

Fast Food: Who's to Blame?

Reading selections for this module:

Brownlee, Shannon. "It's Portion Distortion That Makes America Fat." *Sacramento Bee*. 5 Jan. 2003.

Barboza, David. "If You Pitch It, They Will Eat." *New York Times*. 3 Aug. 2003.

Weintraub, Daniel. "The Battle Against Fast Food Begins in the Home." *Sacramento Bee*. 17 Dec. 2002.

Zinczenko, David. "Don't Blame the Eater." *New York Times*. 23 Nov. 2002.

Ching, Roberta. Letters to the editor in response to "Don't Blame the Eater." 2003.

Reading Rhetorically

Prereading

Activity 1

Getting Ready to Read

Now that you have brainstormed words that you associate with french fries from a fast-food restaurant, write for 10 minutes on this topic:

Who's at fault for America's growing weight problem?

Activity 2

Surveying the Text

Before you read Brownlee's "Portion Distortion" and Barboza's "If You Pitch It," discuss the following questions.

1. What do the titles, "It's Portion Distortion That Makes America Fat" and "If You Pitch It, They Will Eat," tell you about the authors' positions on who is responsible for America's growing weight problem?
2. What do you think is the purpose of these articles?
3. "Portion Distortion" was published in *The Sacramento Bee*, and "If You Pitch It" was published in *The New York Times*. What similarities do you think the articles might have? What differences? Do you think they will be equally reliable?
4. What else can you tell about the articles just by looking at them?

When you read Weintraub, Zinczenko, and the letters to the editor, discuss the following questions.

Activity 2 (Continued)

1. On the basis of the title of his article, what do you think Weintraub's position will be? In what ways do you think his article will be like those of Brownlee and Barboza? In what ways do you think it will be different? What do you think his purpose is?
2. On the basis of the title of his article, what do you think Zinczenko's position will be? Which of the other authors do you think he might agree with?
3. What do you expect is the purpose of the letters to the editor written in response to Zinczenko? How will they be different from Zinczenko's article?
4. What else can you tell about the letters just by looking at them?

Activity 3

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Discuss the following items about Brownlee's article, "Portion Distortion," and Barboza's article, "If You Pitch It."

1. Read the first three and the last paragraphs of Brownlee's article. What is the point of comparing burgers, fries, and cigarettes? What arguments do you think she will make?
2. Read the first three and the last paragraph of Barboza's article. According to Barboza, who is responsible for America's weight problem? What arguments do you think he is going to make?
3. Who is the intended audience for these articles? How do you know?
4. What information and ideas are the authors likely to draw on to convince you of their positions?
5. Reword the titles and subtitles and turn them into questions for you to answer after you have read the full articles.

Now discuss the following items about Weintraub's "The Battle Against Fast Food," Zinczenko's "Don't Blame the Eater," and the letters to the editor.

1. Read the first two and the last paragraphs of Weintraub's article. According to Weintraub, who is responsible for America's obesity problem? What arguments do you think he will make?
2. How do you think he will respond to the arguments raised by Brownlee and Barboza?
3. Read the first two and the last paragraphs of Zinczenko's article. Why does he bring up Jay Leno's monologue? According to Zinczenko, who is responsible for America's obesity problem? What arguments do you think he will make?
4. Zinczenko and Weintraub both argue in part from personal experience. How do their viewpoints differ?
5. Read the last paragraph of each of the letters to the editor. In each case, identify who the writer thinks is to blame. How do you know?

Activity 4

Introducing Key Vocabulary

Semantic Map

Your teacher will divide you into groups and assign a word to your group. Your teacher will give categories that relate to the word or ask you to create the categories. You will list specific examples for each category as a group.

