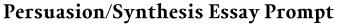
Topic Sentence Cheat Sheet



Few Rules to Remember:

- 1. Topic sentences are always arguments in these kinds of essays.
- 2. The persuasion and synthesis essays can be addressed in exactly the same way.
- 3. The three paragraph models here are just for illustration. Your essay can certainly be 2-5 paragraphs.
- 4. Topic sentences should show relationships/transitions between paragraphs: your goal is an essay that feels like a cohesive whole.
- 5. There are five basic approaches you can take on these essays.
 - Straight Refutation (2-4 reasons why the idea is a bad one)
 - Straight Support (2-4 reasons why the idea is a good one)
 - Concession/Qualifier (strongly take one side, but concede one point to other side)
 - Boomer (not only present your argument, but attack the other side)
 - Caveat (strongly take a position, but concede that there is an issue to consider)

Straight Refutation/Straight Support Essay

You probably want to avoid these. If you can't write these topic sentences by now, you're DOOMED. <u>Keep</u> them arguments.

Concession/Qualifier Essay

Thesis: While modern media discourse is often base and even occasionally pointless, such democratic discussion is essential for good governance and to undermine corporate dominance of the debate.

Body Paragraph 1: It would be hard to argue that American discourse has suffered as access to publishing has increased. [CONCESSION]

Body Paragraph 2: Despite the crudeness of much of contemporary discussion free expression of even the most trivial idea is crucial to democracy. [YOUR FIRST ARGUMENT]

Body Paragraph 3: Even more significantly, democratization of discourse offers perhaps the only tool to undermine corporate dominance of the media. [YOUR SECOND ARGUMENT]

Boomer Essay

Thesis: The democratic discussion generated by new media is essential for good governance and to undermine corporate dominance of the debate.

Body Paragraph 1: Free expression of even the most trivial idea is crucial to democracy. [YOUR FIRST ARGUMENT]

Body Paragraph 2: Even more significantly, democratization of discourse offers perhaps the only tool to undermine corporate dominance of the media. [YOUR SECOND ARGUMENT]

Body Paragraph 3: Critics of new media wrongly assert that it debases our national discussion. [CRUSH THIS ARGUMENT]

Topic Sentence Cheat Sheet



Caveat Essay

Thesis: The democratic discussion generated by new media is essential for good governance and to undermine corporate dominance of the debate.

Body Paragraph 1: Free expression of even the most trivial idea is crucial to democracy. [YOUR FIRST ARGUMENT]

Body Paragraph 2: Even more significantly, democratization of discourse offers perhaps the only tool to undermine corporate dominance of the media. [YOUR SECOND ARGUMENT]

Body Paragraph 3: Despite all of the benefits of participation in new media, it's imperative that society be watchful lest hateful speech spread unchecked. [YOUR CAVEAT—NOT A FULLY DEVELOPED CONCESSION, BUT AN ISSUE TO CONSIDER}

Analysis Essay Prompt

Few Rules to Remember:

- 1. When you read the piece, look for logical places to make your divisions. In order, subject, tone, and chronology are the best places to look for division.
- 2. You DO NOT need to include specific devices in the topic sentences. In fact, unless they are dominant devices that you intend to discuss exclusively, don't list them.
- 3. You want to make the author of the piece the subject of the sentence. This will make your sentence stay in the active voice.
- 4. Note (parenthetically) the structural division you have chosen.
- 5. Keep it simple and clear. The body of the paragraph is where the intricate analysis takes place.
- 6. In analysis essays, the argument is simply your assertion about what the author is saying.

TRANSITION, The AUTHOR [STRONG VERB] (parenthetical citation of structure) SUBJECT PURPOSE.

Sample Topic Sentence (Basic and Effective)

Updike opens his argument (paragraphs 1-2) by describing the conflicted emotions of fans on Opening Day.

Sample Topic Sentence (Bit More Artful)

In his breathless open, Updike depicts (paragraphs 1-2) the crowd at a baseball game on Opening Day, who are both nostalgic about the season past and nervously optimistic about the one to come.