

Social Studies -1 Major Writing Assignment

The purpose of the major writing assignment in Social Studies is to assess student ability and skill of interpretation and argumentation when presented with a single source related to social studies content and knowledge.

The task for this assignment is outlined as follows:

Source

Source will be given here in the form of a short quote or statement.

Assignment II

To what extent should we embrace the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source?

Write an essay in which you:

- **analyze** the source and **demonstrate** an understanding of the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source
- **establish** and **argue** a position in response to the question under discussion
- **support** your position and arguments by using evidence from your knowledge and understandings of social studies

Writing Assignment II (Major Essay) can be separated into **three tasks**:

- Interpretation and Analysis of a single Source
- Argumentation of a position taken in reference to the source given
- Presentation and development of appropriate evidence to support argument.

Task 1: Analysis of Source Perspective

The source presented will have an ideological perspective to be interpreted and analyzed. Your task will be to identify what the source is attempting to communicate and develop your understanding of the ideological perspective reflected in the source. The source will always be a single source and always be a quotation only.

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Individuals are, by nature, unique and unequal. Efforts by the state to interfere with the lives of individuals will result in a restrictive and inefficient society.

SOCIAL STUDIES -1 MAJOR WRITING ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

The following diagram outlines **5** areas of focus when interpreting and analyzing the source presented.

Focus I: Analyze the various elements of the source to determine what the source is communicating about **Grade level Ideology** . What is the intention of the creator or the purpose of the source?

Focus II: Fully explain and develop your understanding of what the source is communicating about **Grade level Ideology** .

Focus III: Link Characteristics/Principles of **Grade level Ideology** to the Source and fully develop and explain your reasoning for connecting the characteristics or principles that you have selected. (Why?)

Focus IV: Develop the **Context** of the source and fully demonstrate your understanding of **Grade level Ideology** to which the source is communicating. This is your opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned in Social Studies and your ability to connect this knowledge to the information presented in the source.

Focus V: Clearly State Your Position: This is your **thesis statement**. Your position must **clearly identify the position** of the argument you plan to take. In a simple, clear and straightforward sentence, state whether you **agree or disagree with the ideological perspective reflected in the source**.

Focus I: "Working the Source"

When presented with the source, be sure to analyze the source by writing on or highlighting the source in an attempt to identify the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source.

- Identify key social studies terminology, words, phrases that have clearly defined definitions or express a perspective, attitude, belief or value.
- Identify individuals, either specific or individuals representing a specify group.
- Identify any purpose to which the author of the source might be trying to serve.
- Identify specific ideologies that the source may be referring to or identifying. This may be presented as either criticism or support.

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- Identify any bias that may be observed in the source.
- Identify where the source may fall on the political and economic spectrum
- Identify if the source is a political or an economic source.

After you have completed Focus I, you can begin writing your essay.

Focus II: Identify the Ideological Perspective

Once you have finished “working the source”, you are ready to begin writing the essay. In paragraph form you are to analyze the source and demonstrate your understanding of the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source.

Note: Students may demonstrate their understanding of an ideological perspective(s) in one part of their essay or demonstrate their understanding of an ideological perspective(s) throughout.

Various observations may include:

- Criticizing or supporting a particular ideology associated with a particular ideology.
- Identifying an issue or problem facing a particular ideology.
- Proposing a solution to an issue facing a particular ideology.
- Suggesting or encouraging an alternative to a particular ideology.

You must communicate to the best of your ability what you have observed from the source and demonstrate your understanding of the ideological perspective the source is attempting to communicate, imply, or convey.

Note: Be sure to identify specifically what in the source has led you to your understanding.

Primers for Interpretation of Sources

Source One..., The 1st source..., The author of Source I..., The cartoonist of Source I...

suggests	enforces	is communicating
discusses	agrees	is referring to
criticizes	presents	clearly states
depicts	argues	defends
embraces	rejects	supports
shows	displays	has the perspective
brings attention to		

Focus III: Link Characteristics/Principles of Liberalism

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Included in your analysis of the source, students should consider including links to characteristics or principles of Liberalism. (grade level ideology) The analysis of the source should identify characteristics/principles of Liberalism (grade level ideology) and include a simple explanation of how/why the characteristics/principles are linked or connected to the source. Students may also wish to define the characteristics/principles selected.

What specific characteristics/principles of Liberalism (grade level ideology) does the ideological perspective of the source bring attention to and what is the source trying to communicate about these characteristics/principles?

Secondly, other than specific characteristics/principles of Liberalism (grade level ideology) other terminology associated with Liberalism (grade level ideology) can be linked to the ideological perspective of the source.

