

Argumentative Example Essays

Grades 11-12

Essay scores are produced for the following grade ranges: 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12. Thus an eleventh grade essay is compared to models for both eleventh and twelfth grades.

Prompt for Essays 1-3: *Frito-Lay is a popular snack company. Most people think of chips when they hear “Frito-Lay.” In the late 1980’s, the company was considering options to expand into a healthier niche market with a vegetable dip. Should Frito-Lay expand their snack options or capitalize on and grow their popularity as a current leader in the chip dip market? Assume you are a market analyst, writing an essay in the time in which Frito-Lay was still considering their options. Your argumentative essay should make a claim, address counterclaims, and use at least three of the suggested sources.**

Argumentative Essay 1: Should Frito-Lay Enter Another Market?

Frito-Lay should not enter another market as a vegetable dip but stay working as a chip dip company.

It would be expensive to switch. The current delivery system would change if the company switches to a vegetable dip. Produce managers would have to be the contacts in stores. Also, a new delivery system would have to be created. More products would need to be developed. This would add to the costs of research and development (Kerin & Peterson, 2007).

Frito-Lay has a good position in its current position as a chip dip manufacturer. Frito-Lay had \$135 million of \$185 million in chip dip sales in 1985 (Kerin & Peterson, 2007). The consumer interest in convenience over healthy eating also creates a great opportunity for Frito-Lay. The market is there for development, but the answer is target the right customers.

Annotation: *This essay needs further development. As is, it is merely a beginning of an organizational structure for a full essay.*

Argumentative Essay 2: Should Frito-Lay Enter Another Market?

Frito-Lay should not enter another market as a vegetable dip, but instead penetrate the chip dip market even further. Frito-Lay should focus on penetrating the market and remaining focused as a chip dip company for many reasons. It would be expensive to switch from a salty chip dip to a healthier vegetable dip. The current “front-door store delivery system,” which does a good job of combining sales and delivery (Kerin & Peterson, 2007), would change if the company switches to a vegetable dip. Instead of working with current customers, produce managers would become the main point of contact in stores, and a new delivery system would have to be developed. To keep a market presence as a vegetable dip, more products would need to be developed, adding to the costs of research and development (Kerin & Peterson, 2007).

Frito-Lay is secure in its current position as a chip dip manufacturer. Sales of shelf-stable chip dips were at \$185 million in 1985 and Frito-Lay had \$135 million of that (Kerin & Peterson, 2007). The consumer interest in convenience over healthy eating also gives Frito-Lay a great opportunity. “Between 1980 and 1985 increased expenditure on convenience foods was almost double that for food as a whole” (Goodman, 1991). The market is there for more convenience foods; the key is to target the right customers.

Frito-Lay has many opportunities for expanding its audience. Advertising should be focused on the convenience of their chips and dips as snack foods for sporting events, holidays, afternoons after school, and children's parties. This will get Frito-Lay to where they want to be.

Annotation: Though this essay improves on the first one, it still lacks the type of development and text evidence required at this level. Further, the author needs to be sure that a reader unfamiliar with the chip dip industry or with marketing could understand the references included, such as "front-door delivery system."

Argumentative Essay 3: Should Frito-Lay Enter Another Market?

It would be foolish of Frito-Lay to try to enter another market as a vegetable dip maker. The company has established itself as a leader in the chip dip business, with 33 percent of the market share of salty snack food purchases in 1985 (Kerin & Peterson, 2007). Its placement of shelf-stable dips with salty snack foods has worked well for the company. The answer Frito-Lay is not to enter another market as a vegetable dip, but to penetrate the chip dip market even further.

Instead, the company should focus on penetrating the market and remaining focused as a chip dip company for many reasons. The primary concern is the expense of switching from a salty chip dip to a healthier vegetable dip. The current "front-door store delivery system," which effectively combines sales and delivery (Kerin & Peterson, 2007), would change if the company switches to a vegetable dip. Instead of working with current customers, produce managers would become the primary point of contact in stores, and a new delivery system would have to be utilized. This new sales approach would lead to an estimated increase of selling expenses, cutting into 25 percent of sales (Kerin & Peterson, 2007).

This expensive change might be manageable if the sour cream-based dip were not the only product in the Frito-Lay line suitable for vegetable dipping. To maintain a market presence as a vegetable dip, more products would need to be developed, adding to the costs of research and development (Kerin & Peterson, 2007).

Perhaps stronger than the anti-vegetable expansion arguments are the pro-penetration arguments. Frito-Lay is solid in its current position as a chip dip manufacturer. Sales of shelf-stable chip dips were at \$185 million in 1985; Frito-Lay accounted for \$135 million of that (Kerin & Peterson, 2007). The consumer interest in convenience over healthy eating also creates a great opportunity for Frito-Lay: "Between 1980 and 1985 increased expenditure on convenience foods was almost double that for food as a whole" (Goodman, 1991). The market certainly exists for further penetration; the key is to segment and target the right customers. Frito-Lay needs to take a step back and define itself not only as a salty snacks company, but also as a resource for entertainment enthusiasts. Chips and dips are used primarily as a snack or finger food. There is no better place for chip and dip than at parties and other social gatherings, and when better to celebrate than during the Super Bowl? In fact, the Super Bowl is considered "one of the few remaining television spectacles that can be described as mass television (Shimp, 2007). In 1985, the Super Bowl was watched by 85,530,000 people in 39,390,000 homes (Advertising Age, 2007). The popularity of the Super Bowl is beneficial to Frito-Lay in two ways: Viewers can consume Frito-Lay products during the game, and they are also a captive audience for advertising.

