

Writing a Position Paper

Your assignment is to write a **3-5 page long, double-spaced, 12pt font** position paper that presents your opinion about a particular issue. The goal of a position paper is to convince the audience (other Island 8th graders) that your opinion is worth listening to and persuade them to agree with you. You will need to carefully choose a topic and develop your ideas/opinion and back it up with research. It is very important to address all sides of the issue and present it in a manner that is easy for others to understand.

Choose an issue/question

This year the topic of your paper/bill needs to be something local (island or state). Think about the lists generated in class for ideas, talk to your parents for ideas, look in the newspapers, and/or look at sites on my page.

Analyzing an Issue and Developing an Argument

Once you have chosen a topic/question is selected and BEFORE you decide where you stand on the issue- you should do some **research** on the subject matter. While you may already have an opinion on the subject, you need to make sure that your position is well supported (others agree with you). Making a list of pros and cons about the subject will help you develop your arguments and counterclaims.

Here are some types of evidence/information that can help you:

- Facts: information that is agreed upon by almost everyone
- Statistics: numbers, charts, etc.
- Informed opinion: usually comes from an expert
- Personal Testimony: someone giving information about their personal experience

You will need to use at least 5 sources.

Sample Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. Introduce the topic
 - B. Provide background on the topic
 - C. Thesis (what is your view on the issue)

- II. Your argument
 - A. Point #1
 - 1. Give your opinion
 - 2. Support (i.e. quote, statistic, etc.)
 - B. Point #2
 - 1. Give your opinion
 - 2. Support (i.e. quote, statistic, etc.)
 - C. Point #3
 - 1. Give your opinion
 - 2. Support (i.e. quote, statistic, etc.)

- III. Counter Argument (state the other side)
 - A. Summarize counterclaims
 - B. Refute (disagree) counterclaims
 - C. Give evidence

- IV. Conclusion
 - A. Restate your argument (thesis)
 - B. Provide a plan of action

**MVPS 8th Grade Social Studies
Position Paper**

Name _____

Notecards (10 points)

___ handed in on time

___ proper format

___ minimum of 20

Outline (10 points)

___ handed in on time

___ proper format

Rough Draft (10 points)

___ handed in on time

___ bibliography

___ sources are cited in paper

Final Draft (25 points)

- **attach rough draft**

	Above Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Below Standards
Position Statement				
Sequencing				
Accuracy				
Mechanics				
Bibliography				
Brochure/Pamphlet (extra credit-5 pts)				

Comments: