

Paper #3: Refutation Paper

In the prior paper, you were required to find at least one source that disagreed with you, and address their point as a counterargument in your own writing. We are going to expand on that now: Find someone who asserts a view of your topic directly opposite yours, and prove them wrong. This does not simply mean disagreeing with them—instead, you should take your research to date and whatever other research you need to perform, and make an argument taking their apart point by point.

In order to be heard in an argument like this, however, you must speak to the people with whom you are disagreeing in some of the ways they spoke originally. In other words, you want your response to be in the same genre as the argument with which you are disagreeing—we'll discuss more about this in class.

If necessary, you can address a viewpoint held by several authors instead of one specific essay. For instance, if I were going to argue in favor of standardized testing, I might pick several columns denouncing it and go after the points they share. Alternately, if I were responding to one specific argument against standardized testing, I might break it down by paragraph. Either approach is acceptable for this assignment.

However, whether you are addressing one argument or several, you must do so respectfully! Dispute the *ideas*. Do not insult the person or persons espousing them. This is more than simply not calling them an idiot—you must be actively respectful of their right to have an opinion. If you are in a position where that is difficult, you should address the ideas without ever addressing the individual who had them. We'll talk more about this in class, too.

Papers must be at least 1,000 words, in MLA-formatted documents of the file types listed on the syllabus, and cited (if necessary) using current MLA convention. All papers must be accompanied by a reflective memo of at least 500 words.

Reflective Memo

Along with the final draft of your essay, I will also ask you to craft a reflective writer's memo. In your memo, you will tell a story about your process of writing the essay. Some questions you might explore include:

- What strategies did you use to get ideas for writing this essay? Which were most effective? Why?
- How did the experience of writing under a constraint hinder and/or enhance your creativity?
- How did you identify the genre of the article(s) to which you are responding? What steps did you make to write to that same genre?

- How did the experience of respectfully disagreeing with someone in their own arena (so to speak) treat you? Elaborate on why this was good and/or bad.
- What kinds of research (if any) did you conduct for this essay?
- What strategies did you use to revise this essay? Which were most effective? Why?
- What do you think is your most beautiful sentence in this essay? Why?
- What feedback from peers (or from the instructor) did you incorporate into your revisions? What feedback did you not incorporate? Why? (Hint: It's perfectly fine not to use all our feedback if you have a clear reason)
- What did you learn from the process of composing this essay?

Please don't answer these questions in order. Instead tell more of a narrative of your process. If your narrative is detailed enough, you'll end up implicitly addressing most of the questions above.