Focus III encourages students to link characteristics or principles of Liberalism (grade level ideology) to the ideological perspective reflected in the source. Doing so demonstrates a greater depth of understanding of what the source is communicating about Liberalism. (grade level ideology)

For example:

A strong central government is an easy way to overcome the selfishness of individual citizens. By implementing social programs funded by a system of taxation, the government is able to create greater social equality and opportunity for all citizens.

Common Good	Collective Responsibility	Progressive Taxation
Self Interest	Public Property	Collectivism

What ideology best fits the source above: _____

There can be no equality of opportunity if men and women and children be not shielded in their lives from the consequences of great industrial and social processes which they cannot alter, control, or singly cope with.

Self Interest	Profit Motive	Private Property
Economic Freedom	Competition	Individualism

What ideology best fits the source above: _____

Focus IV: Development of Context

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Included in your analysis, students are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding of social studies by developing the context of the ideological perspective reflected in the source. When developing the context of the source, try to analyze and include the following descriptions. Not all of the following headings will be able to be observed or identified. Remember, context is to enhance analysis of the source and demonstrate understanding of social studies knowledge.

Time Period/When:

- A specific historical event the source refers to.
- A general time period the source refers to.

Example: Great Depression, Cold War, Enlightenment, Classical/Modern Liberalism

Place or Location:

- Specific geographical location or nation.
- General region or identifiable area

Example: American, Western Society, Developing Nations, Democratic Countries, USSR

Who:

- Specific individual, thinker, philosopher
- General group of people with a similar perspective
 - ✓ *Whose ideas does the perspective represent?*
 - ✓ *Who would share this perspective?*

Example: Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Keynes, Hitler, Demand Side Economists, Luddites, Socialists, Post-Modernists, Environmentalists, Humanitarians

What:

- Specific terminology
- Atmosphere, mood, or attitude of the source perspective

Example: Progressive Tax, Trickle Down Economics, Depression, Prosperity, Anger, Dissatisfaction, ...

Other things for consideration:

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- When analyzing and interpreting the sources, be sure to state directly what in the source has led you to your analysis of the ideological perspective.
- Describe what you see in the source or key words in quotes that lead you toward your understanding of what is being communicated in the source.
- Identify and state an ideology to which the source refers.
- Do not simply copy the source or copy large sections of text from the source. This is considered cribbing and will not be considered your own ideas.

Focus V: Position Statement: Thesis Statement

Once you have analyzed the source, demonstrated your understanding of the ideological perspective(s) presented, linked characteristics/principals of liberalism (grade level ideology) the source, and developed context, you must **clearly state your position** that you intent on arguing and defending with evidence. This position statement is your thesis statement.

Thesis statement: *A thesis statement usually appears near the end of the introductory paragraph of a paper, and it offers a concise statement of the main point or claim of the essay.*

The ideological perspective reflected in the source should be **embraced/rejected**.

The author's statement as reflected in the source should be **supported/criticized**.

<i>For position/thesis statements in which you AGREE with the source perspective</i>	<i>For position/thesis statements in which you DISAGREE with the source perspective</i>
Defended	Resisted
Preserved	Abandoned
Upheld	Discouraged
Maintained	Denied
Accepted	Renounced
Endorsed	Refused/Refuted
Bolstered	Criticized
Encouraged	Disputed
Justified	Opposed
Promoted	Negated
Affirmed	Challenged
Embraced	Detested
Supported	Rejected

Position Statement Vocabulary :

Note:

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You may wish to introduce the arguments that you intend on presenting in Focus V as well. This is optional and would only identify the arguments you intend on developing in the body of your essay. No development of the argument should be included at this point.

Task Two: Argumentation of Position/Thesis

Now that you have analyzed the perspective reflected in the source and clearly stated the position you intend on defending, you must develop clear arguments to defend the position taken. **Your argumentation develops your rationale or reasons for taking your position.**

1st: Argument Introduction:

Begin the argumentation of your position/thesis with an introductory sentence relating back to the source perspective. Acknowledge the source perspective reflected and begin to develop your arguments.

For example:

The perspective of the source clearly demonstrates support for a laissez-faire capitalist economy, however.....

Supporting a mandatory voting procedure is a democracy like the source perspective clearly demonstrates may be beneficial for fixing the problems of voter apathy, however.....

2nd: Establish Argumentation

There are several different strategies that can be employed in order to formulate an effective argument. **Three different argumentation strategies are outlined in the following section.** Choose the strategy you are most comfortable with based on writing skill, knowledge of social studies and confidence in your understanding of the source perspective reflected in the source.

