

The Great Debate: Who do you blame?

W6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Assignment Prompt: For this assignment you will write an argumentative mini-essay with your individual interpretation of whom or what is to blame for the sinking of the Titanic. In essence you will be evaluating the crew's actions on the ship, the ship's safety, and other theories.

The Process

1. Pre-writing: Before you begin your piece, you must become an expert on the topic. To do that, you will be reading and viewing information related to a variety of theories.

2. Brainstorming/Gathering Information: Decide on your stance. What is your claim? Gather your evidence from information that you have seen and read and complete a graphic organizer to collect your FEED CATS (Facts, Examples, Exaggeration, Details, Cause and Effect, Anecdote, Testimony, Statistics) to support your claim.

3. Planning and Drafting: Create a graphic organizer to organize your writing. You will have an introduction, body and conclusion. Remember you are trying to be persuasive and effective so make sure that your essay includes the three important elements of argument. (ethos, logos, pathos) Your argument should have a logic sequence and your textual evidence should be embedded into your body paragraphs.

Outline and Writing Guide

- ✓ **Introductory Sentence(s): (First Impression):** Grab the reader's attention. State your claim. Provide your reasons.
- ✓ **Body Paragraphs (Keep me Interested):** Write AT LEAST 2 paragraphs. Restate your claim as you transition. Elaborate on your reasons using the textual evidence (FEED CATS) that you have collected by including the textual evidence and then explaining how it relates to your position. Tie your ideas in each paragraph together and provide a closing sentence that wraps up the paragraph.
- ✓ **Conclusion Sentence(s): (Lasting Impression):** This is your final chance to present your view. Summarize the argument yet leave the reader with a compelling or memorable thought beyond what you have already mentioned. Something that will effectively get your point across.

4. Schedule: Jan. 5-7th Research Stations

Jan. 11-15th Computer lab (Mini-lessons daily and composing)

Friday 1/15: "Mini-essay" is due.

The Great Debate: Who do you blame?

W6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Argumentative Writing Rubric

Assignment Prompt: For this assignment you will write an argumentative essay with your individual interpretation of whom or what is to blame for the sinking of the Titanic. In essence, you will be evaluating the crew's actions on the ship, the ship's safety, and other theories.

Writing Features and Traits Assessed	4 (Exemplary)	3(Proficient)	2(Developing)	1(Beginning)
Focus and Organization (The clarity and flow of ideas that make the argument read well.)	A claim is stated by taking a clear position on a topic. The argument is organized in a logical order and includes transitional phrases, to clarify and link parts of the essay.	A claim is stated by taking a position on a topic. The argument is presented in order and uses transitional phrases.	A claim is stated. The argument is presented in order. Uses minimal transitional phrases.	A claim is not clearly stated or logically organized. Uses no transitional phrases.
Language (The tone, style, vocabulary, and quality of writing, including word choice.)	Establishes and maintains a tone and style appropriate to the genre or argument. Uses key terms, writing techniques and advanced vocabulary.	Establishes a tone and style appropriate to the genre of argument. Uses key terms and average vocabulary.	Establishes a tone but it is not appropriate to the genre or audience. Uses a few terms and vocabulary that are relevant.	Tone and style are not appropriate. Uses no key terms or vocabulary that is relevant.
Elaboration and Development (The degree in which the claim is elaborated and explained by specific details, descriptions, and textual evidence.)	Provides accurate evidence from relevant sources which are supported by significant FEED CATS. Includes direct quotations and textual evidence that enhance and support the claim.	Provides evidence that is generally supported by FEED CATS and includes information from relevant sources. Includes at least one direct quotation and textual evidence that enhances or supports the claim.	Provides some evidence that is somewhat supported by FEED CATS and includes information from a source. Includes at least one direct quotation and textual evidence.	There is little or no support. The use of sources is not evident and includes no direct quotations or textual evidence.
Conventions (Correct spelling, punctuation, and usage)	Errors are impeccable or minor and very rare!	Errors are minor.	Errors are distracting and repeated.	Errors prevent a reader from understanding the argument.

Score Key:

A	B	C	D	F
16=100	12=88	9=79	5=67	Does not turn in=0
15=97	11=85	8=77	4=64	
14=94	10=82	7=73		
13=91		6=70		

The Great Debate: Who do you blame?

W6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Gather Evidence to Support Your Claim.

Who do you blame? _____ Captain _____

Facts (Statements that are true and provable.)	1. 2. 3.
Examples (A specific person, thing, or event that demonstrates your point.)	1. 2. 3.
Exaggeration (A statement that gives an extreme example to support the key idea. Does not have to be entirely accurate.)	1.
Details (Specific things that make your main idea or key point clear by showing how all pieces fit together.)	1. 2. 3.
Cause/Effect (A statement that illustrates how this detail will affect other outcomes or happenings.) or Compare/Contrast (a statement that relates the idea to something else saying its like ___ or not like ___.)	Because _____ this happened Or It is like _____
Anecdote (A story to explain something and give more personal insight to support the main idea.)	1.
Testimony (A personal statement from someone that tells how they were affected by the main idea.)	_____ said, " _____ _____ _____ ___"
Statistics (A fact this is often stated numerically.)	1. 2.

The Great Debate: Who do you blame?

W6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Planning Sheet: Argument Boxes

Organize your body paragraphs with the boxes below. Each box should have a reason and then at least 3 pieces of evidence to support your reason.

Main Claim (thesis statement): 4-5 sentences

Reason/sub-claim Transition words:	Reason/sub-claim Transition words:	Reason/sub-claim Transition words:	Conclusion: (4-5 sentences) Restate thesis and topic sentences here - make your point clear)
Evidence (supporting details from FEEDCATS): 1. 2. 3. 4.	Evidence (supporting details from FEEDCATS): 1. 2. 3. 4.	Evidence (supporting details from FEEDCATS): 1. 2. 3. 4.	

The Great Debate: Who do you blame?

W6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Planning Sheet: Paragraph Boxes: Organize your mini-essay with the boxes below.

INTRODUCTION:

Main Claim:

PARAGRAPH 2

Topic Sentence

Support (FEED CATS)

Concluding Sentence

PARAGRAPH 3

Topic Sentence

Support (FEED CATS)

Concluding Sentence

PARAGRAPH 4

Topic Sentence

Support (FEED CATS)

Concluding Sentence

CONCLUSION:

Summarizing statement and Leave us THINKING!

The Great Debate: Who do you blame?

W6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

PEER REVIEW WITH PERFECTION!

1. Read the essay.
 2. Write at least one compliment.
(One thing the writer does well.)
 3. Complete the "Personal and Peer Review Sheet" and "Check the Strategies Chart."
 4. Write at least one suggestion for improvement. (One thing the writer could do better.)

The Great Debate: Who do you blame?

W6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Peer review: Take a look at the argumentative piece from The Great Debate. What strategies does the author use to try to persuade you? Read through each strategy to decide whether the author used that strategy by writing yes or no in the second column. If you write yes, then explain how the author used the strategy.