

# RESEARCH PAPER OVERVIEW



Argument & Perspectives on Truth

# Unit Questions

1. What are the steps in the research process?
2. How do I cite sources in MLA format?
3. How do I construct a logical argument?
4. How do I effectively support my claims?

# Purpose of Academic Argument

1. To join in on the conversation
2. To explain your understanding of the truth
3. To propose the best solution available
4. To offer reasons to question old viewpoints
5. To convince readers to reconsider opinions

# Course Standards

- **W1** Writes arguments to support claims in an analysis of topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence
- **W4** Produces clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience
- **W7** Conducts short and sustained research projects to synthesize multiple sources on the subject
- **W8** Gathers information from multiple sources and assesses usefulness of each; integrates information selectively; avoids plagiarism and follows standard format for citation

# ESSAY REQUIREMENTS

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# Essay Requirements

- ❑ Utilize MLA format
- ❑ Do not exceed 4 page limit (excluding works cited)
- ❑ Vary lead-in types (see examples)
- ❑ Balance **direct quotes** and **paraphrases** (cite at least 3 pieces of evidence each way)

# TITLE & INTRODUCTION

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# Title

- ❑ Should relate specifically to your thesis/claim
- ❑ Should grab your reader's attention but still maintain an academic tone

## Style Tips...

- Divide the title into 2 parts
- Use alliteration
- Use wordplay

## EXAMPLES:

*Cell Phone Use in Cars: An  
Easy Call*

*Vending Machine Profits Not  
Worth the Price*



# Introduction

## Your introduction should

1. Begin with a hook.
2. Answer the following questions:

<b>So what?</b>	Introduce the issue's context.
<b>Who cares?</b>	Include prevailing arguments on both sides.
<b>Why should I care?</b>	Explain why the issue is a problem.

3. End with a thesis stating your position on the issue.

# Thesis

- ❑ Should be clear and precise
- ❑ Should be the *last* sentence in the introduction
- ❑ Should state a claim that requires support

## The thesis should not...

- be a statement of fact
- be too broad
- be too vague

## EXAMPLE:

*Although tests can now detect genetic predisposition to specific diseases, doctors should not screen every patient.*

# Introduction Example 1

“All the news that’s fit to print,” the motto of the *New York Times* since 1896, plays with the word *fit*, asserting that a news story must be newsworthy and must not exceed the limits of the printed page. The increase in online news consumption, however, challenges both meanings of the word *fit*, allowing producers and consumers alike to rethink who decides which topics are worth covering and how extensive that coverage should be. Any cultural shift means that something is lost, but in this case there are clear gains. The shift from print to online news provides unprecedented opportunities for readers to become more engaged with the news, to hold journalists accountable, and to participate as producers, not simply consumers.

—excerped from *A Writer’s Reference*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition

# Introduction Example 2

As the Internet has become an integral tool of businesses, company policies on Internet usage have become as common as policies regarding vacation days or sexual harassment. A 2005 study by the American Management Association and ePolicy Institute found that 76% of companies monitor employees' use of the Web, and the number of companies that block employees' access to certain Web sites has increased 27% since 2001 (1). Unlike other company rules, however, Internet usage policies often include language authorizing companies to secretly monitor their employees, a practice that raises questions about rights in the workplace. **Although companies often have legitimate concerns that lead them to monitor employees' Internet usage—the benefits of electronic surveillance are outweighed by its costs to employees' privacy and autonomy.**

—*excerpted from A Writer's Reference, 7<sup>th</sup> edition*

# Introduction Example 3

Although the Supreme Court has ruled against prayer in public schools on First Amendment grounds, many people still feel that prayer should be allowed. Such people value prayer as a practice central to their faith and believe that prayer is a way for schools to reinforce moral principles. They also compellingly point out a paradox in the First Amendment itself: at what point does the separation of church and state restrict the freedom of those who wish to practice their religion? What proponents of school prayer fail to realize, however, is that the Supreme Court's decision, although it was made on legal grounds, makes sense on religious grounds as well. [Prayer is too important to be trusted to our public schools.](#)

—*excerpted from A Writer's Reference, 7<sup>th</sup> edition*

# BODY PARAGRAPHS

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# Body Paragraphs

**Your body paragraphs should include the following:**

1. A transition from the previous paragraph to assure smooth reading.
2. A main idea or subclaim that supports your thesis.
3. Specific evidence and analysis that supports your subclaim and that provides a deeper level of detail than your topic sentence.
4. A wrap-up sentence or warrant that tells the reader how and why the paragraph supports your argument. This final sentence should connect your lines of reasoning, demonstrating how the information in the paragraph relates to and defends your thesis.

5. —*excerpted from The Online Writing Center at Purdue*

# Body Paragraph Example 1

One of the most important advantages online news offers over print news is the presence of built-in hyperlinks, which carry readers from one electronic document to another. If readers are curious about the definition of a term, the roots of a story, or other perspectives on a topic, links provide a path. Links help readers become more critical consumers of information by engaging them in a totally new way. For instance, the link embedded in the story “Window into Fed Debate over a Crucial Program” allows readers to find out more about the trends in consumer spending and to check the journalist’s handling of an original source (Healy 29). Such links give readers the opportunity to conduct their own evaluation of evidence and to verify journalists’ claims, a huge benefit over print news for consumers today.

