

ONRAMPS RHETORIC SUMMER ASSIGNMENT 2023

Welcome to OnRamps Rhetoric! In this course, you will learn about effective techniques of persuasion, first by analyzing real-world arguments about a variety of contemporary controversies, and then by crafting your own original persuasive arguments based on extensive research that you will conduct over the course of the year.

To prepare for this course, you will write a research summary of a viewpoint source that looks at the basic parts of the argument being made. There are two articles provided below. **Choose one to summarize for this assignment.**

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE carefully read through ALL of the directions listed below. It is a lot of information to comb through, but it will help you ultimately be successful.

Terms you need to know before you begin:

1. **A viewpoint source** is an article or piece of writing that is making an argument about one side of a controversial issue. They want the audience to do, feel, or believe something after reading it.
 2. **The principal claim** is the main idea or the thesis that an author wants the audience to believe, feel, or do after reading their editorial. Keep in mind the claim is not always stated outright and you may need to infer the author's principal claim.
 3. **Reasons** are supporting claims that help to convince the reader WHY the main claim is the best course of action. These rely on evidence to make them convincing.
 4. **Evidence** is the facts we use when we're trying to convince someone. Types of evidence include testimony, statistics, and examples. Specific mention of particular people, statements, events, and quotes--all these things count as evidence. And all this evidence can support either a reason or a principal claim. Think of these as the concrete details.
 5. **Stakeholders** are people who have values, interests, or beliefs that are directly or indirectly related to or affected by the controversy at hand. Generally, they have a reason to care about this controversy, and we should believe them because of this.
 - a. If your stakeholder is an editorial board, consider how their readership and community may be directly affected by this controversy. It is their responsibility to represent their readers' stake in this controversy, so their stakeholder status is the same as their readership's.
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In order to write your argument breakdown summary, follow these steps:

1. Read the article all the way through once in order to get an idea of the argument.
2. On your second read-through:
 - a. Label (underline or highlight) the **principal claim**. If the author doesn't state the principal claim explicitly, summarize the claim in your own words. What is the author is trying to get across? This can be anywhere in the article.
 - b. Label any **reasons** – Reasons are how many authors organize their arguments. For instance, if I want you to lend me 5 dollars, a reason might be that I let you borrow money in the past.
 - c. Label all the **evidence** — the specific examples, statistics, real people or events that are used in the article to prove the claim and reasons.
3. Create an outline of the argument. You can use the structure below as an example. Note that not all arguments have the same number of reasons, and sometimes the evidence is used to support the main claim directly. The example below is meant to be a jumping-off point for your own work, not the only way or the “correct” way to outline.

- a. Main Claim
 - i. Evidence for the main claim
 - ii. Reason #1
 1. Evidence for the reason
 - iii. Reason #2
 1. Evidence for the reason
 - iv. Reason #3
 1. Evidence for the reason

4. Use your annotations and your outline to write a 1-page summary of the viewpoint source. Your final product for submission should be as close to a full page as possible.

- a. Begin your summary by explaining who the author is and why they are a stakeholder (see the definition on page 1) in this controversy. This may require you to do some additional research OR you can use any information the author gives about themselves in the article.
- b. Next, offer a concise but thorough summary of the position this source is advocating.
 - i. You are NOT making an argument yourself. You are NOT giving your opinion about this issue or making any judgment of the author's argument.
 - ii. Your task is to objectively convey what the author's argument is.
 - iii. Where necessary and appropriate, include parenthetical citations. Cite paragraph numbers using this format: (author, par. #).
 - When the author is an editorial board, citations will be: (Editorial Board, par. #)

Summary Format:

- Put your name in the top left-hand corner and put OnRamps Rhetoric 306 on the line below your name.
- Next, include the full MLA style bibliographic citation entry of the piece you're summarizing. (The citation is provided for each of the articles.)
- Set margins to 1 inch, spacing to single-spaced, and font to 12 pt.
- **Do not exceed one page in length.** Again, the summary is meant to be concise, so choose your words carefully so as to not go over the required length.
- Use MLA 9 style formatting for the citation and parenthetical citations. In addition to the convention of using parenthetical citations to indicate page numbers, please number the paragraphs for online articles and newspapers that do not feature page numbers.

