870 was not a success. Thomas's curiosity and the fact that he never gave up helped make him a success.

In the student sample above, notice that the student:

- included key words (*characteristics*, *made him a success*) from the topic question in the opinion sentence;
- used transition words (*first*, *second*) to sequence the reasons;
- supported the opinion with reasons; and
- summarized the reasons (*curiosity*; *never giving up*) in the concluding sentence.

As a culminating activity, have students color-code their paragraphs. With highlighters or colored pens, they should color their opinion sentences green; their reason/evidence sentences yellow; and their summary sentences red. In addition, they can circle all transition words and phrases. The *Student Opinion Paper Guide* (Figure 3.1; reproducible on page 156) serves as a guiding activity for students writing opinion pieces. Figure 3.1 includes a blank reproducibles as well as a student example.

Figure 3.1 Student Opinion Paper Guide



Appendix B: Student Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Opinion Paper Guide

Directions: After reading the topic question, follow the directions at the bottom of the page to write your opinion paper.

Topic Question _____

1. **Opinion Sentence:** Write an opening sentence clearly stating your opinion (what you think). Include key words from the Topic Question with your sentence. Use one of these sentence stems to start: *I think, I don't think, I believe, I don't believe,* or *In my opinion.*
2. **Reason/Evidence Sentences:** Continue by writing two or more sentences with reasons that support your opinion (why you think what you think). Use one of these transition (linking) words with each sentence: *first, second, also, next, finally,* or *in addition.*
3. **Summary Sentence:** Finish by writing a sentence where you summarize the reasons for your opinion.

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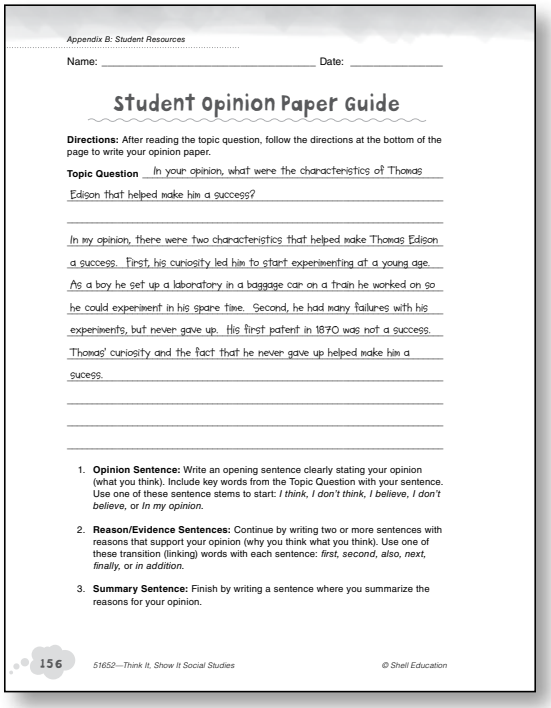
Blank Reproducible



Appendix B: Student Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Opinion Paper Guide

Directions: After reading the topic question, follow the directions at the bottom of the page to write your opinion paper.

Topic Question In your opinion, what were the characteristics of Thomas Edison that helped make him a success?

In my opinion, there were two characteristics that helped make Thomas Edison a success. First, his curiosity led him to start experimenting at a young age. As a boy he set up a laboratory in a baggage car on a train he worked on so he could experiment in his spare time. Second, he had many failures with his experiments, but never gave up. His first patent in 1870 was not a success. Thomas' curiosity and the fact that he never gave up helped make him a sucess.

1. **Opinion Sentence:** Write an opening sentence clearly stating your opinion (what you think). Include key words from the Topic Question with your sentence. Use one of these sentence stems to start: *I think, I don't think, I believe, I don't believe,* or *In my opinion.*
2. **Reason/Evidence Sentences:** Continue by writing two or more sentences with reasons that support your opinion (why you think what you think). Use one of these transition (linking) words with each sentence: *first, second, also, next, finally,* or *in addition.*
3. **Summary Sentence:** Finish by writing a sentence where you summarize the reasons for your opinion.

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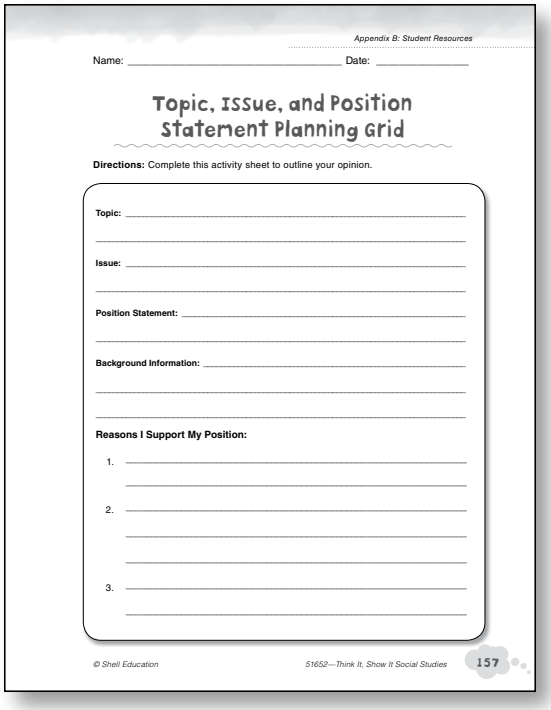
Student Example

Persuasive Pieces

As students mature with the writing they complete in social studies, they move beyond simple opinion paragraphs to longer persuasive pieces. Where opinion papers rely solely on the writer's opinions and feelings, persuasion texts blend their opinions with facts to convince readers to agree. Opinions evolve into the writer's positions. The *Topic, Issue, and Position Statement Planning Grid* activity sheet (Figure 3.2; reproducible on page 157) directs students to do four things:

1. State the topic.
2. Identify the issue and his or her position on the given issue.
3. Select relevant background information.
4. Develop reasons to support the position.