Strategy #1: Satisfactory Argumentation

This argument strategy is a straight forward argument that only defends your position. In order to encourage higher level critical thinking skills and therefore a more proficient grade, students should consider one of the following higher level strategies.

The Satisfactory Argument presents 3 clearly developed arguments that defend the position taken/thesis.

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Argument 1

- Develop 1st argument or reason in support of position statement/thesis
- Fully explain and detail the reason why your position taken should be supported. (convince the reader)

Argument 2

- Develop 1st argument or reason in support of position statement/thesis
- Fully explain and detail the reason why your position taken should be supported. (convince the reader)

Argument 3

- Develop 1st argument or reason in support of position statement/thesis
- Fully explain and detail the reason why your position taken should be supported. (convince the reader)

This strategy asks students to explain three advantages/positives in the defense of their position taken/thesis.

Strategy #2: Critical Thinking Strategy

This strategy demonstrates a more sophisticated and higher level of critical thinking when developing an argument. Students present two arguments that defend their position/thesis as well as a counterargument that will be criticized and destroyed.

Argument 1

- Develop 1st argument or reason in support of position statement/thesis
- Fully explain and detail the reason why your position taken should be supported. (convince the reader)

Argument 2

- Develop 1st argument or reason in support of position statement/thesis
- Fully explain and detail the reason why your position taken should be supported. (convince the reader)

Counter-argument

- Develop a Counterargument that supports a position opposite to your position in support of position statement/thesis.
- Destroy this argument by explaining why this position/argument is faulty and should be discouraged.

Counterargument:

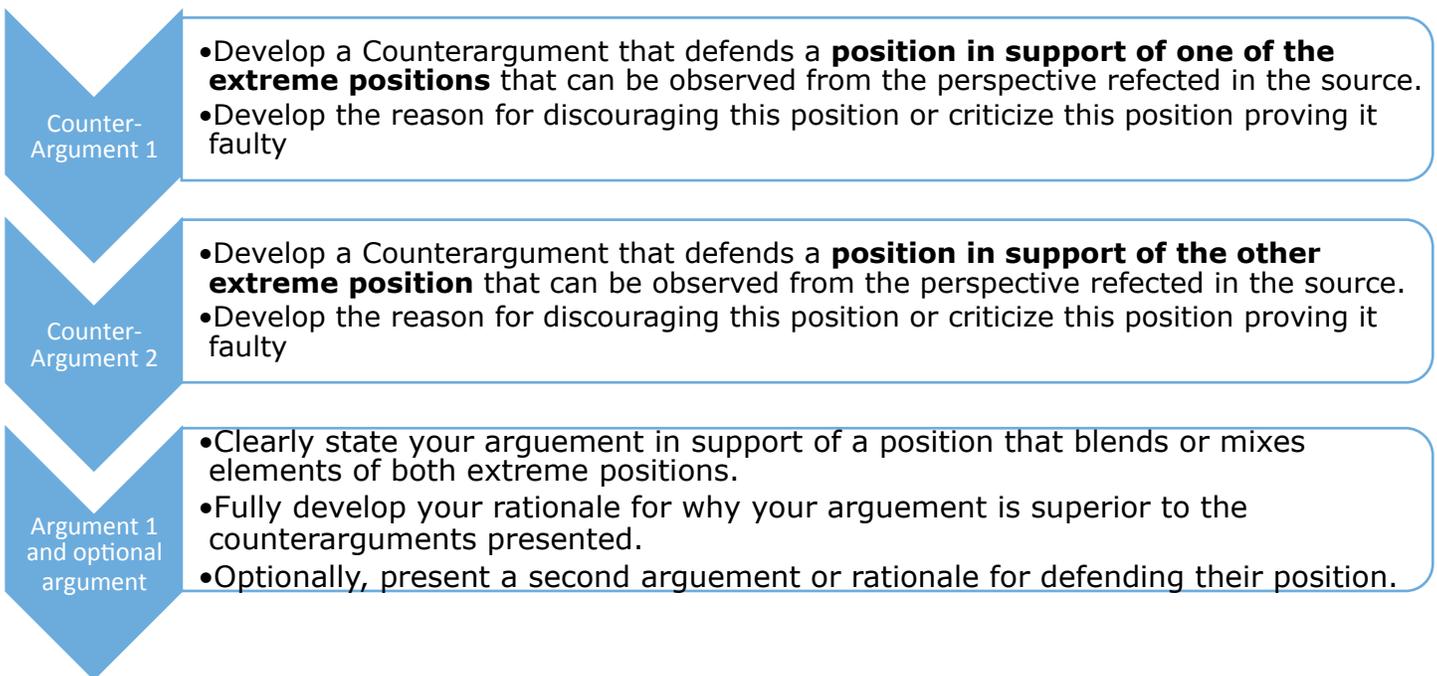
In a counterargument, students identify an opposing position, explain the main argument or validity for this position and refute or criticize it proving the opposite to your position to be invalid.