Activity 5

Assessing Key Vocabulary

Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart

Word	Definition	Know It Well	Have Heard of It	Don't Know It
Vocabulary from Brownlee's "Portion Distortion" and Barboza's "If You Pitch It"				
portion	<i>a serving of food</i>			
distortion				
manipulation				
revenue				
induce				
promotional				
marketing				
class-action				
proliferation				
Vocabulary from Weintraub's "The Battle Against Fast Food"				
epidemic				
step up to the plate				
face up to the fact				

Activity 5
(Continued)

Word	Definition	Know It Well	Have Heard of It	Don't Know It
Vocabulary from Weintraub's "The Battle Against Fast Food"				
crunched data				
implement				
prevalence				
incentives				
sloth				
opiate				
purveyors				
Vocabulary from Zinzchenko's "Don't Blame the Eater" and the letters to the editor				
latchkey kid				
prepared food				
alternatives				
launching				
vulnerable				
litigious				
liability				
entitled				
defendant				
plaintiff				
clogging				
credibility				

Reading

Activity 6

First Reading

Read each article as your teacher assigns it. As you read, think about the predictions you made. You may notice words you worked with in the previous activities. As you look at the words, think about personal connections you can make with them and with the other words. Group them together if they relate.

Activity 7

Rereading the Text

Your teacher will divide the class into two groups. If you are in Group A, you are assigned Brownlee’s “Portion Distortion.” If you are in Group B, you are assigned Barboza’s “If You Pitch It.”

Group A

Now that you know what “Portion Distortion” is about, answer the following questions:

1. Think back to your original predictions. Which were right? Which did you have to modify as you read “Portion Distortion”?
2. What is the main idea of “Portion Distortion”? According to Brownlee, who is to blame for America’s obesity problem? Underline or highlight the sentence that most clearly indicates who is to blame.
3. What does Brownlee think is the solution to the problem?

Group B

Now that you know what “If You Pitch It” is about, answer the following questions:

1. Think back to your original predictions. Which were right? Which did you have to modify as you read “If You Pitch It”?
 2. What is the main idea of “If You Pitch It”? Underline or highlight the sentence that most clearly indicates the main idea.
 3. What does Barboza think is the solution to the problem?
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Activity 8

Annotating the Text

Group A

Reread Brownlee’s “Portion Distortion,” and annotate it as you go along. Underline, highlight, draw arrows, and write comments in the left-hand margin about the main ideas, questions or objections, and connections between the ideas. Write your reactions to what Brownlee says in the right-hand margin.

Compare your annotations with those of a classmate in Group A. Then, if you choose, revise your annotations.

Activity 8
(Continued)

Group B

Reread Barboza’s “If You Pitch It” and annotate it as you go along. Underline, highlight, draw arrows, and write comments in the left-hand margin about the main ideas, questions or objections, and connections between the ideas. Write your reactions to what Barboza says in the right-hand margin.

Compare your annotations with those of a classmate in Group B. Then, if you choose, revise your annotations.

Activity 9

Looking Closely at Language

Answer the following questions:

1. According to Zinczenko’s “Don’t Blame the Eater,” why are kids suing McDonald’s?
2. According to Zinczenko, what are the choices for American kids to get an affordable meal? Use the word “option” in your answer.
3. What causes 30 percent of the new cases of childhood diabetes in America?
4. Give an example of an alternative to fast food. How easy is it for kids to purchase that alternative?
5. Do people who buy fast food know how many calories they are eating? Use the word “consume” or “consumer” in your answer.
6. What do you think of kids who file lawsuits against the fast-food industry?
7. Do you agree with Zinczenko that the fast-food industry is vulnerable?
8. Do you make informed choices when you buy fast food?

Activity 10

Considering the Structure of the Text

Reread Zinczenko’s “Don’t Blame the Eater,” and then do the following:

- Draw a line across the page where the introduction ends. Is it after the first paragraph, or are there more introductory paragraphs? How do you know?
- Draw a line across the page where the conclusion begins. Is it the last paragraph, or are there several concluding paragraphs? How do you know?
- Discuss in groups or as a class why the lines were drawn where they were. In this activity, think and reasoning about organizational structure is more important than agreeing on where the lines should be drawn.
- Further divide the body of the text into sections by topics (what each section is about).

