

Position Paper: Who We Are & How We Live – Paper Guidelines

Length / Format / Final Copy

1. This paper should be written in the form of a Classical argument (see WA pg. 56). This format builds on the five paragraph essay model by adding an opposing argument and response. You should also incorporate **one essay** into your paper: the essay will either support your argument or the opposing argument. The essay should come from *The Presence of Others*.
2. This paper should reach at least three pages in length. **900 Word Minimum**
3. The final copy should follow MLA format (see *Harbrace* & WA Appendix 2)
4. To turn in final paper include the following in a folder:
 1. Prewriting
 2. Rough Draft & Revisions
 3. Peer Review
 4. Conference Worksheet
 5. Final Copy *with Works Cited*
5. The final copy of this paper is due *in-class Oct. 6th or in-office by 3:00 p.m. Oct. 7th*.

For a Successful Essay

Show awareness of audience and purpose

- Show evidence that you have developed a rhetorical strategy
- Is your message clear to the audience? Are you aware of audience needs?
- Does your thesis statement expose your purpose? Do you use a suitable tone?
- Will your audience understand your purpose via the message?
- Are you well organized? Is your essay persuasive? (be aware of logos)

Have a strong thesis

- Specific/Narrow
- Give a Claim & Reasons – not necessarily a “because clause”
- Should use a direct (at the beginning) thesis
- Be sure your thesis is argumentative
- Summarizes the argument you will make in 1 to 3 sentences
- Watch out for over-generalized statements & unnecessary phrases
- “I think” or “In my opinion” already implied

Use relevant/detailed support claims (reasons)

- Need at least three reasons backed by evidence in support of your main claim
- Each reason should be discussed in its own paragraph – if necessary you should use more than one paragraph to discuss a reason
- Support reasons should be logical, justified, and suitable
- Make sure your reasons are audience-based & accommodating – you are trying to persuade the audience, not yourself (be aware of ethos & pathos)

Provide solid evidence

- All of your support claims should be backed by clear, relevant evidence
- Evidence should come from at least one essay, as well as your opinions/ideas, & personal examples
- Be sure to offer analysis of your evidence

Respond to opposing arguments

- Summarize/discuss opposing viewpoints to your thesis claim
- Refute those arguments in favor of your thesis claim

Provide an interesting conclusion

- Recap your argument without simply restating the introductory paragraph
- End with a warning / lesson learned / call to action / anecdote / quote
- Make it clear that your claim is the “best solution”

Exhibit formal language

- Use correctness in grammar / spelling / punctuation
- Remember, this is part of your ethos – you will not be as “believable” if you say “students is” rather than “students are”
- Use strong verbs and nouns
- Language should be appropriate for the audience / your purpose / the content
- Do not write casually as if you are speaking! – don’t address reader as “you”