Figure 3.2 Topic, Issue, and Position Statement Planning Grid



Appendix B: Student Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Topic, Issue, and Position Statement Planning Grid

Directions: Complete this activity sheet to outline your opinion.

Topic: _____

Issue: _____

Position Statement: _____

Background Information: _____

Reasons I Support My Position:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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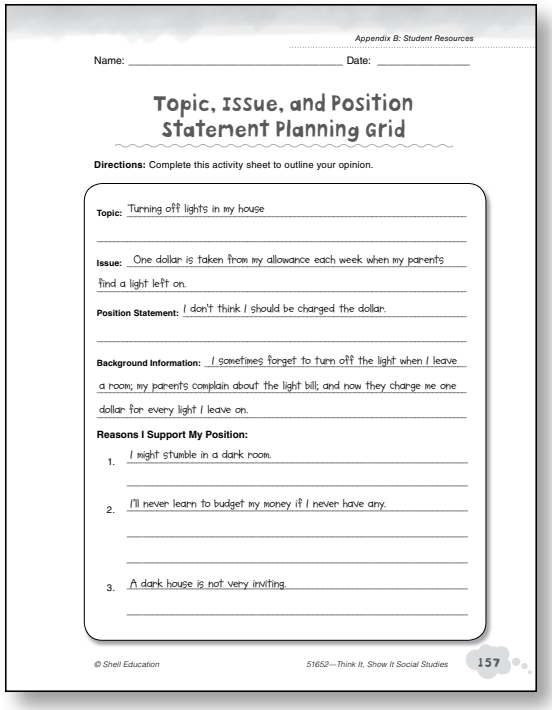


Appendix B: Student Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Topic, Issue, and Position Statement Planning Grid

Directions: Complete this activity sheet to outline your opinion.

Topic: Turning off lights in my house

Issue: One dollar is taken from my allowance each week when my parents find a light left on.

Position Statement: I don't think I should be charged the dollar.

Background Information: I sometimes forget to turn off the light when I leave a room; my parents complain about the light bill, and now they charge me one dollar for every light I leave on.

Reasons I Support My Position:

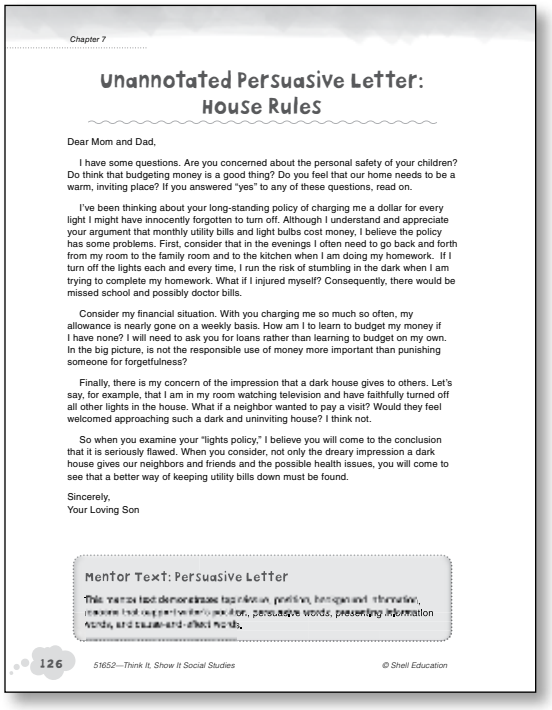
1. I might stumble in a dark room.
2. I'll never learn to budget my money if I never have any.
3. A dark house is not very inviting.

Student Example

Model it!

While studying rules and laws along with Kathleen Krull's *A Kids' Guide to America's Bill of Rights: Curfews, Censorship, and the 100-Pound Giant*, students were prompted to think about all the rules of community life: home, school, neighborhood, and so much more. Then, they selected one of the rules they have at home and took a position against it. Figure 3.3 is an example of an *Unannotated Persuasive Letter Mentor Text* (page 126).

Figure 3.3 Unannotated Persuasive Letter: House Rules



Chapter 7

Unannotated Persuasive Letter: House Rules

Dear Mom and Dad,

I have some questions. Are you concerned about the personal safety of your children? Do think that budgeting money is a good thing? Do you feel that our home needs to be a warm, inviting place? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, read on.

I've been thinking about your long-standing policy of charging me a dollar for every light I might have innocently forgotten to turn off. Although I understand and appreciate your argument that monthly utility bills and light bulbs cost money, I believe the policy has some problems. First, consider that in the evenings I often need to go back and forth from my room to the family room and to the kitchen when I am doing my homework. If I turn off the lights each and every time, I run the risk of stumbling in the dark when I am trying to complete my homework. What if I injured myself? Consequently, there would be missed school and possibly doctor bills.

Consider my financial situation. With you charging me so much so often, my allowance is nearly gone on a weekly basis. How am I to learn to budget my money if I have none? I will need to ask you for loans rather than learning to budget on my own. In the big picture, is not the responsible use of money more important than punishing someone for forgetfulness?

Finally, there is my concern of the impression that a dark house gives to others. Let's say, for example, that I am in my room watching television and have faithfully turned off all other lights in the house. What if a neighbor wanted to pay a visit? Would they feel welcomed approaching such a dark and uninviting house? I think not.

So when you examine your "lights policy," I believe you will come to the conclusion that it is seriously flawed. When you consider, not only the dreary impression a dark house gives our neighbors and friends and the possible health issues, you will come to see that a better way of keeping utility bills down must be found.

