

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write an Argument Essay

Directions: Read "Should the School Week Be Shorter?" Complete the scavenger hunt on page 29.
Then follow the steps below.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Should the school week be shorter?

Consider what you read in the two essays, as well as your own viewpoint.

Check the box next to the point of view you will argue in your essay,
or write your own opinion in the space provided.

☐ **Yes!** The school week should be shorter. ☐ **No!** The school week should stay the same.

STEP 2: GATHER SUPPORT FOR YOUR OPINION

Which details from the letters support your opinion? What other information supports your opinion?

List at least three supporting details on the lines below.

Here's an example: If you think the school week should be shorter, one of your supporting details might be that a shorter week would give teachers more time to plan.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think the school week **SHOULD** be shorter, summarize the strongest arguments against a four-day week that Bethany presents in her letter. If you think the school week **SHOULD NOT** be shortened, summarize the strongest arguments in favor of a four-day week that Dylan presents in his letter.

STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR THESIS (CENTRAL CLAIM)

The thesis is where you tell readers what your essay is going to be about. The thesis should be a clear, strong statement of the opinion you gave in Step 1. The rest of your essay will support this thesis.

Your thesis: _____

STEP 5: WRITE YOUR HOOK

The very beginning of your essay is called the hook because it "hooks" your readers' attention. The hook should relate to the topic of your essay, but it can take many forms. It can be:

- 1. An anecdote** (a very short story): Describe what your schedule is like during the school week. Do you ever get overwhelmed? Or do you feel like you have enough time to take care of all of your responsibilities?
- 2. A surprising fact:** Find a fact that will raise your readers' eyebrows. Several surprising facts are included in the article. You can also do some research to find one that is not included in the article.
- 3. A rhetorical question** (a question to which you don't expect an answer): Ask your readers a question that reflects your point of view about shortening the school week. Here's one way you could structure your question: "Would shortening the school week really _____?"
- 4. A quote:** Find a thought-provoking quote that relates to the topic of your essay.

Choose one of the ideas above, or use your own idea, and write a hook on the lines provided.

Your hook: _____

STEP 6: SUMMARIZE THE ISSUE

Let readers know a little about the issue you will be writing about. This is not your point of view; it's a brief summary of the issue. Use information from both essays to finish the summary below.

Dylan thinks that his school should switch to a four-day week. Bethany disagrees and believes that

STEP 7: START WRITING

On the next page, you'll find guidelines for how to organize your essay.

Argument Essay Outline

Directions: Use the outline below to write your essay. You will use what you wrote on the first three pages of this activity.

1

INTRODUCTION

Open with your hook from Step 5.



Write a transition sentence that relates your hook to the question of a shorter school week.



(See *Scope's* handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)



Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.



Finish with your thesis from Step 4.

2

BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

**Now write your supporting points from Step 2.
For each one, write 1-3 sentences that
provide additional details.**

You can put your supporting points and detail sentences together in one paragraph or you can split them into several paragraphs. It depends on how much you want to write about each point.

Hint! Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers will remember details that are presented last.

3

ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument.

Use what you wrote in Step 3.

Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.

4

CONCLUSION

**Write 2-3 sentences to remind your readers
of your main points.**

Finish with a strong final sentence.

*Need an idea?
Refer to your hook,
find a quote, or give
a call to action.*

5

READ AND REVISE

Use *Scope's* "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written.