Activity 10 (Continued)

- Write a short description of what each section is about, what it says about that topic, and why the writer put it there (the rhetorical function of the section).

Now answer the following questions:

- How does each section affect the reader? What is the writer trying to accomplish?
- What does each section say? What is the content?
- Which section is the most developed?
- Which section is the least developed? Does it need more development?
- Which section is the most persuasive? The least persuasive?
- On the basis of your chart of the text, what do you think is the main argument? Is that argument explicit or implicit?

Make a map of the ideas in the article by doing the following:

- Draw a circle in the center of the page and label it with the text's main idea.
- Record the text's supporting ideas on branches that connect to the central idea.
- Ask yourself how the ideas are related to one another.

Compare your map with a partner's. Make any changes needed to make your map reflect the ideas of the article more accurately.

Activity 11

Revisiting Key Vocabulary

Discuss the denotations (literal meaning) and connotations (the feelings or ideas a word suggests) of these words from Barboza's "If You Pitch It":

- blitzkrieg
- perverts (verb)
- assault
- threatening
- lock out

What does the use of these words imply about the author's view of fast-food marketing?

If you are in Group A, work with a Group A member to identify "loaded" words in Brownlee's "Portion Distortion."

If you are in Group B, work with a Group B member to identify other "loaded" words in Barboza's "If You Pitch It."

Now share with the class the words you have found.

Activity 12

Refining Key Vocabulary**Getting Ready to Write**

This exercise is designed to help you become aware of not only the word meanings but of word forms as well.

1. Some critics of the fast-food industry _____ that it intentionally tries to make us eat too much.
2. Increasing _____ sizes while keeping costs down induces customers to eat more.
3. Parents are _____ for making sure their children eat nutritious food and get enough exercise.
4. The lack of physical education in the schools is contributing to the epidemic of childhood _____.
5. It's the fault of parents who let their children eat _____ food.
6. We shouldn't _____ junk food until we encourage more personal responsibility for one's own health.
7. _____ for fast food should carry warning labels such as those for tobacco and alcohol.
8. Fast-food restaurants need to _____ nutrition information to consumers.

Postreading

Activity 13

Summarizing and Responding**Group A**

Write a summary of Brownlee's "Portion Distortion," following the guidelines in the Peer Response to Summary form. Then write your response to Brownlee's views.

Now exchange your summary/response with a partner from Group B. Use the Peer Response form to evaluate your partner's summary/response to "If You Pitch It."

Group B

Write a summary of Barboza's "If You Pitch It," following the guidelines in the Peer Response to Summary form. Then write your response to Barboza's views.

Now exchange your summary/response with a partner from Group A. Use the Peer Response form to evaluate your partner's summary/response to "Portion Distortion."

Peer Response to Summary

1. Does the writer include the author's name in the first sentence of the summary? Yes _____

Writer: Include the author's name. No _____

2. Does the writer include the title of the essay in the first sentence of the summary? Yes _____

Writer: Include the title of the essay. No _____

Is the title in quotation marks? Yes _____

Writer: Punctuate the title using quotation marks. No _____

3. Does the first sentence clearly state the main idea of the article? Yes _____

Writer: State the main idea in the first sentence. Make sure it is clear and accurate. No _____

You can improve your first sentence by _____

4. Does the writer include all of the important ideas or supporting points from the essay? Yes _____

Writer: You left out an important point (specify which): No _____

5. Does the writer use his/her own words? Yes _____

Writer: You used the author's words instead of your own. (Indicate where—give paragraph or line number.) No _____

6. Does the writer keep his/her own opinions out of the summary? Yes _____

Writer: You mentioned your opinion in the summary. (Indicate where—give paragraph or line number.) No _____

Remember to save your opinion for your response!
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Activity 14

Thinking Critically

Think about the following questions, and then write your answers.