Sincerely,
Your Loving Son

Mentor Text: Persuasive Letter

This [illegible] persuasive [illegible], persuasive words, presenting information [illegible]

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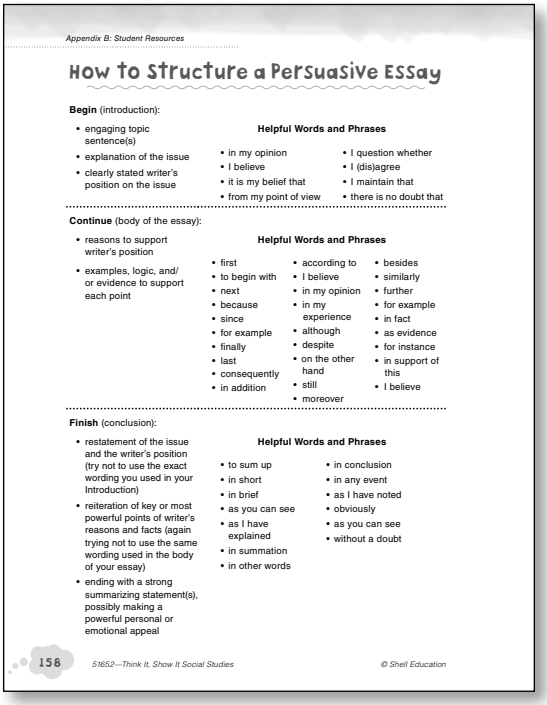
After the students filled out their sheets, they then wrote letters to their parents in attempts to persuade them regarding the rules. (Parents were also invited to write responses.)

To help support the composition of the letters, students use the *How to Structure a Persuasive Essay* sheet (Figure 3.4; reproducible on page 158), from which they can pick key persuasive words and phrases.

Figure 3.4 How to Structure a Persuasive Essay



Appendix B: Student Resources

How to Structure a Persuasive Essay

Begin (introduction):

- engaging topic sentence(s)
- explanation of the issue
- clearly stated writer's position on the issue

Helpful Words and Phrases

- in my opinion
- I believe
- it is my belief that
- from my point of view
- I question whether
- I (dis)agree
- I maintain that
- there is no doubt that

Continue (body of the essay):

- reasons to support writer's position
- examples, logic, and/or evidence to support each point

Helpful Words and Phrases

- first
- to begin with
- next
- because
- since
- for example
- finally
- last
- consequently
- in addition
- according to
- I believe
- in my opinion
- in my experience
- although
- despite
- on the other hand
- still
- moreover
- besides
- similarly
- further
- for example
- in fact
- as evidence
- for instance
- in support of this
- I believe

Finish (conclusion):

- restatement of the issue and the writer's position (try not to use the exact wording you used in your Introduction)
- reiteration of key or most powerful points of writer's reasons and facts (again trying not to use the same wording used in the body of your essay)
- ending with a strong summarizing statement(s), possibly making a powerful personal or emotional appeal

Helpful Words and Phrases

- to sum up
- in short
- in brief
- as you can see
- as I have explained
- in summation
- in other words
- in conclusion
- in any event
- as I have noted
- obviously
- as you can see
- without a doubt

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Using "persuasive sentence stems," students pick words and phrases to help them write persuasive sentences.

Persuasive Sentence Stems

- I realize you _____ (*believe*, *feel*, *maintain*, *want*, *favor*, *support*, *argue*, *make the case/point*) ...
- I understand you _____ (*believe*, *feel*, *maintain*, *want*, *favor*, *support*, *argue*, *make the case/point*) ...
- Even though you _____ (*believe*, *feel*, *maintain*, *want*, *favor*, *support*, *argue*, *make the case/point*) ...
- Although you _____ (*believe*, *feel*, *maintain*, *want*, *favor*, *support*, *argue*, *make the case/point*) ...
- _____ (*but*, *yet*, *however*) I question _____ (*on the other hand*, *nevertheless*) ...

Topic Sentences

With both opinion papers and persuasive pieces, students can practice effective ways to begin their paragraphs. Maureen E. Auman, in a program called *Step Up to Writing,* has formulated a series of methods or patterns for writing topic sentences. Four of them are adapted here. These are particularly helpful when students write opinion papers and shorter persuasive pieces. The patterns are:

- number statements
- topic/opinion statements or issue/position statements
- "however" statements
- *and*, *but*, and *or* statements

Number Statements

A number statement is an opening sentence that contains a number word or phrase. These words might be used in number statements:

- a couple of
- a few
- a number of
- many
- numerous
- several
- ten
- three
- two
- various

Example Number Sentences

- There are *numerous* ways in which humans interact with the environment.
- Greece was home to *various* city-states.
- *Two* Founding Fathers had great influence over the beginnings of America.
- Trade is *one* of the *many* reasons countries cooperate.
- *Two* important characteristics that Thomas Edison had that made him a success were persistence and love of knowledge.
- There are *several* things that I would like you to consider regarding our long-standing rule and consequences for not turning lights off.

Topic/Opinion Statements

A topic/opinion statement is a sentence that begins with a preposition or prepositional phrase. Here are examples of different prepositions and prepositional phrases students can use in their writing:

- although
- as
- as long as
- as soon as
- because
- before
- even though
- even while
- if after
- since
- unless
- until
- when
- whenever
- whether
- while

After introducing the preposition and prepositional phrase, a student can draw the connection to his or her topic. The topic of the paper is given first and followed by a comma. Then, the writer's opinion is given.

Example Topic/Opinion Statements

- *Before* Thomas Edison became a success as an inventor, he had many personal characteristics that helped him.
- *Even though* Congress can pass laws, the president can still veto them.
- *Since* the Industrial Revolution, lifestyles have changed completely.
- *After* being purchased from the French, the Louisiana Territory needed to be explored.
- *As* the Nineteenth Amendment was added to the Constitution, voting rights were finally granted to women.

Issue/Position Statements

Like the topic/opinion statement, the issue/position statement begins with a preposition or prepositional phrase. Issue/position statements are generally introduced to advanced students. These are some commonly used issue/position statements:

- after
- although
- as
- as long as
- as soon as
- because
- before
- even though
- even while
- if
- since
- unless
- until
- when
- whenever
- whether
- while

After introducing the preposition and prepositional phrase, a student should draw the connection to his or her topic. It should be written as a dependent clause and then present the issue, followed with a comma. Then, the writer's position is stated as an independent clause.

