



Part Two (2): Argument Essay

This repository can be used to support English Language Learners to write a successful Argument Essay on the New York State English Language Arts Regents Exam. This resource has been broken down into three steps that need to be followed to successfully complete the task: 1. Break Down the Instructions, 2. Read and Analyze the Texts and 3. Organize Your Writing.

Students may need more scaffolding and support when first introduced to the argument task. Thus, there may be multiple resources or strategies within each step that support different proficiency levels or different skills of focus. For example, students at the Emerging proficiency level being introduced to this task may require time to breakdown and analyze the instructions for key words, may need to use a checklist to help read and annotate the passages, a graphic organizer to record evidence, a format outline and sentence frames to write out the essay. As they become more independent, they will move away from sentence frames and may rely temporarily on the checklists and graphic organizers to complete this task. The ultimate goal is that they can recreate these tools on their own to support themselves during the test, where no scaffolding is provided.

The materials or strategies in this repository can be used as is, or further modified to meet the specific needs of your students.

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Step One (1): Break Down the Instructions

Part 2

Argument

Directions: Closely read each of the **four** texts provided on pages 13 through 20 and write a source-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Write your argument beginning on page 1 of your essay booklet.

Topic: Should U.S. Congressional lawmakers have term limits?

Your CLAIM = Yes or No
answer to this question

Your Task: Carefully read each of the **four** texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least **three** of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding whether or not U.S. Congressional lawmakers should have term limits. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least **three** of the texts to develop your argument. Do *not* simply summarize each text.

Guidelines:

Be sure to:

- **Establish your claim** regarding whether or not U.S. Congressional lawmakers should have term limits
- **Distinguish** ^{recognize} your claim from alternate or ^{opposite} opposing claims
- Use specific, relevant, and sufficient **evidence from at least three of the texts** to develop your argument
- **Identify each source** that you reference by text number and line number(s) or graphic (for example: Text 1, line 4 or Text 2, graphic)
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

Texts:

- Text 1 – Why No Term Limits for Congress? The Constitution
- Text 2 – Darrell Berkheimer: How Term Limits Would Improve Congress
- Text 3 – Why Term Limits?
- Text 4 – Five Reasons to Oppose Congressional Term Limits

Thesis = My claim + 3 reasons + opposing claim

Each example of evidence becomes a body paragraph
(3 total body paragraphs minimum)

When you get to this task on the test - use scrap paper to RECREATE the Graphic Organizer we practice!



Step Two (2): Read and Analyze the Text(s)

- Use a Reading Checklist

Reading Checklist:

- ☐ Read and annotate the text.
 - ☐ Put a **+** next to evidence that **SUPPORTS** the topic.
 - ☐ Put a **-** next to evidence that **OPPOSES** the topic.
- ☐ Highlight key vocabulary words.
- ☐ Use context clues and surrounding text to look for meaning to the new vocabulary words. Is it a cognate? Does it have a prefix or suffix?
- ☐ Create a **gist** statement in the margins.
- ☐ Decide whether YOU support or oppose the topic and write your claim.
- ☐ Organize evidence into your graphic organizer.

- Use a Graphic Organizer to organize evidence and/or prepare for your writing:
 - While Reading Graphic Organizer - Sort Your Evidence

For ____ (topic) _____ (+)	(Text, line)	Against ____ (topic) _____ (-)	(Text, line)

- Write Your Claim

Thesis statement/Claim:

The US Congressional lawmakers **should/should not** have term limits because
_____, _____, and _____; **even**
though/however _____

_____.

- Argument Format Graphic Organizers
 - Big Ideas - Good for introducing the general format of the argument essay.

Claim:

Reason:

Details:

Reason:

Details:

Reason:

Details:

Reason:

Details:

Conclusion:

- [Detailed Evidence, Citations and Explanations Graphic Organizer](#)



Step Three (3): Organize Your Writing

- Use a Writing Checklist

Writing Checklist:

Introduction:

- ☐ Hook/Interesting Statement
- ☐ Background Information
- ☐ Claim
- ☐ Counterclaim

In each body paragraph:

- ☐ Main idea sentence (what is the paragraph about?)
- ☐ Detail sentences
 - ☐ With quotes and citations
- ☐ Conclusion sentence (final thought)

Conclusion:

- ☐ Restate the thesis.
- ☐ Summarize your points/restate topic (main idea) sentences

For inspiration to get sentences started, refer to the [Argument Sentence Frames](#) document

- Follow a Sentence by Sentence Outline of the Essay Format

Essay Format Outline:

Paragraph 1: Introduction

1. Hook - interesting statement to make the reader want to read
2. Give 2-3 sentences of background information on the topic
3. Counterclaim ("Some people believe _____")
4. Claim ("However, there are many reasons why people believe reason 1, reason 2, reason 3")

Paragraph 2: Reason 1 of claim

1. Topic sentence - reason for the paragraph
2. 3 quotes and citations to support reason 1 of your claim (text #, line #)
3. Explanation
 - a. Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation



Paragraph 3: Reason 2 of claim

1. Topic sentence - reason for the paragraph
2. 3 quotes and citations to support reason 2 of your claim (text #, line #)
3. Explanation
 - a. Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation

Paragraph 4: Reason 3 of claim

1. Topic sentence - reason for the paragraph
2. 3 quotes and citations to support reason 3 of your claim (text #, line #)
3. Explanation
 - a. Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation

Paragraph 5: Counterclaim

1. Restate your counterclaim from the introduction
2. 2 quotes and citations to support your counterclaim (text #, line #)
3. Explanation
 - a. Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation; Quote, citation, explanation

Paragraph 6: Conclusion

1. Claim/Thesis - reworded
2. Topic sentences - reworded (first sentence of each paragraph)
3. Final thoughts about the topic

Notes:

*Do NOT say "I, we, us, you"

**MUST use 3 out of the 4 texts in your examples - Write (text #, line #) for all citations to prove you used at least 3 of the Articles

***For inspiration to get sentences started, refer to the [Argument Sentence Frames](#) document