Expectations for a successful summary:

- The full MLA citation for the article at the top of the page below the name and course
- Introduce the author and explain how they are a stakeholder
- Introduce the author's main claim
- List any supporting reasons that the author has given in their argument
- List any supporting evidence to either the main claim directly or the separate reasons
 - This evidence should include embedded or incorporated quotes
 - Any quoted or paraphrased material will have parenthetical citations (author, par. #)
- Be fair and objective within the summary

Article #1:

The Editorial Board. "Editorial: TSA, airport must do more to reduce security wait times." *Austin American Statesman*, 30 April 2022,
<https://www.statesman.com/story/opinion/2022/04/30/security-delays-austin-airport-demand-urgent-action/9556986002/>. Accessed 12 May 2022.

Editorial: TSA, airport must do more to reduce security wait times

By American-Statesman Editorial Board

According to its master plan, Austin-Bergstrom International Airport aspires to be "a gateway to the world for all." It's a laudable goal, but over the past month, exceedingly long security checkpoint delays have prevented some travelers from even reaching their departure gates, much less boarding planes to destinations around the globe.

Frequent bottlenecks at ABIA's Transportation Security Administration checkpoints came to a maddening head on March 28, when lines snaked through the terminal onto the sidewalks outside, leading to scores of people missing their flights, warnings about security risks and a black eye for the airport and our city.

A city airport needs to meet the security demands of the people it serves, be they local residents who depend on it for business and leisure travel or visitors from around the world who come to enjoy Austin. For them, the airport is the first and last impression of this city. Many of those impressions were no doubt sullied by the chaos of March 28, when some outbound travelers had to ditch rental cars at the curb in desperate bids to make their flights.

The TSA dispatched an additional 15 screening agents to Austin to help last month, but only when U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Austin, stepped in to demand action from federal officials after getting caught up in the March 28 airport debacle.

"Austin's status as an international city supporting world-class endeavors and worldwide visitors is being held hostage by its airport's inability to access TSA support," Doggett wrote in a letter to the TSA administrator on April 4.

We appreciate Doggett flexing his political muscle to help, especially at a time when confidence in elected officials to solve problems is depressingly low. But it shouldn't take congressional intervention to convince the TSA to fix an obviously urgent problem at the Austin airport.

A month before Doggett got involved, ABIA Director Jacqueline Yaft asked the TSA – to no avail – for 100 additional screeners and more canine teams, warning that large crowds on the airport's sidewalks could create a "soft target" for terrorists. We implore the federal government to grant Yaft's urgent request, which also includes an appeal for 15 more Customs and Border Protection agents to handle international traveler security. We also urge ABIA be more transparent with the public about its plans to expand the airport and alleviate the security holdups.

ABIA spokeswoman Sam Haynes told our board last week that the airport is trying to help TSA by delivering new infrastructure such as a security checkpoint that opened in December 2021, balancing passenger load between checkpoints, and hiring additional staff to help the TSA direct passengers.

The airport also plans to hire an outside firm to develop a communications and marketing strategy to keep the public informed about expansion plans, which include large-scale renovations to the main Barbara Jordan Terminal and a second ABIA concourse with at least 10 more gates by 2028. We encourage the airport to get this team in place as soon as possible, well ahead of major construction that could confuse and frustrate travelers even more.

Meanwhile, the TSA's modest infusion of manpower in Austin is helping to move passengers to their gates more quickly – for now. But 15 new screeners isn't nearly enough to alleviate the airport's struggle to keep up with ever-increasing passenger traffic and still meet the TSA's goal of maximum 30-minute passenger wait times in security lines.

March was the busiest month ever at ABIA and the crowds will spike even more this summer, during one of the year's busiest travel seasons.

With its booming tech economy, the Austin metro area has one of the fastest-growing populations in the U.S. Austin is an increasingly sought-out international destination, evidenced by the record crowds at the Circuit of the Americas Formula One races last October.

Demand is growing for outbound international flights, too. By the end of 2022, six airlines will fly nonstop from Austin to 15 destinations outside the U.S. -- up from just four international destinations in 2019. New nonstop flights to London, Amsterdam, Jamaica and Canada have been or will be added this year.