Example Issue/Position Statements

- *Although* there were many important battles in the Revolutionary War, one of the most famous is the Battle of Bunker Hill.
- *Even though* globalization has many benefits, it also comes with a cost.
- *While* the Greeks and Romans were both European, their differences outweighed their similarities.
- *Even while* the president is in charge of the country, there are still limits on what he can do.

"However" Statements

These are generally introduced to more advanced students. While the issue/position statement begins with a preposition or prepositional phrase, the *however* statement has a conjunctive adverb in the middle of the sentence. The sentence begins with the issue stated as an independent clause and is followed by a semicolon. After the issue is stated, the conjunctive adverb *however* is inserted and followed by a comma. Then, the second part of the sentence is an independent clause stating the position of the writer. For example: *I know that for our home to be safe and comfortable, we need rules;* however*, one of our rules needs to be amended.*

With the *however* statement, other conjunctive adverbs can be used in place of the word *however.* These are example conjunctive adverbs that can be used:

- as a result
- consequently
- furthermore
- in fact
- instead
- meanwhile
- nevertheless
- otherwise
- still
- therefore

Example "However" Statements

- There are many famous French icons; *however*, the most recognizable is the Eiffel Tower.
- Deforestation has damaging ecological effects; *therefore*, action needs to be taken.
- Hammurabi's Code was full of violent punishments; *nevertheless*, it was a revolutionary legal system.
- Alexander conquered the Persians and had many impressive accomplishments; *as a result*, he is known as "Alexander the Great."

And, *But*, and *Or* Statements

These are generally introduced to older students. *And*, *but*, and *or* statements use coordinating conjunctions remembered by students with the acronym FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so). Similar to *however* statements, the *and*, *but*, and *or* statements begin with the issue stated as an independent clause. It is followed with a comma. One of the FANBOYS words is then inserted, and the writer's position is written as an independent clause.

Example *And*, *But*, and *Or* Statements

- The United States has had many great leaders, *but* the best was Abraham Lincoln.
- Some geographic regions feature harsh climates, *yet* people have managed to find ways to live there.
- People need a variety of goods and services on a daily basis, *and* if it weren't for local government, these needs wouldn't be met.
- One area might not produce something on its own, *so* there will always be a need for trade.

Argumentative Pieces

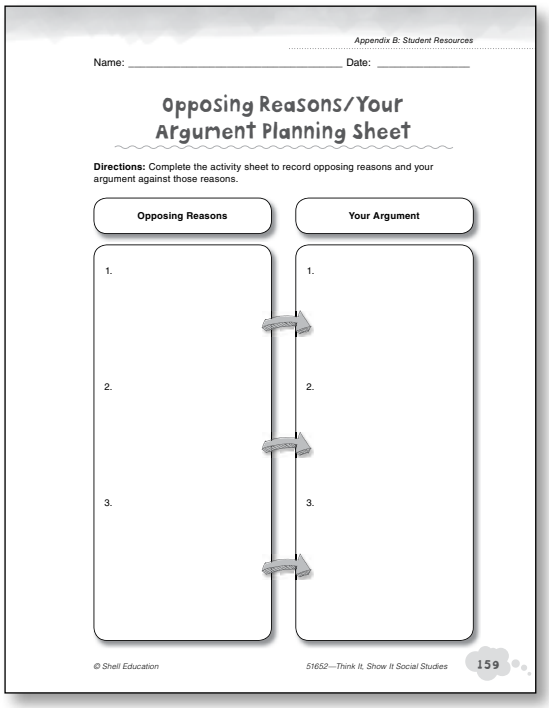
Formal arguments share much of the same concepts and features as opinion papers and persuasive texts: topics, opinions, points of view, issues, positions, arguments, and counter arguments. Along with these, formal arguments introduce the concepts of claims and counterclaims. The formal argument is representative of the type of academic writing expected of college-and career-ready, twenty-first century students.

The elements of an argument include:

- Present a claim(s) about a topic or an issue.
- Differentiate the claim(s) from opposing claims.
- Logically arrange the evidence.
- Support the claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data.
- Evidence should demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text.
- Use and cite credible sources.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion.
- Clarify the differences between the claim(s), counterclaim(s), reason(s), and evidence.
- Always use an academic, formal style.
- In the conclusion, incorporate a section that supports the argument being presented.

The foundation of an effective argument is the anticipation of the reasons for an opposing position or point of view. Students can map out the points of their counterclaims with the *Opposing Reasons/Your Argument Planning Sheet* (Figure 3.5; reproducible on page 159).

Figure 3.5 Opposing Reasons/Your Argument Planning Sheet



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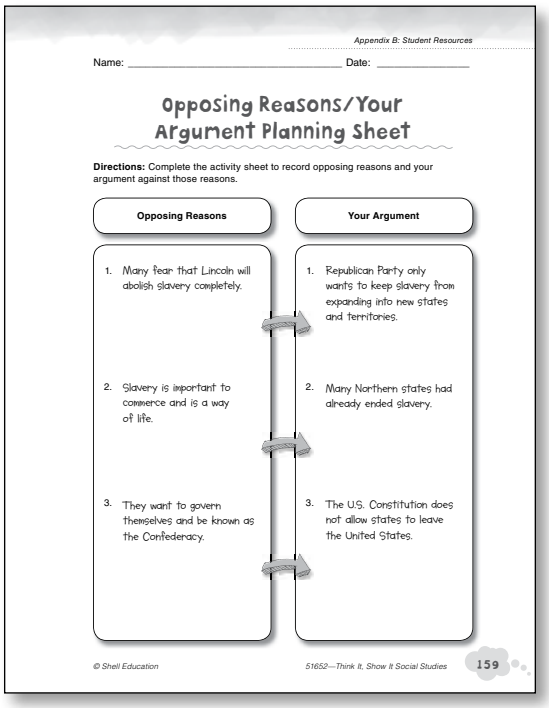


Student Example

Using the sheet to plan and research the basis of their arguments, students are given (or select) topics or issues. They need to determine their positions on the issues. On the left side of the sheet, they determine three possible counterclaims (or more, if needed) to their positions. Directly across from each opposing reason, they formulate and write their counterclaims. Figure 3.5 includes an example using the topic of the 1861 secession of the Southern states upon the election of Abraham Lincoln. For this particular assignment, students were to take positions as if they were living at that time.

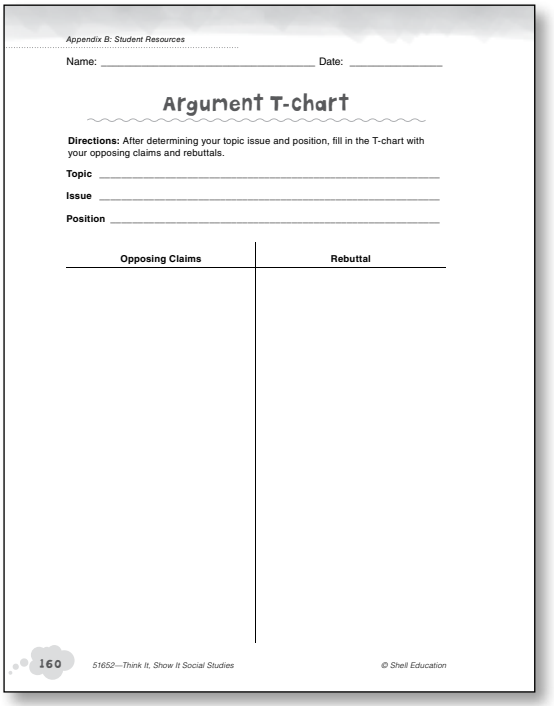
From the *Opposing Reasons/Your Argument Planning Sheet* students generated the following response:

> *The Republican Party argued that the South's fear that Lincoln was going to abolish slavery and that they would lose their commerce and way of life was completely unfounded. The North only wanted to keep slavery from expanding into the new states and territories. They had already ended slavery and didn't want it in new states. Furthermore, they maintained that while the South wanted to secede and become a separate country known as the Confederacy, the U.S. Constitution did not allow states to separate from the Union.*

Argument T

The *Argument T-Chart* activity sheet (Figure 3.6; reproducible on page 160) functions much like the *Opposing Reasons/Your Argument Sheet*. On it, students map out the basis of their formal arguments. With this sheet, students approach assembling the bodies of their arguments as if they were preparing for a class debate (pros and cons). They first record the topics, issues, and their positions at the top of the sheet. Then, on the left side, they write the alternate or opposing claims to their positions. On the right side, they record their rebuttals.

Figure 3.6 Argument T-Chart



Appendix B: Student Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Argument T-chart

Directions: After determining your topic issue and position, fill in the T-chart with your opposing claims and rebuttals.

Topic _____

Issue _____

Position _____

Opposing Claims	Rebuttal

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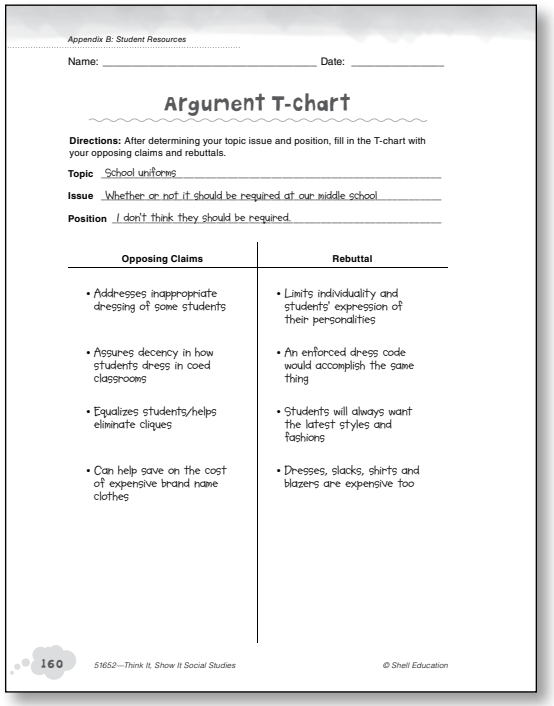

Appendix B: Student Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Argument T-chart

Directions: After determining your topic issue and position, fill in the T-chart with your opposing claims and rebuttals.

Topic School uniforms

Issue Whether or not it should be required at our middle school

Position I don't think they should be required.

Opposing Claims	Rebuttal
• Addresses inappropriate dressing of some students	• Limits individuality and students' expression of their personalities
• Assures decency in how students dress in coed classrooms	• An enforced dress code would accomplish the same thing
• Equalizes students/helps eliminate cliques	• Students will always want the latest styles and fashions
• Can help save on the cost of expensive brand name clothes	• Dresses, slacks, shirts and blazers are expensive too