Questions about Logic (Logos)

1. Which article is the most convincing?
2. What are the major claims presented in that article?
3. Are there claims in the article that are weak or unsupported? What are they?
4. What other counterarguments could the author consider?
5. Has the author left out an argument on purpose?

Questions about the Writer (Ethos)

1. What is the author's background?
2. Is this author knowledgeable? Smart? Successful?
3. What does the author's style and language tell you about him or her?
4. Do you trust this author? Why or why not?
5. Do you think this author is deceptive? Why or why not?
6. Do you think this author is serious? Why or why not?

Questions about Emotions (Pathos)

1. How does the article affect you? Which parts?
2. Do you think the author is trying to manipulate your emotions? How?
3. Do your emotions conflict with your logical interpretation of the arguments?
4. Does the author use humor? How does this affect your acceptance of his or her ideas?

Writing Rhetorically

Prewriting

Activity 15

Reading the Assignment**On-Demand Writing Assignment**

You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Explain Weintraub's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position by providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading. Your essay should be as well-organized and carefully written as you can make it.

As Americans add pounds, critics are increasingly blaming the fast-food industry. Teenagers have filed lawsuits blaming McDonald's for their health problems, and a public health

Activity 15
(Continued)

group in California has asked the governor to declare childhood obesity a state of emergency. But parents—not the fast-food companies, not the government—are in the best position to fight the epidemic of overweight children. Parents are responsible for teaching kids healthy eating and exercise habits. Parents are to blame if they let kids eat unhealthy foods and sit in front of the television or computer for hours at a time. We have laws against parents leaving a loaded weapon where children can find and use it to hurt themselves or others. It’s time to get parents to take the same responsibility to protect their children from unhealthy foods and lack of exercise.

Adapted from Daniel Weintraub’s
“The Battle Against Fast Food Begins in the Home”
The Sacramento Bee, December 17, 2002

Explain Weintraub’s argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Take the following steps for this exercise:

- Read the assignment carefully.
- Decide which issue you are going to discuss.
- Discuss the purpose of the assignment. What will you try to accomplish in your essay?

Activity 16

Getting Ready to Write

As you think about what you will write, answer the following questions about the passage included in the writing assignment.

1. What are the author’s major claims?
2. Which claim is the strongest? The weakest? Has he or she left any out?
3. How credible is the author on this topic?
4. How does the argument affect you emotionally?
5. Has the author tried to manipulate your emotions? How?

Activity 17

Formulating a Working Thesis

Writing down a tentative thesis at this point is a good habit to develop in your writing process. Your thesis should be a complete sentence and can be revised several times. But a focused thesis statement will keep your writing on track.

Record your responses to the following questions in preparation for writing your tentative thesis statement:

Activity 17 (Continued)

- What specific question will your essay answer? What is your response to this question? (This is your tentative thesis.)
- What support have you found for your thesis?
- What evidence have you found for this support? For example, you can use facts, statistics, quotes from authorities, personal experience, anecdotes, stories, scenarios, and examples.
- How much background information do your readers need to understand your topic and thesis?
- If readers were to disagree with your thesis or the validity of your support, what would they say? How would you address their concerns (what would you say to them)?

Now draft a possible thesis for your essay.

Writing

Activity 18

Composing a Draft

When you write an argument essay, choose an approach to the subject that matters to you. If you have strong feelings, you will find it much easier to gather evidence and convince your readers of your point of view. Keep in mind, however, that your readers might feel just as strongly about the opposite side of the issue. The following guidelines will help you write a good argument essay.

1. State your opinion on the topic in your thesis statement. To write a thesis statement for an argument essay, you must take a stand for or against an action or an idea. In other words, your thesis statement should be debatable—a statement that can be argued or challenged and will not be met with agreement by everyone who reads it. Your thesis statement should introduce your subject and state your opinion about that subject.

Daniel Weintraub’s thesis is the third line of the passage: “But parents—not the fast food companies, not the government—are in the best position to fight the epidemic of overweight children.” This is Weintraub’s position, and it is a debatable thesis. Some other statements about fast food and the epidemic of overweight children would not be debatable and therefore would not be effective theses.

