

DEBATE: "Should Everyone Get a Trophy?" • SKILL: Argument Essay, page 1 of 3

Write an Argument Essay

Directions: Read "Should Everyone Get a Trophy?" on pages 26-27 of the November 2013 issue of *Scope*. Fill in the chart on page 27. Then follow the steps below to write an argument essay.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Should every kid get a trophy just for participating in a sport? Consider what you read in the article, then take a position. **Check the box next to the point of view you will support in your essay, or write your own opinion in the space provided.**

Yes! Trophies for all!

No! Reward only the best.

STEP 2: FIND YOUR SUPPORT

Which of the items that you wrote in the columns on page 27 support your opinion? What are some other points that support your opinion? List three to five supporting items here:

STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think the way we reward young athletes should change, point out an argument that coaches, parents, and kids who like the current reward system might make. If you think the way we reward young athletes is fine the way it is, explain why some think otherwise.

STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR THESIS

The thesis is where you tell readers what the essay is going to be about. It should be a clear, strong statement of the opinion you expressed in Step 1. The rest of your essay should support your thesis.

Your thesis: _____

STEP 5: WRITE YOUR HOOK

The very beginning of your essay is called the hook because it "hooks" your readers' attention. The hook should relate to the topic of your essay, but it can take many forms. It can be an exaggeration (an outrageous statement about the topic), a fact, a quote, or a rhetorical question (a question to which you don't expect an answer). Here are three ideas for hooks that could work for this topic. **Choose one of the ideas below, or use your own idea, and write a hook on the lines provided (one to three sentences).**

- 1. EXAGGERATION:** Describe what the world might be like if kids got trophies for everything they did.
- 2. SURPRISING FACT:** Find a fact related to this topic that will raise your readers' eyebrows. Several surprising facts are included in the article. You can also do some research to find one that is not included in the article.
- 3. RHETORICAL QUESTION:** Ask readers what it would be like if everyone received the same rewards regardless of what they did at school, work, or in sports.

Your hook: _____

STEP 6: SUMMARIZE THE ISSUE

Let readers know a little about the issue you will be writing about. This is not your point of view; it's a very brief summary of the issue. In this case, it's that some people think kids get too many trophies.

Your summary of the issue: _____

STEP 7: START WRITING

Now that you have the key ingredients for your essay, you are ready to start writing. On the next page, you'll find guidelines for how to organize your ingredients, as well as hints about what else you'll need to add.

Directions: Follow the guidelines below to write a strong essay. You will use what you wrote on the first two pages of this activity.

INTRODUCTION

Open with your hook from Step 5.



Write a transition that relates your hook to the question of whether everyone should get a trophy. (See *Scope's* handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)



Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.



Finish with your thesis from Step 4.

BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

Here's where you write your supporting points from Step 2. For each one, write one to three sentences that provide additional details. You can put your supporting points and detail sentences together in one paragraph, or you can break them into three paragraphs.

It depends on how much you want to write about each point. Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers tend to remember best the details that are presented last.

ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument. Use what you wrote in Step 3. Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.

CONCLUSION

Write two to three sentences to remind your readers of your main points.



Finish with a strong sentence. Looking for an idea? Try referring to your hook, finding a compelling quote, or inspiring your readers.

READ AND REVISE

Use *Scope's* "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written. Make any necessary changes and write a second draft.