Many believe that capital punishment should be re-instated. They argue that it will act as an effective deterrent against violent crimes and criminals would hesitate committing such crimes when faced with the death penalty. However, this argument is flawed as statistics clearly shows that capital punishment does not lower violent crime rates.

Strategy #3: Goldilocks Argument

This strategy demonstrates again a more sophisticated and higher level of critical thinking when developing an argument. Students will present a **counterargument defending one side of the issue** presented and then present a **counterargument defending the other side of the issue** presented. These counterarguments usually defend positions that are extremes when arguing a position on an issue. Students **demonstrate the extent that these counterarguments are faulty and should be criticized** and discouraged. In the third argument, students present their argument for defending a position that blends elements of both of the extremes presented in the counterarguments.

Optionally, if students have further arguments to present they are encouraged to present a second argument in support of their position/thesis. Be sure second arguments are valid and enhance the first argument and not detract from the overall quality of their argumentation.



Examples of Arguments:

Ideological Perspective is Capitalism as a favorable economic ideology for a nation.

Argument 1: Competition creates variety of consumer products at great quality.

Argument 2: Self Interest and the Profit motive encourages individuals to provide consumer demands as efficiently as possible in order to maximize individual profit.

Argument 3: Government intervention favors the lazy and restricts individual freedom from gaining wealth and fortune from hard work and determination.

Task Three: Evidence to Support Argumentation

There are different ways to approach providing evidence to support your arguments developed:

Option 1: You may wish to fully develop an argument or counterargument and follow it with a fully developed form of evidence using knowledge of Social Studies. After you have presented each argument, develop evidence. This option clearly separates your argumentation from your evidence.

Option 2: You may wish to blend your arguments with your evidence. As argumentation is presented, you may wish to include descriptions of the evidence you are going to present defending your position. Skillfully written, your argument and evidence are presented together. ***Be sure to clearly develop a reason/argument that defends your position. Presenting evidence alone without a clearly developed argument will seriously affect your argumentation grade.***

There are **several types of evidence** or examples you can use to support the arguments you have developed:

- Historical or contemporary **case studies** covered in the course
- Events and historical **periods of time**
- **Theories and philosophies** from people/thinkers
- Information from an **expert or an authority** on a subject
- **Policies and decisions** made by people or governments
- **Current Events** that clearly demonstrate evidence
- **Hypothetical Examples:** Arguments can be supported with a hypothetical that illustrates your argument to be sound. Your example may be hypothetical, but it must remain plausible to the marker. Avoid discussions of the miraculous, the magical, or the improbable.

Anything that you have learned in social studies that would support you argument and give defend your position taken in terms of the ideological perspective presented in the source.

For each form of evidence that you present in defense your argument, be sure to fully explain and develop the details. Describe and fully detail the evidence that you have selected. This is your opportunity to **demonstrate and defend your position/thesis by developing a solid understanding what you have learned in Social Studies.**

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Structure and Format:

This essay should be written in paragraph structure. It is estimated that this essay should be 4-6 pages in length.

Paragraph One: Introductory sentence, Analysis of Source and Identification of Position Statement/Thesis

Paragraph Two: Develop Argument #1
(Or counterargument 1 from strategy three.)

- Evidence to support Argument #1
(Or counterargument 1 from strategy three.)

Paragraph 2 may separate argument and evidence into separate paragraphs.

Paragraph Three: Develop Argument #2
(Or counterargument 2 from strategy three.)

- Evidence to Support Argument #2
(Or counterargument 2 from strategy three.)

Paragraph 3 may separate argument and evidence into separate paragraphs.

Paragraph Four: Develop Argument #3 from strategy #1 or Counterargument from Strategy #2 or Argument 1 and Optional Argument from Strategy #3

- Evidence to Support Arguments choices above

Paragraph 4 may separate argument and evidence into separate paragraphs.

Paragraph Five: Conclusion

- Restate position/thesis
- Restate arguments used to defend your position/thesis
- Closing Statement/Sentence.

Assessment Criteria: See *Writing Assignment II Rubric on the Virtual Classroom*

Analysis of Source.....	/6 marks
Argumentation.....	/8 marks
Evidence.....	/8 marks
Communication.....	/8 marks
Total.....	/30 marks