Not debatable: The number of obese children has more than doubled since 1980.

Not debatable: Many people blame the fast-food industry for making them fat.

The first example is a statistic (a fact based on research). It is not an opinion and cannot be used as a thesis. The second example is a statement about other people’s opinions, but it is not the writer’s opinion.

Activity 18
(Continued)

2. Take your audience into consideration as you write your essay.

When you write your essay, assume that your audience is well-informed generally but may not have the specific knowledge that you have gained by reading and discussion as you moved through the Fast Food unit. You need to provide your readers with information and your sources for that information whether you are citing statistics or paraphrasing someone else's argument. In a true timed-writing situation, you will not have access to sources, but you can still refer to information you learned in a class, read in an article, or found on a Web site. Just be sure to mention where you found it (not a formal reference but an acknowledgment that it comes from another source).

You may also want to let your readers know who you are. Think about the information that Zinzchenko provided about his development from "a typical mid-1980s latchkey kid" to a writer for a health magazine. That information helped us to decide how credible his opinions were. In the same way, you can let your readers know, for example, that you are a high school student so that when you talk about the easy access you have to junk food at school, they know you are in a good position to know this.

You also need to assume that some of your readers will disagree with you (remember, your thesis is going to be debatable). If you acknowledge some possible alternative positions and explain why they are not as strong as your own, that will strengthen your argument. For example, Weintraub acknowledges that some people blame fast-food companies and other people blame the government for America's weight problem. He gets those arguments on the table before he goes on to his own argument that parents are the ones who bear the greatest blame.

3. Choose evidence that supports your thesis statement. Evidence is probably the most important factor in writing an argument essay. Without solid evidence, your essay is nothing more than opinion; with it, your essay can be powerful and persuasive. If you supply convincing evidence, your readers will not only understand your position but may agree with it.

Evidence can consist of facts, statistics, statements from authorities, and examples or personal stories. Examples and personal stories can be based on your own observations, experiences, and reading, but your opinions are not evidence. Other strategies, such as comparison/contrast, definition, and cause/effect, can be particularly useful in building an argument. Use any combination of evidence and writing strategies that supports your thesis statement.

In the readings for the Fast Food assignment, you can find several different types of evidence. Here are some examples:

Activity 18 (Continued)

Facts

As early as 1972, McDonald’s introduced its large-size fries (Brownlee, paragraph 13).

An existing law requires an average of at least 20 minutes per day of physical education (Weintraub, paragraph 9).

Statistics

Since 1980, the number of obese children has more than doubled to 16 percent (Barboza, paragraph 9).

About 20 percent of the nation’s schools now offer brand-name fast food (Barboza, paragraph 21).

Diabetes accounts for \$100 billion a year in health-care costs today (Zinczenko, paragraph 5).

Statements from Authorities

Statement by Lisa Young, a nutritionist at New York University (Brownlee, paragraph 21).

Quote by Susan Linn, a Harvard psychologist who studies children’s marketing (Barboza, paragraph 5).

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Barboza, paragraph 9).

Examples and Personal Stories

Zinczenko’s personal story (Zinczenko, paragraphs 2–4)

- 4. Anticipate opposing points of view.** In addition to stating and supporting your position, anticipating and responding to opposing views are important. Presenting only your side of the argument leaves half the story untold—the opposition’s half. If you acknowledge that there are opposing arguments and answer them, your argument is stronger.

In paragraph 13 of “The Battle Against Fast Food Begins at Home,” Weintraub acknowledges the argument that busy parents, especially single parents, don’t have the time to cook healthy meals or the energy to restrict TV and video games. He counters the argument in the next paragraph where he describes the strategies used in his own home. By acknowledging the argument (more fully developed in Zinczenko’s opinion piece), he increases his own credibility.

