

# Helpful Hints for Essay 2

Please read through these slides to get a feel for and examples of what is expected for Essay 2.

# The Introduction Paragraph

- Begin with a strong lead-in: Start with a fascinating statement, a descriptive definition, a startling/shocking fact, or a quick narrative.
- For an argumentative research paper, it is essential that you clearly and comprehensively introduce the topic. Do not expect your reader to be an expert on the issue like you are.
- By the end of this first paragraph, you should include your thesis statement. The thesis statement should be recognized as the essay's thesis so that the reader now expects to read a paper that attempts to be persuasive about a specific topic.

# An Example of a Strong Introduction Paragraph

On March 10<sup>th</sup> 2011, a 9.0 earthquake struck just off the coast of Japan. As if the potential for damage wasn't great enough, this earthquake also generated a tsunami that moved inland at approximately 40 miles per hour. Even more unfortunately, the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power facility was not only near the epicenter of the quake but also directly in the path of the tsunami. The high pressure in reactor chambers building exploded. A massive cloud of incredibly toxic material and powerful radiation was expelled, and cascaded across the atmosphere poisoning everything it touched. An atmosphere of fear suffused the world as these predictions of far reaching consequences were made by the news media. How much damage could this cause? How high would the death toll climb? Actually, the answer that might surprise some is that far less damage occurred than many feared. Nuclear power is not as destructive as our culture makes it out to be. For a variety of reasons, when properly employed and managed, nuclear power is safe.

(Note the strong thesis statement at the end of the paragraph)

# Use Quotes Well

Corporations are one often cited beneficiary of the Citizens United decision. This is especially true for publically traded companies, which have a legal duty to their shareholders to make a profit. As such, these corporations are always on the lookout for ways to improve the bottom line as it would be foolish not to contribute heavily to a key politician on an important committee, such as the defense committee if one runs an aeronautics company. In an interview on NPR's *This American Life*, Karquel Alexander, a tax professor at University of Kansas, said the following about how much a company can receive in return per dollar of investment: "22,000%. So, for every dollar, on average, these firms spend on tax lobbying, they receive \$220 in tax benefits." If one can get, or keep, someone in office who will pass favorable legislation, the amount of money to be made is staggering. However, due to the risk of potential public backlash, such as when Target was found to be donating to anti-gay marriage groups, this practice is somewhat mitigated. However, what is known is that 80% of Super PAC funding comes from a group of just 100 wealthy donors, at least in the case for GOP Super PACs (Jeno 23). These GOP Super PACs are the most well-funded because of the incredible amount of money that these donors contribute.

# What was strong about last example

- On the last slide, I highlighted the quotes used by putting it in blue text. The first quote introduced the source, its credibility, and some context was provided as well to set up the focus of the quote. It was a direct quote – quotation marks were used to show that the information was word for word from Karquel Alexander.
- The second quote used was an indirect quote – it was paraphrased from the original quote so no quotation marks were used because it was reworded from the original. However, the information still came from a source and hence the in-text parenthetical citation.

# Don't forget these essentials...

- You are writing an **argumentative research** paper; therefore, you must have an **opinionated thesis** and not a factual thesis
- Aim for two or three quotes per paragraph. Except for the introduction and conclusion paragraphs, each paragraph should have some research findings included
- Do not use “I” statements in your paper. If you have personal experience with the topic and it would enhance the paper incredibly, then you can use personal experience but keep it to one paragraph ONLY.



# More essentials...

- Don't forget to include a paragraph that includes a **counterargument**. You *must* recognize and point out the “other” side's opinion. Without acknowledging the counterpoints, you are not writing a true college-level argumentative research paper.
- Remember our focus on transitions at the start of new paragraphs? Well, in a long, formal paper like this, transitions are key, so be sure to include them!
- Stick to an even tone that shows your authority on the topic.

# The Conclusion

- Your conclusion should reiterate the main point of your paper and the major claims that support that main point
- BUT, your conclusion should not be a point-by-point repetitiously stated paragraph using the same exact language from the essay—don't be boring!
- The best conclusions include a recommendation of what to do next, a call to action, or a statement of the topic's broader implications. For instance, what does this topic *mean* to the world?



# An Example of a Strong Conclusion Paragraph

While there are many legitimate concerns regarding the use and expansion of nuclear power, many of those concerns are based on fears not facts: uncertainty about safety of operations are largely unfounded, fear of the effects of radiation on health and wellbeing, exposure to the toxicity of nuclear materials. All of these fears about nuclear power can be addressed with facts. Fear is important to humans. It guards, and keeps safe, but when judgments about important topics are made under the influence of fear, not fact, those judgments become faulty and unsound. Ozzie Zehner, a scholar visiting U.C. Berkley who was educated at Cambridge expresses it very eloquently: “When it comes to nuclear power, we often purse our lips with skepticism. We must rethink our collective fear of nuclear power and see the good in it, too” (21). People must seek out facts, must consider critically and apply logic. Fear is an emotion, a drive designed to protect humans from danger, but it often cannot differentiate between danger and novelty. If everyone allowed fear to keep them from novelty, there would be no progress at all.



# **Helpful Hints for the Research Essay**