

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write an Argument Essay

Directions: Read "Should We Get Rid of the Penny?" Complete the essay kit on page 17.
Then follow the steps below.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Should the U.S. get rid of the penny?

Consider what you read in the article, as well as your own viewpoints.
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!** Pennies are pointless.

☐ **No!** Pennies are important.

☐

STEP 2: GATHER SUPPORT FOR YOUR OPINION

Look at what you wrote in the "Yes" and "No" columns on page 17. Which points 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 we should get rid of the penny, one of your supporting details might be: "Add it all up, and the government loses half a cent for each of the billions of pennies it produces every year . . ."

1.

2.

3.

STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think that the U.S. SHOULD get rid of the penny, summarize the strongest arguments of those who disagree. If you think that the U.S. SHOULD NOT get rid of the penny, summarize the main reasons some people think that we should.

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 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 your experience with pennies. Do you ever use them? Do you have a penny jar at home?
- 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. Here's one way you could structure your question:
"Do we really need to keep making pennies if _____?"
- 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: _____

There is disagreement over whether the U.S. should continue using pennies. Some people think that pennies are useless and should no longer be made. Others think that _____

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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	<h2>INTRODUCTION</h2> <p>Open with your hook from Step 5.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Write a transition sentence that relates your hook to the question of whether to stop making pennies.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>(See <i>Scope's</i> handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Finish with your thesis from Step 4.</p>
2	<h2>BODY PARAGRAPH(S)</h2> <p>Now write your supporting points from Step 2. For each one, write 1-3 sentences that provide additional details.</p> <p>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.</p> <div data-bbox="1182 913 1529 1207" style="border: 1px dotted black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><i>Hint! Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers will best remember details that are presented last.</i></p> </div>
3	<h2>ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE</h2> <p>Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument.</p> <p>Use what you wrote in Step 3.</p> <p>Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.</p>
4	<h2>CONCLUSION</h2> <p>Write 2-3 sentences to remind your readers of your main points.</p> <p>Finish with a strong final sentence.</p> <div data-bbox="1209 1564 1529 1774" style="border: 1px dotted black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><i>Need an idea? Refer to your hook, find a quote, or give a call to action.</i></p> </div>
5	<h2>READ AND REVISE</h2> <p>Use <i>Scope's</i> "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written.</p>

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“Should We Get Rid of the Penny?” Quiz

Directions: Read “Should We Get Rid of the Penny?” Then answer the questions below.

- The author develops the idea that making pennies is wasteful in all of the following ways EXCEPT**
 - by explaining what pennies are made of.
 - by explaining that most pennies end up lost or unused.
 - by explaining where pennies are made.
 - by explaining what it costs to make a penny.
- The author writes, “Who would lug 1,000 pennies to the movies when they could bring a \$10 bill?” What literary device is he using?**
 - hyperbole
 - rhetorical question
 - metaphor
 - symbolism
- The purpose of the literary device you chose in Question 2 is**
 - to emphasize how inconvenient pennies are.
 - to convince readers that pennies are useful.
 - to encourage readers to think about how they spend their money.
 - to show that some people still use pennies to pay for things.
- The author likely includes the example about the hot dog vendor on page 17 to**
 - support the claim that getting rid of the penny could hurt business.
 - show that hot dogs are expensive.
 - show how getting rid of the penny could influence prices.
 - explain how hot dog vendors decide on prices.
- Consider this statement: “Then again, Canada minted its last one-cent coin in 2012, and prices there have not gone up enough to cause problems.” This line**
 - refutes the claim that the penny is useful.
 - supports the argument that the U.S. should keep the penny.
 - supports the claim that making pennies is a waste of money.
 - refutes the claim that getting rid of the penny would have a major impact on prices.
- Which claim could BEST be supported with information from the article?**
 - Producing pennies doesn’t cost a lot.
 - Most Americans want to get rid of the penny.
 - Pennies are not as useful as they once were.
 - Many people still use pennies.

Constructed-Response Questions

Directions: Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

- What idea about pennies does the cartoon on page 16 express? In the article, how does author Justin O’Neill express a similar idea? Explain, using text evidence to support your answer.
- Consider how the author begins the article. Why might he have included the detail about the price of candy in the 1900s? What point was he trying to make? Explain your answer.

