



English 10 | Position Paper Assignment Description

The Handmaid's Tale

Description of Assignment: Like a debate, a **position paper** presents one side of an arguable opinion about an issue. **The goal of a position paper is to convince the audience that your opinion on a chosen topic is valid and defensible.** For this position paper, you will **choose one of the issues below** and choose a side to argue for your issue. Each issue is directly related to our reading group themes from *The Handmaid's Tale*:

Theme and Position Paper Question	“For” argument	“Against” argument
<u>Religion</u> <i>Should religion have a place in government?</i>	Yes, religion should have a place in government.	No, religion should not have a place in government.
<u>Environment</u> <i>Should we ban fracking?</i>	Yes, we should ban fracking.	No, we should not ban fracking.
<u>Economy</u> <i>Should companies be allowed to collect information about us?</i>	Yes, companies should be allowed to collect information about us.	No, companies should not be allowed to collect information about us.
<u>Socio-cultural</u> <i>Is school designed more for girls than for boys?</i>	Yes, school is designed more for girls than for boys.	No, school is not designed more for girls than for boys.

Position Paper Requirements: You will write a first draft of your position paper by hand, and then you will type your position paper when your rough draft is complete. All students are required to handwrite a first draft and type a final draft.

Your position paper must:

- Clearly address all sides of the issue you choose
- Take one side of the argument and persuade your audience to agree with your point of view
- Support your argument with evidence to ensure the validity of your claims
- Argue against counterclaims to show that you are well informed about both sides

Additionally, your final draft must:

- Be at least three pages in length, double-spaced
- Be in MLA format:
 - Double-spaced
 - 12 point font
 - Page #s and your last name in the upper right hand corner
 - Your name, the teacher’s name, the course title and the date in the upper right hand corner
 - Have a title for your paper
 - Have 1 inch margins
- Cite at least two different academic sources (one you find on your own, and one you will read in class) in addition to citing *The Handmaid's Tale*



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POSITION PAPER OUTLINE

Part of Paper	What to include
Thesis and Introduction	<p>A. Introduce the topic B. Provide background on the topic to explain why it is important C. State your the thesis (your view of the issue).</p> <p><i>Thesis statement frame:</i></p> <p>I believe _____ because _____, _____, and _____.</p>
Counter Argument	<p>A. Summarize the counterclaims or the side of the argument that you're arguing against B. Provide supporting information for counterclaims C. Refute the counterclaims by saying why they are not valid/are not good arguments D. Give evidence for argument</p> <p>You can generate counterarguments by asking yourself what someone who disagrees with you might say about each of the points you've made or about your position as a whole.</p>
Body Paragraph 1, Your Argument/ Point 1	<p>A. Assert point #1 of your claims B. Give your educated and informed opinion C. Cite at least two pieces of evidence to support point #1</p>
Body Paragraph 2, Your Argument/Point 2	<p>A. Assert point #2 of your claims B. Give your educated and informed opinion C. Cite at least two pieces of evidence to support point #2</p>
Body Paragraph 3, Your Argument/Point 3	<p>A. Assert point #3 of your claims B. Give your educated and informed opinion C. Cite at least two pieces of evidence to support point #3</p>
Conclusion	<p>A. Restate your thesis in different words B. State why your argument matters to you, to the reader and to the world (the "so what?")</p>

HW: For my position paper I'll be writing about _____ (write theme here), making the _____ (for or against) argument.