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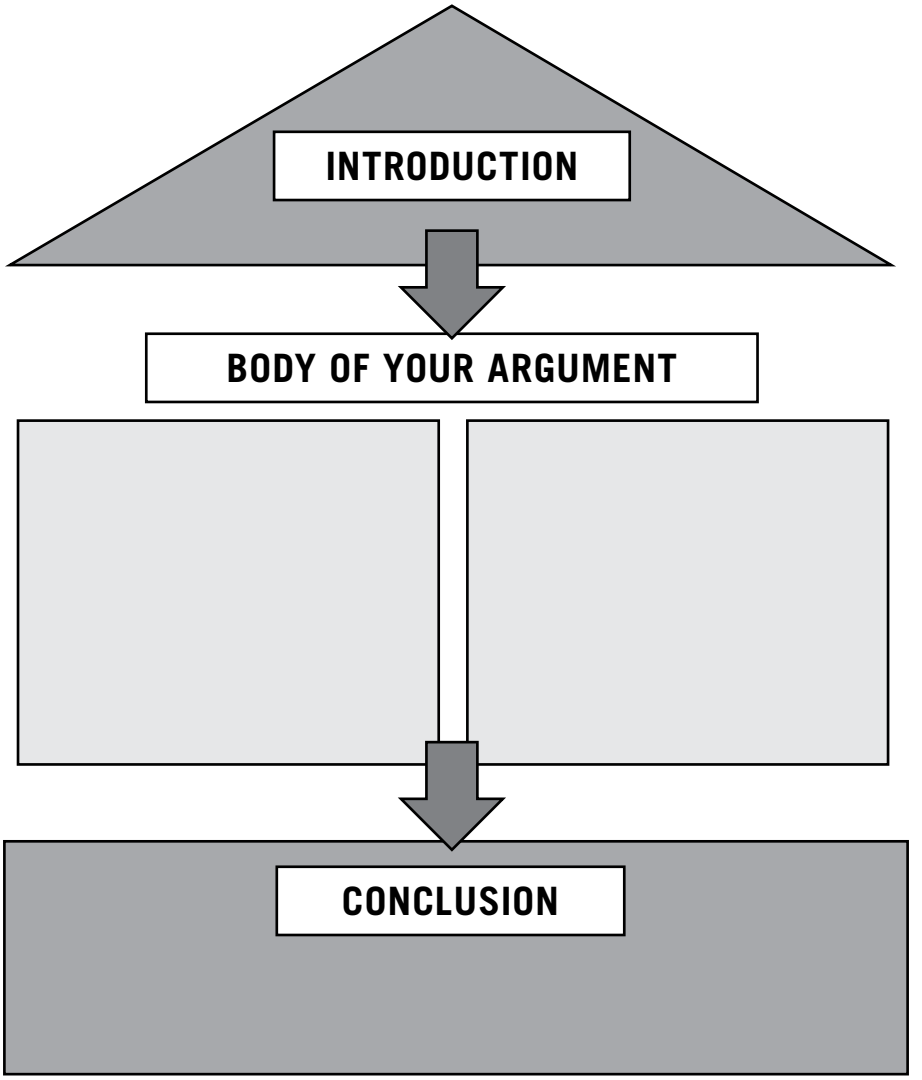
Student Example

Introduction, Body, and Conclusion

The three structural blocks of an argument are the introduction, the body of the argument, and the conclusion. Mobile 4 (reproducible on page 191) is a visual representation of this structure.

Mobile 4



Introduction

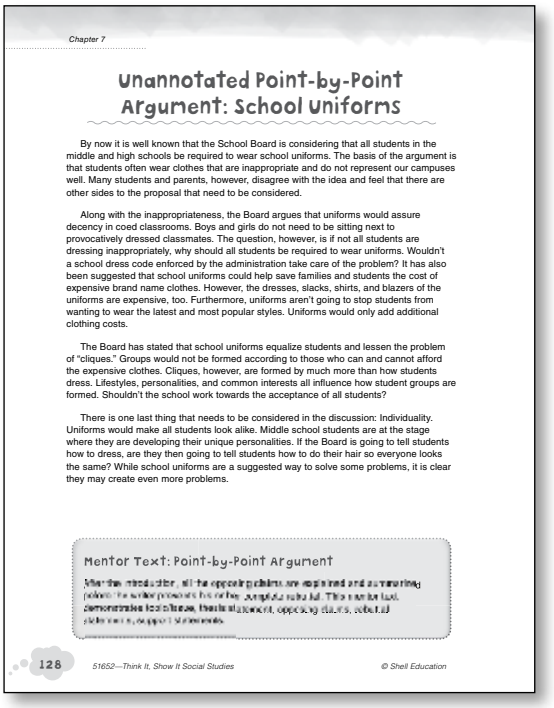
The introduction provides the context of what students are arguing in their papers. This should consist of an introduction to the topic or issue, an acknowledgement of the counterclaim(s), and a thesis statement expressing the writer's position. It is important to note that persuasive essays can be written in informal, conversational tones. With formal arguments, however, formal, academic style of writing is expected. This writing is free of slang, trite expressions, abbreviations, symbols, email/text shortcut language, contractions, and the use of the personal pronoun *I*. With formal writing, the writer does not speak directly to the reader, but rather maintains an objective third-person point of view.

Body of the Argument

There are three elements critical to a formal argument: opposing claims or views, rebuttals, and support statements. Students can structure these in the body of their papers by following one of two patterns: point-by-point or opposition/rebuttal. Figure 3.7 (reproducibles on pages 128 and 130) includes student examples of each type of argument. Pages 56–57 show visual models (Mobiles 5 and 6) of the two argument patterns, point-by-point and opposition/rebuttal.

- **Point-by-Point:** After the introduction, one opposing claim is given with the rebuttal following. Then, a second opposing claim is given followed by its rebuttal, and so on.
- **Opposition/Rebuttal:** After the introduction, all the opposing claims are explained and summarized before the writer presents a complete rebuttal.

Figure 3.7 Point-by-Point and Opposition/Rebuttal Argument Student Examples



Chapter 7

Unannotated Point-by-Point Argument: School Uniforms

By now it is well known that the School Board is considering that all students in the middle and high schools be required to wear school uniforms. The basis of the argument is that students often wear clothes that are inappropriate and do not represent our campuses well. Many students and parents, however, disagree with the idea and feel that there are other sides to the proposal that need to be considered.

