You are required to research and write a 4-6 page argument essay. Your final essay is expected to demonstrate your research and rhetorical skills and support and illustrate your arguments. You will:

• Choose a topic from the list provided.
• Engage in both primary and secondary research to provide evidence of support for claims.
• Minimum of 8-12 sources – take careful notes on a variety of sources; annotating, summarizing, synthesizing and citing sources accurately using MLA format.
• Establish a claim/position and develop an argument based on research.
• Support the position with credible sources (for example: InfoOhio databases, .gov sites, .edu sites, Ms. Davis approved sites), attributing credit for both direct and indirect citations, using MLA format using in-text citations.
• Conclude with minimal summary and an appeal to the audience for belief in your claim and/or action.
• Create a Works Cited page using MLA format.

Take note – a successful research topic usually meets the following criteria:

• The writer is genuinely interested in the topic, and willing to learn more about it.
• While the writer may be committed to a perspective on the topic, the writer can recognize the value and importance of perspectives that contest or complicate the writer's views.
• The topic is susceptible to analysis, rather than founded in articles of faith or personal tastes that readers cannot be expected to share.
• The topic can be researched; there are relevant facts and viewpoints on record in a variety of print and electronic sources.
• The topic matters, not just to the writer but also to a broad potential readership. Good topics often start with a question that has something to do with how we live, what we care about, or what we may need to know; a good research question is one that raises more questions, and can't be answered simply.

Common Problems: Problems that prevent students from earning a high score on an argument question include:

1. Not taking a clear position or wavering between positions
2. Substituting a thesis-oriented expository essay for an argumentative essay
3. Being reluctant to engage in verbal combat because "everyone's entitled to his or her own opinion," so there's nothing to argue about
4. Slipping out of focus
5. Lacking clear connections between claims and the data, and the warrants needed to support them
6. Trying to analyze rhetorical strategies or her style instead of arguing a point
1. Animal rights and experimentation
2. Border control
3. Pharmaceutical industry
4. International adoption
5. Death penalty
6. Genetic cloning (human/organs/therapeutic)
7. Smoking in public places
8. Affirmative action
9. English as the official language
10. Gun control
11. Immigration policy
12. Marijuana/or other drugs legalized
13. School vouchers
14. Year-round Schooling
15. Body Image and the media
16. Genetic engineering
17. Arts and Music in public schools
18. Government surveillance of citizens
19. Health care/national health insurance
20. Cuba - that the US should end the embargo
21. Is global climate change man-made?
22. DNA profiling
23. Do violent video games cause behavior problems?
24. Should the alcohol drinking age be increased or decreased?
25. Is the cost of college too high?
26. Stand your ground laws
27. Patriot Act
28. Single Parent vs. Nuclear Family
29. Fracking
30. Genetically modified foods