

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write an Argument Essay

Directions: Read "Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?" Complete the scavenger hunt on page 29.
Then follow the steps below.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Should cafeterias have assigned seating?

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!** Cafeterias should have assigned seats. ☐ **No!** Cafeterias should not have assigned seats.

STEP 2: GATHER SUPPORT FOR YOUR OPINION

Which details from the essays 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 cafeterias should have assigned seats, one of your supporting details might be that having to find a seat at lunch creates a lot of anxiety for some students.

1.

2.

3.

STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think cafeterias **SHOULD** have assigned seats, summarize the strongest arguments against assigned seating that Josh presents in his letter. If you think cafeterias **SHOULD NOT** have assigned seats, summarize the strongest arguments in favor of assigned seating that Lila presents in her 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 a personal experience that you've had in the cafeteria. Has finding a seat ever been stressful for you? Do you recall a particularly special day of sitting with your friends at lunch?
- 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 assigned seating in cafeterias. Here's one way you could structure your question: "Would assigned seats in the cafeteria 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.

Lila thinks that her school should have assigned seating in the cafeteria. Josh 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 assigned seating in the cafeteria.

↓

(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.