Along with the inappropriateness, the Board argues that uniforms would assure decency in coed classrooms. Boys and girls do not need to be sitting next to provocatively dressed classmates. The question, however, is if not all students are dressing inappropriately, why should all students be required to wear uniforms. Wouldn't a school dress code enforced by the administration take care of the problem? It has also been suggested that school uniforms could help save families and students the cost of expensive brand name clothes. However, the dresses, slacks, shirts, and blazers of the uniforms are expensive, too. Furthermore, uniforms aren't going to stop students from wanting to wear the latest and most popular styles. Uniforms would only add additional clothing costs.

The Board has stated that school uniforms equalize students and lessen the problem of "cliques." Groups would not be formed according to those who can and cannot afford the expensive clothes. Cliques, however, are formed by much more than how students dress. Lifestyles, personalities, and common interests all influence how student groups are formed. Shouldn't the school work towards the acceptance of all students?

There is one last thing that needs to be considered in the discussion: Individuality. Uniforms would make all students look alike. Middle school students are at the stage where they are developing their unique personalities. If the Board is going to tell students how to dress, are they then going to tell students how to do their hair so everyone looks the same? While school uniforms are a suggested way to solve some problems, it is clear they may create even more problems.

Mentor Text: Point-by-Point Argument

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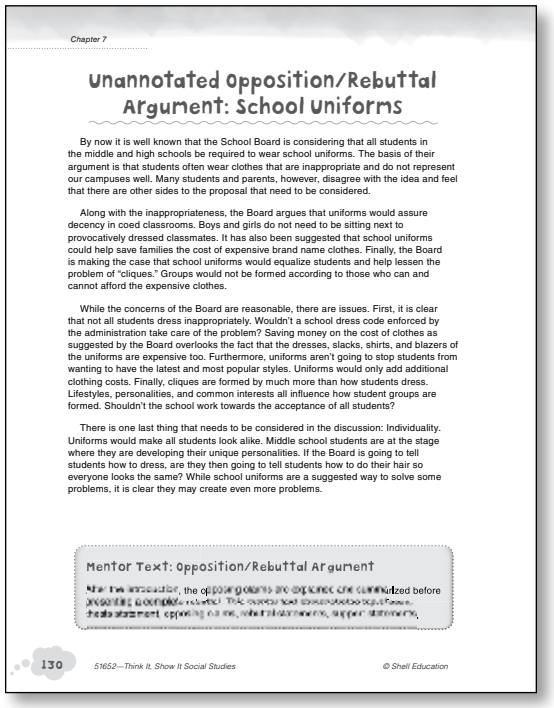
Point-by-Point Argument



Chapter 7

Unannotated Opposition/Rebuttal Argument: School Uniforms

By now it is well known that the School Board is considering that all students in the middle and high schools be required to wear school uniforms. The basis of their argument is that students often wear clothes that are inappropriate and do not represent our campuses well. Many students and parents, however, disagree with the idea and feel that there are other sides to the proposal that need to be considered.

Along with the inappropriateness, the Board argues that uniforms would assure decency in coed classrooms. Boys and girls do not need to be sitting next to provocatively dressed classmates. It has also been suggested that school uniforms could help save families the cost of expensive brand name clothes. Finally, the Board is making the case that school uniforms would equalize students and help lessen the problem of "cliques." Groups would not be formed according to those who can and cannot afford the expensive clothes.

While the concerns of the Board are reasonable, there are issues. First, it is clear that not all students dress inappropriately. Wouldn't a school dress code enforced by the administration take care of the problem? Saving money on the cost of clothes as suggested by the Board overlooks the fact that the dresses, slacks, shirts, and blazers of the uniforms are expensive too. Furthermore, uniforms aren't going to stop students from wanting to have the latest and most popular styles. Uniforms would only add additional clothing costs. Finally, cliques are formed by much more than how students dress. Lifestyles, personalities, and common interests all influence how student groups are formed. Shouldn't the school work towards the acceptance of all students?

There is one last thing that needs to be considered in the discussion: Individuality. Uniforms would make all students look alike. Middle school students are at the stage where they are developing their unique personalities. If the Board is going to tell students how to dress, are they then going to tell students how to do their hair so everyone looks the same? While school uniforms are a suggested way to solve some problems, it is clear they may create even more problems.