- 5. Find some common ground.** Pointing out common ground between you and your opponent is also an effective strategy. Common ground refers to points of agreement between two opposing positions. For example, one person might be in favor of gun control and another strongly opposed. But they might find common ground—agreement—in the need to keep guns out of teenagers’ hands. Locating some common ground is possible in almost every situation. When you state in your essay that you agree with your opponent on certain points, your reader sees you as a fair person.

Activity 18 (Continued)

Weintraub advocates making individuals responsible for their children's health rather than having government intervene, but he suggests a middle ground between individual responsibility and government intervention. He advocates having health agencies do "more to encourage these kinds of simple policies in the home" (paragraph 16).

- 6. Maintain a reasonable tone.** Just as you probably wouldn't win an argument by shouting or making mean or nasty comments, don't expect your readers to respond well to such tactics. Keep the "voice" of your essay calm and sensible. Your readers will be much more open to what you have to say if they think you are a reasonable person.

Weintraub maintains a reasonable tone throughout his article. He believes that parents are endangering their children's health and makes the analogy to leaving a loaded gun where children can use it, but he doesn't say parents are stupid or lazy. Instead, he suggests that they are uninformed, and he acknowledges the difficulties they face in raising healthy children. We are more ready to accept his conclusion that more education is needed because he makes a reasonable argument rather than a strident appeal.

- 7. Organize your essay so that it presents your position as effectively as possible.** By the end of your essay, you want your audience to agree with you. So you want to organize your essay in such a way that your readers can easily follow it. The number of your paragraphs will vary depending on the nature of your assignment, but the following outline shows the order in which the features of an argument essay are most effective:

Introduction

Background information
Introduction of subject
Statement of your opinion

Body Paragraphs

Common ground
Lots of evidence (both logical and emotional)
Opposing point of view
Response to opposing point of view

Conclusion

Restatement of your position
Call for action or agreement

The arrangement of your evidence in an argument essay depends to a great extent on your readers' opinions. Most arguments will be organized from general to particular, from particular to general, or from one extreme to another. When you know that your readers already agree with you, arranging your details from general to particular or from most to least important is usually most effective. With

Activity 18 (Continued)

this order, you are building on your readers' agreement and loyalty as you explain your thinking on the subject.

If you suspect that your audience does not agree with you, reverse the organization of your evidence and arrange it from particular to general or from least to most important. In this way, you can take your readers step by step through your reasoning in an attempt to get them to agree with you.

Weintraub's essay follows the general outline just presented. Here is a skeleton outline of his essay.

Introduction

Background about the recommendations of the California Center for Public Health Advocacy's recommendations to reduce childhood obesity.

Weintraub's own position that parents, with some help, can and should teach their children healthy eating and exercise habits.

Body Paragraphs

The Center's report

- Data on childhood obesity
- Analysis of causes: fast food, portion sizes, junk food at school, advertising of junk food, and lack of PE
- Recommendations: required PE, nutritional standards for schools, working water fountains

Recommendations ineffective unless parents accept their roles:

- Loaded gun analogy
- Reasons parents resort to fast food and TV
- Strategies used in the Weintraub home: limit junk food at home; eat home-cooked meals, limit TV time; encourage organized sports and outdoor activities

Conclusion

Organizations such as the Center for Public Health Advocacy need to encourage parents to take an active role in monitoring their children's eating and exercise habits.

Activity 19

Organizing the Essay

The following items are traditional parts of all essays:

- An introduction (usually one or two paragraphs) that "hooks" the reader and provides a thesis statement or road map for the reader
- The body (as many paragraphs as necessary), which supports the thesis statement point by point
- A conclusion (usually only one paragraph) that summarizes the main points and explains the significance of the argument

The number of paragraphs in an essay depends on the nature and complexity of your argument.

Activity 19 (Continued)

Here are some additional hints for helping you organize your thoughts:

Introduction

- You might want to include the following in your introductory paragraphs:
 - A “hook” to get the reader’s attention
 - Background information the audience may need
 - A thesis statement, along with some indication of how the essay will be developed (“forecasting”). *Note:* A thesis statement states the topic of the essay and the writer’s position on that topic. You may choose to sharpen or narrow the thesis at this point.

