Argumentative Research Essay Prompt

For this essay, you will be choosing/creating a topic and researching it to provide your **OWN** discovered sources to **support** an **ARGUMENT** you make. This will be much like your Argument Synthesis, but will be **RESEARCH** oriented, meaning **you are responsible** for selecting your **topic** and your **sources**.

You will choose a topic of your own creation to **research and argue** about that fits under one of these categories. For instance, examples of topics could be topics such as “Private Prisons” or “Trying Juveniles as Adults.” Using these topics, you would argue something about the concept using your sources and **your own, EXPLAINED and SUPPORTED** opinions.

You are to research this topic on your own, and find ***FOUR (4)*** sources that are reliable, respectable, and fit for academic use. You will use these sources to discuss the topic and make your own argument, much like the Argument Synthesis. For help on interacting with your sources, check our templates handout. **BE SURE TO INCLUDE BOTH IN-TEXT CITATIONS AND A WORKS CITED PAGE.**

Also be sure to include an **arguable thesis** that establishes your viewpoint in a **debateable, meaningful** way. Remember, your argument does not need to be a black and white yes or no on a topic, or outright agree/disagree with sources. ***Find your own voice and stance on your topic!***

Remember that this is a **RESEARCH PAPER,**  and since it makes use of sources, you will need to make use of **SYNTHESIS** to discuss the topic and various opinions around it. These sources will also help to support your argument, as this is **ALSO** an **ARGUMENTATIVE** essay. This **research paper** will be a culmination of all your skills and approaches in previous papers this semester.

Be sure to discuss your sources alongside **your own argument**. That said, **YOUR ARGUMENT is the focus here**, not your sources’ arguments. Your sources **SUPPORT and provide TALKING POINTS**, but **DO NOT take the focus** of the essay. ***Think of your sources as the tools you use to craft your thesis and support it.***

Please keep in mind the following notes.

Organizing an Argumentative Essay (Which this is!):

* State your thesis clearly and make sure that it reflects the focus of your essay.
* Make sure your main points are clearly stated (use topic sentences), and connect each point to your thesis as explicitly as possible.
* Divide and order paragraphs logically.
* Provide appropriate transitions both within and between paragraphs.
* Develop each main idea/supporting argument thoroughly. Use specific examples and source materials appropriately as support. Be sure to integrate source materials smoothly into your own writing using attribution phrases and transitions. Also be sure to avoid unnecessary repetition (repetition is often an organization problem).
* Make sure sentences are clear and unambiguous. Double-check to see that sentences are adequately varied in length and style, and that there are no fragments or run-ons. Also proofread carefully to correct any other sentence errors.
* Select words precisely. When in doubt, use a dictionary or a thesaurus.
* Provide and check your MLA documentation. Are your parenthetical citations correct? Is your Works Cited list correct according to MLA style, and does it include all sources cited in your essay?

Keep In Mind For Your Argument:

* Include body paragraphs that provide evidence and support of your thesis, **not** just rants of personal opinion
* Make sure you establish your credibility on the subject and that you provide sufficient information to make your argument (thesis) on your research topic convincing.
* Each paragraph should be ***limited to the discussion of one general idea***. This will allow for clarity and direction throughout the essay. In addition, such conciseness creates an ease of readability for one’s audience. It is important to note that **each paragraph** in the body of the essay ***must have some logical connection to the thesis statement*** in the opening paragraph. Some paragraphs will directly support the thesis statement with evidence collected during research. ***It is also important to explain how and why the evidence supports the thesis.***
* You need some evidential support (whether factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal).
* Be sure to give your essay a descriptive and attention-getting title (NOT just “Synthesis”).

Format: MLA

Length: 850 or more words.

Due Before Finals:

* Topic, Thesis, Proposal
* Annotated Bibliography
* Outline

Due Date: Finals period, in class and in dropbox.