

Social Studies 10-1: The Position Paper

Consider the Question

Do you understand the question? For Social Studies 10-1 position papers, the questions are always centered around the influences of Globalization, namely Identity, History, Economics and the Environment. You are always presented with a source that is followed by a question, such as “To what extent does globalization contribute to economic sustainability for all people’s of the world?” In other words, it is trying to say should we accept or reject the perspective in the source, or should we take a position somewhere in the middle? In order to answer this question, you will need to:

- Review your knowledge about globalization
- Analyze the perspective in the source
- Establish a position (your thesis statement)
- Think of arguments and evidence to support your position

Here is an example:

“Millions of people a day are better off [now] than they would have been without those trends and developments, without globalization, without the developments of increased international commerce, and that’s all [for] the good. And very few people have been harmed by it.”

Dick Cheney Former U.S. Vice President

Followed by the question:

“To what extent does globalization contribute to economic sustainability for all people’s of the world?”

Establish a Position

Your position must be clear. That doesn’t mean you have to argue completely for or against the perspective presented in the source, but you do have to say how much you think it should be embraced. No matter what position you take, you must support it in the body of your essay.

Possible answers are:

- “To the full extent”
- “To a great extent”
- “To a certain extent”
- “To the extent that...”
- “To no extent”

Support your position

After you have formed a position, think about how you will defend it.

- What are the main reasons you support or reject the ideological perspective presented in the source?
- What information will help you defend your position?
 - ❖ Focus on values, principles and perspectives discussed in class that will support your position.
 - ❖ Name drop (in context) to validate the values, principles and perspectives you are defending or promoting.
- What specific examples can be used to support your position? Your essay will be evaluated based on your use of argument and the evidence you present. Evidence can be theoretical, historical, contemporary or current.
- Briefly acknowledge the opponents of your position and refute them in an appropriate manner.

Organize your Ideas

Before you begin actually writing your essay, organize your opinions, facts, and examples so that they make sense. An outline or a graphic organizer will help you order your thoughts.

Using your organizer as a guide, write the first rough draft of your essay. Do not worry about spelling and grammar just yet. Get your thoughts and information on paper while following your organizational structure.

Write the essay

It must include an opening paragraph in which you introduce the key elements of the concept being discussed, a strong thesis, several supporting paragraphs in which your arguments, evidence and examples are presented, and a concluding paragraph.

Revise the essay

As you read over your first draft, ask yourself the following questions:

- Did I establish a clear position?
- Do my arguments make sense?
- Do the evidence I presented support my position? Are they facts or opinions?
- Are my ideas logically organized?
- What about spelling, grammar and word usage?

Revise and edit your essay based on these questions. If you are using a word processor, make sure to do a spell check and grammar check. If you are not sure, ask for help.

For *Assignment II: Position Paper*, write with a purpose. Your response should:

- contain a clear analysis of the source
- present argumentation that is orderly, logical, and thorough
- use appropriate evidence to develop and support your position
- include values, perspectives, characteristics and/or principles that validate your position.

Ask yourself these questions as you proofread your work for *Assignment II: Position Paper*:

- Have I fully analyzed and demonstrated an understanding of the statement?
- Is my argumentation consistent, logical, and thorough?
- Is the evidence presented accurate and relevant?
- Is my writing organized and easy to understand?
- Did I use correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar?
- Did I use vocabulary correctly and accurately?
- Will my response convince the reader that my position is valid?

Outline: Position Paragraph (MEAL)

Introduction (~5 sentences)

- HOOK-- General statement; introduce topic
 - If there is a term that requires definition, do so here.
- Introduce and interpret source
- Thesis
 - Topic + position + 3 arguments
 - The 3 arguments should be in the order of your body paragraphs

Body Paragraphs (6-9 sentences)

- **M**-main idea aka topic sentence
 - 1 sentence
 - Topic + (proving) point
 - The topic sentence should present your argument.
- **E**-evidence/example
 - 1-2 sentences
 - Evidence to support your argument.
 - Direct quotation or paraphrase—ensure either are cited/referenced
- **A**-analysis
 - 3-4 sentences
 - Your analysis of the evidence in support of your argument
 - Why is your evidence/example important? How does it relate to the topic? How does it prove my point?
- **L**-link
 - 1-2 sentences
 - Main idea [rephrased] + Evidence
 - The link also acts as a transition to the next paragraph
- ❖ You may also include a counterargument and rebuttal in at least one of the body paragraphs. The purpose is to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate why *your* argument has more leverage.

Conclusion (~5 sentences)

- Rephrase thesis statement [beginning with listing your three arguments]
- Summarize 3xMain body paragraphs
 - 1 sentence/argument; rephrase linking sentence as it already draws from your example
- One last point about the topic...end with a BANG!

*References -- APA format

Outline: Position Paragraph (RIM)

Introduction (~5 sentences)

- HOOK-- General statement; introduce topic
 - If there is a term that requires definition, do so here.
- Introduce and interpret source
- Thesis
 - Topic + position + 3 arguments
 - The 3 arguments should be in the order of your body paragraphs

Body Paragraphs (6-9 sentences)

- **R**-respond directly to question aka topic sentence
 - Topic + (proving) point (1 sentence)
 - The topic sentence should present your argument.
- **I**-integrate quotation/evidence to support your argument (I.C.E.)
 - 1-2 sentences
 - Introduce your quotation/evidence
 - Cite your quotation
 - Direct quotation or paraphrase—ensure either are cited/referenced
 - Explain/Analyze your quotation (3-4 sentences)
 - Your analysis of the evidence in support of your argument
 - Why is your evidence/example important? How does it relate to the topic?
How does it prove my point?
- **M**-make connections to the *text* as a whole/world/experience
 - 1-2 sentences
 - Main idea [rephrased] + Evidence
 - The link also acts as a transition to the next paragraph
- ❖ You may also include a counterargument and rebuttal in at least one of the body paragraphs. The purpose is to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate why *your* argument has more leverage.

Conclusion (~5 sentences)

- Rephrase thesis statement [beginning with listing your three arguments]
- Summarize 3xMain body paragraphs
 - 1 sentence/argument; rephrase linking sentence as it already draws from your example
- One last point about the topic...end with a BANG!

*References -- APA format