

- **Issue Task**

1. A sample topic reads like this – “It could be argued that the most important technological breakthroughs have happened by chance and through surprise discoveries. However, others argue that deliberate, well-planned research with specific goals is the only way to ensure technological advancement.
2. Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.”
3. You are expected to respond by analyzing this general statement by taking a stance over a matter that is understandably complex.
4. You may get similar topics encompassing several different areas such as politics, education, or culture.
5. "True beauty is found not in the exceptional but in the commonplace."

Write an essay in which you take a position on the statement above. In developing and supporting your essay, consider instances in which the statement does and does not hold true.

6. The most difficult way to understand contemporary culture is to analyze the trends of its youth.
Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

- **Argument Task**

1. A sample topic reads – “SuperCorp recently moved its headquarters to Corporateville. The recent surge in the number of homeowners in Corporateville proves that Corporateville is a superior place to live

then Middleburg, the home of SuperCorp's current headquarters. Moreover, Middleburg is a predominantly urban area and according to an employee survey, SuperCorp has determined that its workers prefer to live in an area that is not urban. Finally, Corporateville has lower taxes than Middleburg, making it not only a safer place to work but also a cheaper one. Therefore, Supercorp clearly made the best decision.

2. Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on the assumptions and what the implications are if the assumptions prove unwarranted."

In contrast to the Issue essay, the Argument essay will ask the author to dissect the logic behind the stance or position taken by him or her.

3. *The director of the International Health Foundation recently released this announcement:*

"A new medical test that allows the early detection of a particular disease will prevent the deaths of people all over the world who would otherwise die from the disease. The test has been extremely effective in allowing doctors to diagnose the disease six months to a year before it would have been spotted by conventional means. As soon as we can institute this test as a routine procedure in hospitals around the world, the death rate from this disease will plummet."

Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on the assumptions and what the implications are if the assumptions prove unwarranted.

4. An ancient, traditional remedy for insomnia—the scent of lavender flowers—has now been proved effective. In a recent study, 30 volunteers with chronic insomnia slept each night for three weeks on lavender-scented pillows in a controlled room where their sleep was

monitored electronically- During the first week, volunteers continued to take their usual sleeping medication. They slept soundly but wakened feeling red. At the beginning of the second week, the volunteers discontinued their sleeping medication. During that week, they slept less soundly than the previous week and felt even redder. During the third week, the volunteers slept longer and more soundly than in the previous two weeks. Therefore, the study proves that lavender cures insomnia within a short period of me.

Write a response in which you discuss what specific evidence is needed to evaluate the argument and explain how the evidence would weaken or strengthen the argument

5. Woven baskets characterized by a particular distinctive pattern have previously been found only in the immediate vicinity of the prehistoric village of Palea and therefore were believed to have been made only by the Palean people. Recently, however, archaeologists discovered such a "Palean" basket in Lithos, an ancient village across the Brim River from Palea. The Brim River is very deep and broad, and so the ancient Paleans could have crossed it only by boat, and no Palean boats have been found. Thus it follows that the so-called Palean baskets were not uniquely Palean.

Write a response in which you discuss what specific evidence is needed to evaluate the argument and explain how the evidence would weaken or strengthen the argument.

6. The following appeared as a letter to the editor from a Central Plaza store owner.

"Over the past two years, the number of shoppers in Central Plaza has been steadily decreasing while the popularity of skateboarding has increased dramatically. Many Central Plaza store owners believe that the decrease in their business is due to the number of skateboard users in the plaza. There has also been a dramatic increase in the amount of litter and vandalism throughout the plaza. Thus, we recommend that the city prohibit skateboarding in Central Plaza. If skateboarding is prohibited here, we predict that business in Central Plaza will return to its previously high levels."

Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation is likely to have the predicted result. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.