One way to reach consumers before the game and present a call to action that encourages consumers to add chips and dip to their party plans is to work with their established contacts at supermarkets and convenience stores to develop a "Party Central" store display. Since Pepsi Co. is the parent company of Frito-Lay, the display can include Frito-Lay potato chips, dip and Pepsi soft drinks. This in-store product display can build on to the already established method of pairing Frito-Lays dips with salty foods and will appeal to those customers who are looking for Super Bowl shopping necessities only.

The Super Bowl, perhaps the most anticipated event of every new year, can also be utilized as an advertising vehicle to further target entertainment enthusiasts, whether these party planners are sports focused or not. The average price of a 30 second Super Bowl ad in 1985 was \$500,000 (Advertising Age, 2007). Although this sounds expensive at \$16,667 per second, the ad would reach millions of sports enthusiasts who can be convinced to provide Frito-Lay chips and dip at their next sports party.

Sports parties are not the only events Frito-Lay can penetrate. Holiday parties are another outstanding opportunity. Just as they do for the Super Bowl, many people get together to celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Eve. For the first two celebrations, snacks usually are set out while the larger meal cooks, while New Year's Eve is more appetizer- and cocktail-centered. Frito-Lay's potato chips and dip work beautifully in either setting.

Birthday parties provide an avenue for a completely different target market. According to research on men's and women's household roles in the 1980's, women devoted more hours in the week to household chores than men (Caplow, Bahr, Modell, & Chadwick, 1991). Around the same time, modern "labor-saving" appliances, such as vacuum cleaners, dishwashers, etc., became much more common in the household, as women were devoting more time outside of the house to work and needed convenient ways to save time at home (Caplow et al., 1991). The implications of this information are such that women who are also moms would be an ideal target audience for Frito-Lay's potato chips and dip. This is a quick, easy snack that can be put together for kids' birthday parties. It goes perfectly with their easy-to-eat and quickly-made hot dogs and burgers! In addition, older kids who come home to empty houses in the afternoon can help themselves to chips and dip without the need for using any appliances.

The possibilities are limitless. This sample of potential customers ranges from a broad section of millions of Super Bowl viewers to a small child's birthday party. As illustrated in the previous examples, there is ample opportunity for Frito-Lay to position its new sour cream-based dip as a potato chip dip instead of as a vegetable dip. While it is indisputable that healthy eating habits may be affecting some consumers in the market place, convenience is still heavily considered when making food purchases. Furthermore, in the current climate of busy households constantly on the go, snack foods are becoming even more popular. By applying itself in the marketplace as a convenient, expeditious way to provide food for parties and get-togethers of all kinds, Frito-Lay can target adults who are interested in sporting and holiday events. In addition, Frito-Lay is in perfect position to aid moms who need a quick addition to their children's snack and party plates.

Given the current popularity of chips and dip, the multiple and varied opportunities for use, and the wide target audience, Frito-Lay would be wise to stay out of the vegetable dip market. The risk of changing from a chip dip to a vegetable dip, with no current plans in development for a supplemental dip for the vegetable market just does not outweigh the potential of capitalizing on Frito-Lay's already powerful presence in the chip dip market.

Annotation: The development of this essay is far superior to that of the previous one. Using examples such as Super Bowl and birthday parties help strengthen the author's claim. The author has also included a strong conclusion, reminding the reader of her supporting reasons and ending with a strong restatement of the claim.

**The American Psychological Association style for formatting and citations was used for this essay. The resources below were not included in the drafts submitted for scoring.*

Resources

- Caplow, T., Bahr, H.M., Modell, J., & Chadwick B.A. (1991). *Recent social trends in the United States, 1960–1990*. McGill-Queen’s University Press: Montreal.
- Goodman, D., & Redclift, M. (1991). *Refashioning nature: food, ecology, and culture*. Routledge: New York, NY.
- Kerin, R.A., & Peterson, R.A. (2007). “Opportunity analysis, market segmentation, and market targeting.” *Strategic Marketing Problems*. (pp. 118-128). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Shimp, T. (2010). In *Advertising promotion, and other aspects of integrated marketing and communications*. South-Western Cengage Learning: Mason, OH.
- “Super bowl 2007, advertising history: 40 years of prices and audiences.” Advertising Age. Retrieved from <http://adage.com/SuperBowlBuyers/superbowlhistory07.html>

For more examples of student essays, see the Common Core State Standards Initiative site, which includes samples of actual student essays for all three writing genres and for all grades. Each essay includes helpful notes and explanations. The first set of essays is from an on-demand writing assignment. The second set shows a range of writing, usually with one or more short essays and one or more longer ones.

Link: <http://achievethecore.org/page/505/common-core-narrative-writing>