**The Researched Argument**

**English IV**

Goal:

Students will research a debatable topic and write an argumentative paper. The semester research paper will be broken down into interrelated parts—each part devoted to answering an essential question about the issue. When completed, **the research paper will be 5 pages long, reflect the use of a minimum of five (5) sources, a minimum of fourteen (14) citations, and a Works Cited page**.

**The research paper is a major requirement, and it must be done correctly to ensure a successful grade.** Each step of the research paper will be discussed in class. Please keep up with due dates for each assignment, however they are subject to change and it is the student’s responsibility to mark changes on syllabus given in class. If you have questions, please email me at **schlichjr@scsk12.org****.** (AS A SUBSTITUE FOR TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS, DO NOT EMAIL WITH AN ATTACHMENT. I MUST HAVE A PAPER COPY OF ALL PARTS OF THE PROJECT.)

**PROCESS FOR PART 1** [introduction]

All papers will contain a clearly worded **introduction**. The introduction will contain a minimum of five sentences. The introduction will contain a clear thesis—a position statement—reflecting the writer’s position to be proved by the research in the paper.

**PROCESS FOR PART II** [Define the two sides and provide background information]

The task for this first part is to write two paragraphs in which the writer endeavors to clearly define the chosen issue and to describe the origins and causes of the controversy:

* Identify the important aspects of the issue; that is, *what* do people disagree about?
* Define the key terms in the issue
* What are the historical dimensions of this controversy?
* Where does the issue stem from?
* What started the controversy?
* What are the causes of the problem?

Put most simply, the task in this section of the paper is to answer as fully as possible the essential question: **“What is it?”** and **“How did it begin** and **what causes it?”**

To answer this question **does not** require you to develop an argument. Rather, it requires that the writer make as clear as possible what he wants to write persuasively about.

In this part, the writer **should not** explain why he believes one way or another; he **should not** argue for a particular course of action. All of that will come later. Research is a component of this paper; consequently, citations documenting the facts used to defining this issue are appropriate in the part of the paper. Those considerations come in a different part of the paper. Documentation in the form of citations certainly appears in this section of the paper.

**PROCESS FOR PART III** [Explain argument] \*\*longest section

The task in part three is to write three to six paragraphs in which the writer conveys the substance of the argument by evaluating what is at the heart of the controversy. It is in this part of the paper that the writer puts forth his opinion regarding the issue in an attempt to persuade the reader about its nature and to win support. Listed below are some questions to consider; answering those questions will help to clarify what the paper is actually arguing.

* What makes the issue a good or bad thing?
* Should it be sought or avoided?
* Is it right or wrong?
* Is it better or worse than something else?
* Is it more or less desirable than any alternative?
* Is it more or less right or wrong than something else?

In this section of the paper, the writer should not explain how the problem can be solved or argue for a particular course of action. That is for part IV.

This section of the paper requires research, so continue to employ specific references and citations. Part III represents the meat of the argument; the writer must use three appeals of persuasion: **logical (facts, statistics), emotional (bias, stereotypes), and ethical (moral responsibility)**. This section provides the perfect opportunity to use a human-interest story, an anecdote to illustrate the point.

**PROCESS FOR PART IV** [Counter-argument]

Part IV addresses the other side of the argument and is one to two paragraphs. A counter-argument is an argument opposed to your thesis. It expresses the view of a person who disagrees with your position. Here are some key questions to consider endeavoring to answer:

* What are some disadvantages?
* What are some problems concerning the opposition?

The task here is to clearly state the opposing argument. This section affords the best place to address the conceding points—or concession—the opposite side to the argument.

**PROCESS FOR PART V [Conclusion]** All papers will contain a clearly worded **conclusion**. The conclusion will contain a minimum of five (5) sentences. The conclusion closes the essay and tries to close the issue. The aim is to convince the reader that your essay has covered all the most important arguments about the issue and that your main premise is the best position on the issue. You **should not**present any new arguments in your conclusion.

Additional Guidelines

* Minimum of 5 sources
* Paper=5 pages in length
* Minimum of 14 citations
* Introductory and conclusion paragraphs minimum of 5 sentences each
* Body paragraphs minimum of 7 sentences
* Works Cited page as the final page of the document
* MLA formatting
* All grammar rules apply. Consistent errors can result in a failing grade. Errors include, but are NOT limited to:
	+ Sentence fragments
	+ Run-on sentences
	+ Comma slice error
	+ Use of 2nd personal pronouns (especially ‘you’)
	+ Subject/verb agreement

**All assignments must be turned in to me in person. If you are absent, send the assignment with a friend or have it dropped off in the office prior to 2:15 PM of the due date.**

**Late Assignments**

Each day an assignment is late, 20% will be deducted off the original amount (*weekends included*). The final draft *MUST* be turned in on the last due date, *even if you are absent!* Your college professor will not care if you’re sick when you paper is due. Also, prepare for printer problems, etc. early! Only major emergencies will be considered on an individual basis. Students MUST email me at the time of the issue. **I will not accept emailed copies of any assignment relating to the research project! All assignments must be turned in to me in person. If you are absent, send the assignment with a friend or have it dropped off in the office prior to 2:15 PM of the due date.**

**Germantown High School Plagiarism Policy**

Germantown High School values academic honesty and believes plagiarism is a serious offense. Using the work of other people in any way is stealing intellectual property. In the high school setting, it can result in the failure of an assignment, but in a college setting, plagiarism can lead to failure in an entire course or worse. Most importantly, if a student plagiarizes, he or she is not learning, and the ultimate goal of the school is for students to learn.

**A student has plagiarized if he or she**

* Has failed to give credit to the proper sources any time an assignment has been completed with the aid of an outside source, whether that source is an electronic translator, literary analysis, or other students.
* Has copied another person’s work, be it the work of an author or another student, without the use of quotation marks and proper credit following the quote.
* Has paraphrased an item without giving the original author credit.
* Has inappropriately collaborated with other students.
* Has allowed another student to copy his or her work.
* Has resubmitted his or her own work or the work of another student that was submitted in a previous class or activity.

The teacher will provide copies of proper documentation to the student showing that the plagiarism has occurred.

**Consequences of plagiarism**

* If a student has plagiarized, been involved in plagiarism, or allowed plagiarism of his or her own work, even inadvertently, the student will receive a zero on the assignment.
* If two students have turned in work that is the same, all or in part, both students will receive zeros on the assignment.
* Students will also be asked to fill out an honors infraction form. Honorary clubs look at these forms to determine membership in the organizations.

I have read the research paper guidelines and due dates and understand that I am responsible for researching my topic outside, writing my own paper, and turning in my assignments on time. In addition, I understand that if an assignment is not turned in on the due, I will be penalized. Finally, I understand that if I copy any information from my sources without proper documentation, I will receive a zero on my research paper. I also know that all due dates are subject to change and it is my responsibility to note the changes.

Student Signature Date

Parent Signature Date