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“Should We Get Rid of the Penny?” Quiz

Directions: Read “Should We Get Rid of the Penny?” Then answer the questions below.

1. Which line from the article does not support the claim that making pennies is wasteful?

- (A) “Add it all up, and the government loses half a cent for each of the billions of pennies it produces every year . . .” (p. 16)
- (B) “Then there is the fact that making pennies wastes zinc and copper.” (p. 16)
- (C) “America’s pennies are born at the U.S. Mint . . .” (p. 16)
- (D) “Shouldn’t we limit our use of zinc and copper to products people actually use?” (p. 16)

2. The author writes, “Who would lug 1,000 pennies to the movies when they could bring a \$10 bill?” What literary device is he using?

- (A) hyperbole
- (B) rhetorical question
- (C) metaphor
- (D) symbolism

3. The purpose of the literary device you chose in Question 2 is

- (A) to emphasize how inconvenient pennies are.
- (B) to convince readers that pennies are useful.
- (C) to encourage readers to think about how they spend their money.
- (D) to show that some people still use pennies to pay for things.

4. The example about the hot dog vendor on page 17 helps you understand

- (A) why getting rid of the penny could hurt business.
- (B) why the penny is useful.
- (C) how items could cost more without pennies.
- (D) how much a hot dog costs.

5. Which line refutes (disproves) the claim that getting rid of the penny would have a major impact on prices?

- (A) “Oddly, it costs the Mint more than a penny to produce a penny.” (p. 16)
- (B) “Prices would have to be rounded to the nearest nickel.” (p. 17)
- (C) “That might not sound bad, but those tiny increases could add up.” (p. 17)
- (D) “Then again, Canada minted its last one-cent coin in 2012, and prices there have not gone up enough to cause problems.” (p. 17)

6. Which claim could NOT be supported with information from the article?

- (A) Using pennies is inconvenient.
- (B) Making pennies is costly.
- (C) Most Americans want to get rid of the penny.
- (D) Pennies are important to charities.

Constructed-Response Questions

Directions: Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. What idea about pennies does the cartoon on page 16 express? Explain your answer.

8. Consider how the author begins the article. Why might he have included the detail about the price of candy in the 1900s? What point was he trying to make? Explain your answer.

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Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud.

Vocabulary:

"Should We Get Rid of the Penny?"

1. bill (bil) *noun*; As it is used in the article, *bill* refers to a proposed law—that is, an idea for a law that has not yet been approved. For a bill to become a law, it must be approved by the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and the president.

2. nostalgic (nuh-STAL-jik) *adjective*; Nostalgia (nuh-STAL-juh) is a feeling of longing for the happiness felt in a former place or time. *Nostalgic* means "feeling or experiencing nostalgia." Looking at an old photograph or hearing a certain song on Spotify might make you nostalgic as you remember a moment or period in the past and wish that you could experience it again.

3. vendor (VEN-der) *noun*; A vendor is a person who sells something. *Vendor* is often used to refer to someone who sells something on the street or outside a store. For example, a man who sells fruit from a cart on a street corner is a fruit vendor.

Vendor is also used to refer to a company that sells a particular type of product. For example, The Coca-Cola Company is a soda vendor.

Directions: Below and on the back of this page, list any other words from the debate whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

Vocabulary Practice

"Should We Get Rid of the Penny?"

Directions: Fill in the circle to show whether you think each statement is true or false. Briefly explain your choice.

1. If there is a bill that says people are not allowed to talk on the phone while driving, it is illegal to talk on the phone while driving.

☐ true ☐ false

Reason: _____

2. Looking at photos from when you were in 3rd grade might make you feel nostalgic.

☐ true ☐ false

Reason: _____

Directions: Complete each unfinished sentence in a way that makes the meaning of the boldfaced word clear.

3. I could see that my grandfather was feeling **nostalgic** as he told us a story about _____

4. Lisa asked the **vendor** _____

Directions: Write a sentence that includes a word or words from the list of vocabulary words on page 1 of this activity (including any words you added).

5. _____