We applaud all those who work to keep travelers safe at our nation's airports. Airport security should never be compromised. But unless urgent action is taken to address airport security delays at ABIA for the long-term, these problems will only get worse as airport traffic grows. Federal and local officials must work together with urgency to expedite security checks and ease the logjams at ABIA.

Article #2:

The Editorial Board. "Regardless of your political leanings, our democracy needs you to vote." *USA Today*, 7 November 2022,
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/todaysdebate/2022/11/07/vote-midterm-elections-protect-democracy/10617647002/>. Accessed 28 April 2022.

Regardless of your political leanings, our democracy needs you to vote

Our View: Fulfilling your civic duty is a critical part of how we preserve this beautiful and fragile democracy. It wasn't so long ago that many Americans were shut out of the democratic process.

By The Editorial Board USA TODAY

Published 6:00 a.m. ET Nov. 7, 2022 Updated 1:39 p.m. ET Nov. 7, 2022

Standing around ballot boxes armed with weapons is not how we protect democracy. Voting, however, is America's primary mechanism for defending our democratic values.

And if early polling is any indication, American voters are showing up to vote in this year's midterm elections and will likely match, if not pass, the 53% who exercised their right in 2018 – the highest turnout for a midterm election in four decades.

That's a good thing.

Despite these record numbers, U.S. voter turnout is embarrassingly low compared with other countries. But we have the power to change those dismal numbers.

Voting is how we preserve democracy

Today, voting is more important than ever in the politically charged environment of election deniers and conspiracy theorists who aim to threaten and intimidate American democracy in a way that it has not been challenged since, quite possibly, this nation's founding.

Our government doesn't exist in a vacuum. The American people are its lifeblood. That means we cannot take our system of government for granted, because it wasn't so long ago that many Americans were shut out of the democratic process.

It has been fewer than 100 years since Native Americans were given the right to vote (via the Snyder Act of 1924). And barely a century ago, in 1920, women won that right when the 19th Amendment was

ratified by Congress. Before that, African American men couldn't vote until the 15th Amendment was ratified in 1870.

These dates, along with the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, serve as reminders that not only are we a young democracy, but we are also a fragile democracy. Voting is a big part of how we protect it.

Voting tips for Election Day

Because of worries about Election Day, and post-election day violence, and a marked increase in concern about voter intimidation, the USA TODAY Editorial Board wants you to know your voters' rights. The ACLU has a helpful, in-depth list of what to know before and on Election Day. We've summarized them here:

- Know what documents you need to bring, including identification and proof of residence, especially if this is your first time voting.
- If you're still in line when the polls close, stay put. You have the right to vote.
- If you make a mistake on your ballot, request a new one.
- If the machines at your polling place aren't working then request a paper ballot.
- If a poll worker says your name is not on the list of registered voters, ask them to check a statewide system (if one is available) to see whether you are registered to vote somewhere else. If they don't have access to a statewide system, ask them to call the main election office. You can also call 1-866-OUR-VOTE to verify your polling place.
- If you have a disability, you need to know that in federal elections, every polling place must have at least one voting system that allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently. You have the right to receive in-person help at the polls from the person of your choice, but it must not be your employer.
- For voters who don't read or write English well, according to federal law, you may receive in-person assistance at the polls from someone who's not your employer.
- If someone tries to interfere with your right to vote, in many states, you can give a sworn statement to the poll worker that you "satisfy the qualifications to vote in your state," and then cast your ballot. Make sure to report intimidation to the election protection hotline at 1-866-OUR-VOTE. Also, make sure to report intimidation to your local election officials, who will have their offices open on Election Day.

Democracy is fragile

We are the guardians of our own liberty. We elect leaders to represent our wants, needs and concerns, in state legislatures and in Congress. We also elect state judges and other local politicians based on whether we think they are the best fit for office.

Voting is a fundamental part of what makes our country a democratic republic. It is not a perfect system, but it is the best system we have. Regardless of who you decide to cast your ballot for: Democrat, independent or Republican – fulfilling your civic duty to vote is a critical part of how we preserve this beautiful and fragile democracy.

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