Mentor Text: Opposition/Rebuttal Argument

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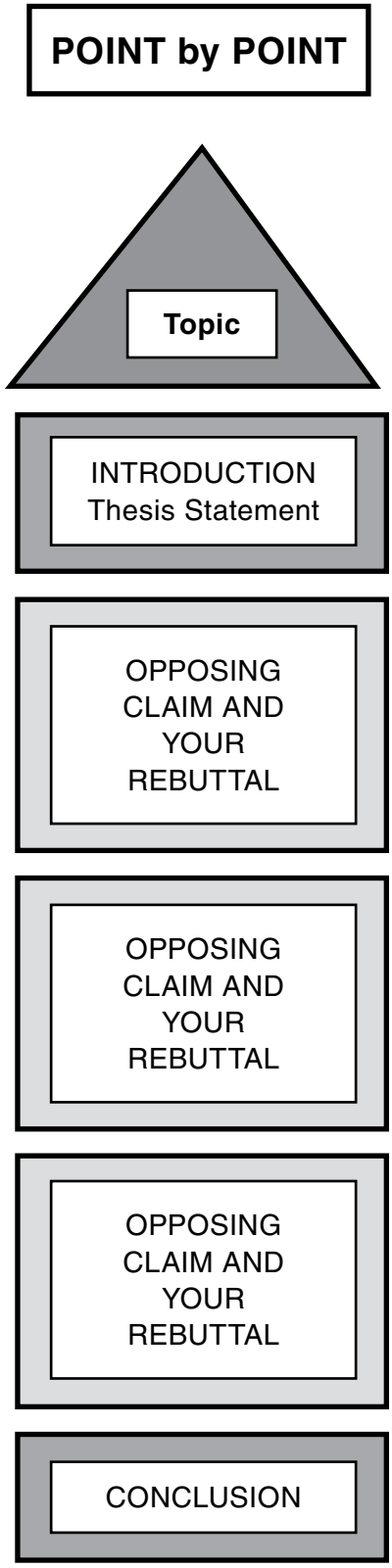
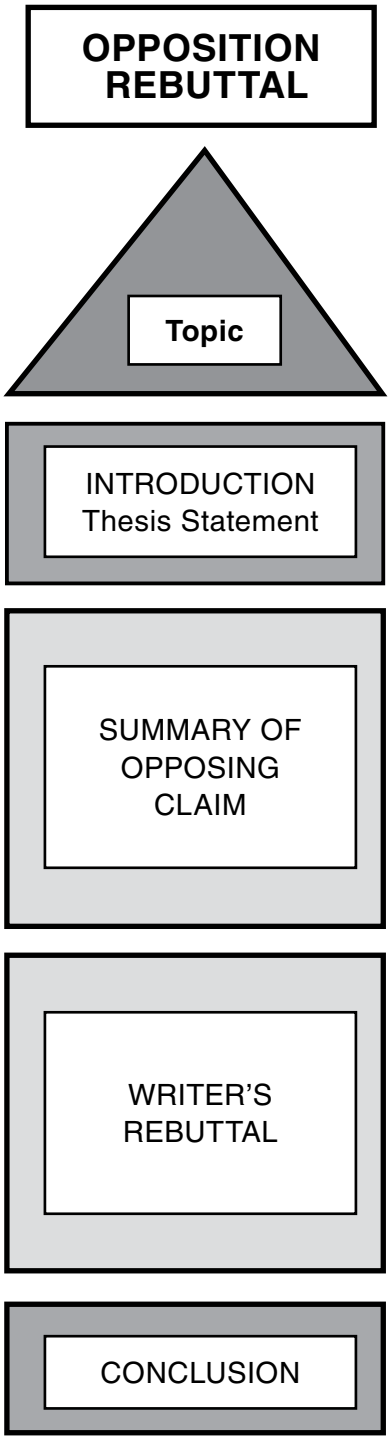
Opposition/Rebuttal Argument



Mobile 6 Patterns of Argument

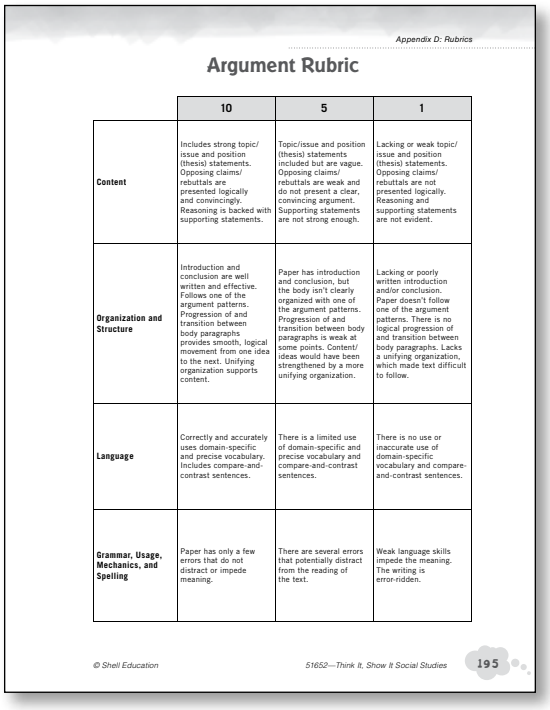


Conclusion

A conclusion acts as a summation of the student's argument. It brings the argument full circle. Often, a writer saves what he or she believes to be the strongest personal or emotional appeal for the conclusion. Typically included is a brief restatement of the writer's position and rebuttal, all while acknowledging opposing claims or points.

Figure 3.8 (reproducible on page 195) shows an *Argument Rubric*, which guides students in their work. In addition, annotated and unannotated mentor texts for both the point-by-point and opposition/rebuttal argument patterns are included in Chapter 7.

Figure 3.8 Argument Rubric



Appendix D: Rubrics

Argument Rubric

	10	5	1
Content	Includes strong topic/issue and position (thesis) statements. Opposing claims/rebuttals are presented logically and convincingly. Reasoning is backed with supporting statements.	Topic/issue and position (thesis) statements included but are vague. Opposing claims/rebuttals are weak and do not present a clear, convincing argument. Supporting statements are not strong enough.	Lacking or weak topic/issue and position (thesis) statements. Opposing claims/rebuttals are not presented logically. Reasoning and supporting statements are not evident.
Organization and Structure	Introduction and conclusion are well written and effective. Follows one of the argument patterns. Progression of and transition between body paragraphs provides smooth, logical movement from one idea to the next. Unifying organization supports content.	Paper has introduction and conclusion, but the body isn't clearly organized with one of the argument patterns. Progression of and transition between body paragraphs is weak at some points. Content/ideas would have been strengthened by a more unifying organization.	Lacking or poorly written introduction and/or conclusion. Paper doesn't follow one of the argument patterns. There is no logical progression of and transition between body paragraphs. Lacks a unifying organization, which made text difficult to follow.
Language	Correctly and accurately uses domain-specific and precise vocabulary. Includes compare-and-contrast sentences.	There is a limited use of domain-specific and precise vocabulary and compare-and-contrast sentences.	There is no use or inaccurate use of domain-specific vocabulary and compare-and-contrast sentences.
Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling	Paper has only a few errors that do not distract or impede meaning.	There are several errors that potentially distract from the reading of the text.	Weak language skills impede the meaning. The writing is error-ridden.

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Informative/Explanatory

To state it as succinctly as possible: informative/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. Its accurately conveyed information may examine a topic, explain a process, an idea, or a concept, or demonstrate an understanding of why events occur or have occurred.