—*excerpted from A Writer’s Reference, 7<sup>th</sup> edition*



# Body Paragraph Example 2

Additionally, many experts disagree with employers' assumption that online monitoring can increase productivity. Employment law attorney Joseph Schmitt argues that, particularly for employees who are paid a salary rather than an hourly wage, "a company shouldn't care whether employees spend one or 10 hours on the Internet, as long as they are getting their jobs done—and provided that they are not accessing inappropriate sites" (qtd. in Verespej 43). Other experts even argue that time spent on personal Internet browsing can actually be productive for companies. According to Bill Coleman, an executive at Salary.com, "Personal Internet use and casual office conversations often turn into new business ideas or suggestions for gaining operating efficiencies" (qtd. in Frauenheim 4). Employers, in other words, may benefit from showing more faith in their employees' ability to exercise their autonomy.

—excerpted from *A Writer's Reference*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition

# OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS

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# Concession and Refutation

## **When you refute an opposing position, be sure to**

1. State the opponent's position: be sure to present the idea fairly and to introduce it with a signal phrase
2. State your position: Make clear the nature of your disagreement with the argument you are refuting. Your position may note, for instance, that the opposing viewpoint is limited, old-fashioned, short-sighted, immoral, or filled with logical fallacy.
3. Support your refutation: Provide evidence to support your claims.
4. Restate your thesis: Wrap up the paragraph by reasserting your argument.

*—excerpted from The Online Writing Center at Purdue*

# Concession & Refutation Example

Not everyone embraces the spread of unregulated news reporting online. Critics point out that citizen journalists are not necessarily trained to be fair or ethical, for example, nor are they subject to editorial oversight. Acknowledging that citizen reporting is more immediate and experimental, critics also question its accuracy and accountability: “While it has its place...it really isn’t journalism at all, and it opens up information flow to the strong probability of fraud and abuse,” and “information without journalistic standards is called gossip” (Hazinski 23A). Even a supporter like journalist Dan Gillmor is willing to agree that citizen journalists are “nonexperts,” but he also makes an important point that they are “using technology to make a profound contribution, and a real difference” (7).

continued >>>

# Concession & Refutation, cont.

For instance, citizen reporting made a difference in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Armed with cell phones and laptops, regular citizens relayed critical news updates in a rapidly developing crisis, often before traditional journalists were even on the scene. In 2006, the enormous contributions of citizen journalists were recognized when the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* received the Pulitzer Prize in public service,” the Pulitzer Prize board credited the newspaper’s blog for “heroic, multi-faceted coverage of the storm and its aftermath” (“2006 Pulitzer” 3). While such appreciation for online partnerships with citizen journalists does require a shift in perspective, this shift denotes a positive rather than negative change. According to Glaser, the *Times-Picayune’s* partnership with citizen journalists was a “watershed [moment] for online journalism” (Glaser 4).

—excerpted from *A Writer’s Reference*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition

# FORMATTING REMINDERS

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# Direct Quotes

- ❑ Half of your evidence should be directly quoted
- ❑ Each must be introduced with a lead-in (see examples)
- ❑ All must be documented and punctuated correctly

## Rules for quotes:

- 5 or more words used in succession must be quoted
- Do not include the author's last name in the citation if you mention the name in the lead-in
- Include the author's first name in the lead-in the first time you introduce him or her, after that, refer to the author by last name only
- Punctuation follows the citation *except* when the sentence is a question or exclamation

## EXAMPLE:

*The difference between old methods of data gathering and electronic surveillance involves quantity: "Technology makes it possible for employers to gather enormous amounts of data about employees" (Lane 3).*

# Paraphrases

- ❑ Half of your evidence should be paraphrased in your own words (see rules [here](#))
- ❑ Do not place quotes around these ideas since you are not quoting the author directly
- ❑ ALL must be documented and punctuated correctly

## Rules for paraphrases:

- 3 or more words used in succession must be quoted
- Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology retained in the paraphrase
- Punctuation follows the citation except when the sentence is a question or exclamation

## EXAMPLE:

These programs record any key entered into the computer in hidden directories that can later be accessed or uploaded by employers (Lane 128-129).



# Block Quotes

Douglass is particularly blunt in his assessment of "Christian" behavior in the south:

I assert most unhesitatingly, that the religion of the south is a mere covering for the most horrid crimes, --a justifier of the most appalling barbarity,-- a sanctifier of the most hateful frauds,--and a dark shelter under, [*sic*] which the darkest, foulest, grossest, and most infernal deeds of slaveholders find the strongest protection. (53)

This statement reveals the passionate anger Douglass feels at the perversion of the "love-thy-neighbor" philosophy of Christianity.

## *\*Formatting example*

- ❑ Use when the quote exceeds 4 typewritten lines
- ❑ Introduce a block quote with a **sentence lead-in**
- ❑ Add no quotation marks that do not appear in the original text
- ❑ Place end punctuation **before** parenthetical documentation
- ❑ Indent 1 inch (2 tabs) from the left margin

# In-text Citation: Special Cases

- ❑ When the author's name is not given, **cite the title** instead
- ❑ If you use a shortened title, be sure you are consistent throughout your essay
- ❑ When quoting someone other than the author, use **“qtd. in”** in your citation

## EXAMPLES:

...this is the end of the quote”  
 (“Automatically” 13).

...this is the end of the quote”  
(Schmitt qtd. in Verepej 4).

# Literary Titles

- ❑ Format book, journal, or report titles *in italics*
- ❑ Format essay or article titles “in quotation marks”

## EXAMPLES:

*The Theory of Physical Education in Elementary Schools*

(a book written by Thomas Chesterton)

“Physical Education in Schools: Both Quality and Quantity  
are Important”

(a journal article published by the American Diabetes Association)

Beth Catlin

Professor Elaine Bassett

English 106

3 August 2009

Andrew Carnegie: The Father of Middle-Class America

For decades Americans couldn't help but love the red-headed, fun-loving Little Orphan Annie. The image of the little girl moving so quickly from poverty to wealth provided hope for the poor in the 1930s, and her story continues to be a dream of what the future just might hold. The rags-to-riches phenomenon is the heart of the American Dream. And few other people have embodied this phenomenon as much as Andrew Carnegie did in the late 1800s and early 1900s. His example and industry caused him to become the father of middle-class America.

Andrew Carnegie can be looked to as an ideal example of a poor immigrant making his way up to become leader of the capitalist world. Carnegie was born into a poor working-class family in Scotland. According to the PBS documentary "The Richest Man in the World: Andrew Carnegie," the Industrial Revolution was difficult on Carnegie's father, causing him to lose his weaving business. The Carnegie family was much opposed to the idea of a privileged class, who gained their wealth simply by inheritance ("Richest"). This type of upbringing played a large factor in Andrew Carnegie's destiny. In order to appease his mother's desire for material benefits, and perhaps in an effort to heal his father's wounds, Carnegie rejected poverty and cleaved to prosperity.

Carnegie's character was ideal for gaining wealth. His mother taught him to "look after the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves;" he later turned this proverb into "watch the costs, and the profits take care of themselves" ("Richest"). Such thrift was integral to his future success. He also believed that "all is well since all goes better" ("Richest"). His theory

# MLA Format

- ❑ Correctly formatted running head (last name & pg. # on *every page*)
- ❑ Correctly formatted heading (on pg. 1 *only*)
- ❑ 12-point serif font
- ❑ 1-inch margins
- ❑ Double-spaced

## Works Cited

- Besthoff, Len. "Cell Phone Use Increases Risk of Accidents, but Users Willing to Take the Risk." *WRAL.com*. Capitol Broadcasting, 9 Nov. 1999. Web. 12 Jan. 2001.
- Farmers Insurance Group. "New Survey Shows Drivers Have Had 'Close Calls' with Cell Phone Users." *Farmers*. Farmers Insurance Group, 8 May 2000. Web. 12 Jan. 2001.
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- Ippolito, Milo. "Driver's Sentence Not Justice, Mom Says." *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* 25 Sept. 1999: J1. *eLibrary Curriculum*. Web. 12 Jan. 2001.
- Layton, Lyndsey. "Legislators Aiming to Disconnect Motorists." *Washington Post* 10 Dec. 2000: C1+. Print.
- Lowe, Chan. Cartoon. *Washington Post* 22 July 2000: A21. Print.
- Pena, Patricia N. "Patti Pena's Letter to Car Talk." *Cartalk.com*. Dewey, Cheetham, and Howe, n.d. Web. 10 Jan. 2001.
- Redelmeier, Donald A., and Robert J. Tibshirani. "Association between Cellular-Telephone Calls and Motor Vehicle Collisions." *New England Journal of Medicine* 336.7 (1997): 453-58. Print.
- Stockwell, Jamie. "Phone Use Faulted in Collision." *Washington Post* 6 Dec. 2000: B1+. Print.
- Sundeen, Matt. "Cell Phones and Highway Safety: 2000 State Legislative Update." *National Conference of State Legislatures*. Natl. Conf. of State Legislatures, Dec. 2000. Web. 27 Feb. 2001.
- Violanti, John M. "Cellular Phones and Fatal Traffic Collisions." *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 30.4 (1998): 519-24. Print.

Heading is centered.

List is alphabetized by authors' last names (or by title when a work has no author).

First line of each entry is at the left margin; extra lines are indented 1/2".

Double-spacing is used throughout.

Abbreviation "n.d." indicates that the online source has no update date.

# Works Cited

- ❑ Should include **all** works **quoted or paraphrased** in your essay
- ❑ Must be correctly formatted (see pg. 28 in writing handbook)
- ❑ Should be the last page in your essay (number accordingly)