Body

- Paragraphs that present support of the thesis statement with topic sentences supported by evidence. (See “Getting Ready to Write.”)
- Paragraphs that include different points of view or address counter-arguments.
- Paragraphs or sentences where you address those points of view by doing the following:
 - Refuting them
 - Acknowledging them but showing how your argument is better
 - Granting them altogether but showing they are irrelevant
- Evidence that you have considered the values, beliefs, and assumptions of your audience as well as your own values, beliefs, and assumptions. Evidence that you have found some common ground that appeals to the various points of view of readers is also necessary.

Conclusion

- A final paragraph (or paragraphs) that includes a solid argument to support the thesis and indicates the significance of the argument—the “so what” factor

Activity 20

Developing the Content

Here are a few highlights about developing your essay:

- Most body paragraphs consist of a topic sentence (or an implied topic sentence) and concrete details to support that topic sentence.
- Body paragraphs give evidence in the form of examples, illustrations, statistics, and so on and analyze the meaning of the evidence.
- Each topic sentence is usually directly related to the thesis statement.
- No set number of paragraphs makes up an essay.
- The thesis dictates and focuses the content of an essay.

Revising and Editing

Activity 21

Revising the Draft

You now need to work with the organization and development of your draft to make sure that your essay is as effective as possible.

Peer Group Work

In groups of three or four, each of you should read his or her essay aloud to other members of the group. Then complete Part I of the Evaluation Form for each essay.

Paired Work

Work in pairs to decide how you want to revise the problems that group members identified.

Individual Work

Revise the draft based on the feedback you have received and the decisions you have made with your partners. Consider these additional questions for individual work:

- Have I responded to the assignment?
- What is my purpose for this essay?
- What should I keep? What is most effective?
- What should I add? Where do I need more details, examples, and other evidence to support my point?
- What could I get rid of? Did I use irrelevant details? Was I repetitive?
- What should I change? Are parts of my essay confusing or contradictory? Do I need to explain my ideas more fully?
- What should I rethink? Was my position clear? Did I provide enough analysis to convince my readers?
- How is my tone? Am I too overbearing or too firm? Do I need qualifiers?
- Have I addressed differing points of view?
- Does my conclusion show the significance of my essay?
- Have I used key vocabulary words correctly to represent the ideas from the article? Have I used words that refer to specific facts from the text?

Activity 22

Editing the Draft

You now need to work with the grammar and mechanics of your draft to make sure that your use of language is effective and conforms to the guidelines of standard written English.

Individual Work

Edit your draft based on the information you have received from your instructor or a tutor. Use the editing checklist provided by your teacher. The suggestions below will also help you edit your own work.

Activity 22
(Continued)

Editing Guidelines for Individual Work

- If possible, set your essay aside for 24 hours before rereading to find errors.
- If possible, read your essay out loud so you can hear your errors.
- Focus on individual words and sentences rather than overall meaning. Take a sheet of paper and cover everything except the line you are reading. Then touch your pencil to each word as you read.
- With the help of your teacher, figure out your own pattern of errors—the most serious and frequent errors you make.
- Only look for one type of error at a time. Then go back and look for a second type, and if necessary, a third.
- Use the dictionary to check spelling and confirm that you've chosen the right word for the context.

Activity 23

Reflecting on the Writing

When you have completed your own essay, answer these six questions.

1. What was most difficult about this assignment?
2. What was easiest?
3. What did you learn about arguing by completing this assignment?
4. What do you think are the strengths of your argument? Place a wavy line by the parts of your essay that you feel are very good.
5. What are the weaknesses, if any, of your paper? Place an X by the parts of your essay you would like help with. Write any questions you have in the margin.
6. What did you learn from this assignment about your own writing process—about preparing to write, writing the first draft, revising, and editing?