

# Argumentative Example Essays

## Grades 9-10

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

**Prompt for Essays 1-2:** *Scientists discover potential new cures for disease every day. When they are developing medicines, they need to have some way to test whether or not the medicine will work for humans. For years, scientists have tested drugs by using them in various ways on animals. Unfortunately, as a result of making sure a substance is safe and effective for humans, many animals are injured or die. How do you think these situations should be handled? On the one hand, it is bad to make animals suffer, but on the other hand, scientists need to conduct these experiments to show that the medicines people use are safe and effective. After reading the stimulus material, take a position on this topic and write an essay stating your position and explaining why it is the better one. Use the most relevant evidence from the articles for each side, pointing out the strengths and limitations of both sides of the issue.\**

### Argumentative Essay 1: Animal Testing

If someone in your family has a disease like cancer, heart conditions, and AIDS they may have to suffer pain and change their lifestyle. But they only are alive because of medicine. Back when medicine and vaccines weren't invented or that advanced, diseases like Polio, Malaria, Asthma, etc., killed many people. Even getting a cold or fever could kill you. Nowadays all the medicines save many lives, but they are killing, too.

All these vaccines weren't tested on other humans, but on animals. Everything from mice to polar bears, new ways of saving people are tested first on animals. Animals that can't speak or argue about us humans killing them. They have no say in living or dying. On average 20 million animals are killed through this testing. Many of them don't get pain killers when they are slammed on the head, or get their legs chopped to see if they can adapt.

That's because a painkiller can affect the research and can mess up the reactions. Is it fair to test an animal get tested like this? Many scientists argue that it is necessary to save lives. The question is, are we the ones to chose who lives and who dies? Are we the ones to kill in order to increase our lifespans?

We should work toward ways to decrease animal testing and find other ways that don't involve such pain and killing. It should be worked out so that a company can use only a certain number of animals a year. Also, we could use a computer program that acts just like an animal with all of it's behaviors and reactions. If it gives bad results, they can keep working until it says it's ok. When that is done, they could use only a few animals to see if it worked. This would reduce the chance of animals getting killed.

*Annotation:* *This essay shows an organizational structure but lacks full development. Using more information from the references to support the reasons for the claim would make this argument much stronger. The counter-claim should also be addressed.*

## Argumentative Essay 2: Animal Testing

You might have a family member or friend who has had to experience the difficulties of a life-threatening disease including cancer, heart conditions, and AIDS. That person may have had to endure enormous bouts of pain and adapt to an irregular lifestyle. The most common reason they were even able to live is because of medicine and treatments that supported them. Even a century ago, medical science was not even close to what is capable of now. A long time ago, getting infected with something like small pox could kill you. Just a century ago, a deadly flu called influenza swept throughout the world, after World War 1. It was a major epidemic that is estimated to have caused more than 40 million deaths in between the years of 1918-1919.<sup>1</sup> Every year, there is a new case of influenza, but thanks to modern medicine, it's not as dangerous as its counterpart in the 1910's.

The most common reason people survive life-threatening diseases is because of medicine and special medical treatments. Cancer, a very dangerous disease is acquired by about half of all men and one-third of all women in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Before chemotherapy was introduced in the 1940's, there weren't many options to treat cancer.<sup>3</sup> Since then, chemotherapy has evolved into a leading cancer treatment Penicillin, first discovered by Alexander Fleming in 1928, was one of the world's very first antibiotics.<sup>4</sup> Due to advanced medicine, the risk of dying from many diseases has been reduced dramatically. There is a big disadvantage though, a side effect that kills millions.<sup>5</sup>

In order to carry out the number of tests necessary to get a single drug on the market, much of the early testing is done on animals. Annually, about 20 million animals die through medicine- testing.<sup>6</sup> There are many reasons why animals are used, and the first one is because if the drug fails, humans wouldn't have to get harmed, the animals would. Also, animals such as apes/monkeys and mice have a close genetic model of the average human. Another reason is because mice, in general, have a very short life-span which is a few years at most. This allows the scientists to not have to wait, for example 40 years, to see the complete result of a test.<sup>7</sup> Some other reasons animals are used for testing, as stated by the Food and Drug Administration is so scientists know how much of a drug is absorbed into the blood, or how the drug is broken down chemically in the body.<sup>8</sup>

In a usual experiment, there are two groups of subjects. One group actually receives the medication, and while the other gets a placebo, which is a fake medication. Both groups think they have gotten the medication, but they haven't. Animals can be tested on in many ways, including getting traumatized on purpose or having their legs amputated or dissected at birth. These methods, although not done to be cruel, are very agonizing and many animal patients don't even receive painkillers.<sup>9</sup> The big reason why scientists and researchers do not give pain-numbing antidotes is because the painkiller supposedly affects the results and in turn gives inaccurate information. Many scientists argue that without the use of animals as subjects, it would be significantly complicated to progress the scientific era in medicine, restricting the ability to save as many lives as possible.<sup>10</sup> The fact is, without animal to do the tryouts for us, it would be harder to create new revolutionary advances in health and prolong the lives of humans. Although, we should try to regulate the amount of harm we do to these creatures.

Animals should be treated with respect, and we should use less brutal tactics to investigate medicinal properties. We should find alternative methods that don't involve such animal genocide. Scientists should develop a program which contains all known genetic information of humans and animals, and which is able to perform a multitude of tests on any new medicine, giving all possible outcomes. If the result is not favorable and doesn't meet requirements, the scientists could change up the chemical process or materials in the medicine until it meets the regulations. When this process is successfully attained, scientists can be allowed to test on a voluntary person. Although computers will not be able to calculate everything that might happen, the use of electronics to solve these types of problems will significantly help in the matters of animal testing. It can pave a road to a new way of life, with the use of futuristic technology.

*Annotation: Development in this essay is a big improvement over the first essay. The explanation of how research is carried out to test drugs is informative as well as interesting, and adds strength to the writer's argument. The writer has also presented and refuted the counter-claim.*

*The Modern Language Association (MLA) style for formatting and citations was used for this essay. See End Notes for resources (not included in the drafts submitted for scoring). Since all sources were listed in the End Notes, a separate Works Cited page was not included.*

#### End Notes

- 1 "The Deadly Virus: The Influenza Epidemic of 1918." *National Archives and Records Administration*, n.d. Web. February 2014.
- 2 "Questions People Ask About Cancer." *American Cancer Society*. 2014. Web. February 2014.
- 3 "Evolution of Cancer Treatments." *American Cancer Society*. 2014. Web. February 2014.
- 4 "Antibiotics." *History Learning Site*. 2014. Web. February 2014.
- 5 "Evolution of Cancer Treatments." *American Cancer Society*. 2014. Web. February 2014.
- 6 Andre, Claire, and Manuel Velasquez. "Of Cures and Creatures Great and Small." *Markkula Center for Applied Ethics*. Santa Clara University. n.d. Web. February 2014.
- 7 Melina, Remy. "Why do Medical Researchers Use Mice?" *LiveScience*. 2010. Web. February 2014.
- 8 "Why are Animals Used for Testing Medical Products?" *U.S. Food and Drug Administration*. June 12, 2014. Web. 25 Feb 2014.
- 9 Andre, Claire, and Manuel Velasquez. "Of Cures and Creatures Great and Small." *Markkula Center for Applied Ethics*. Santa Clara University. n.d. Web. February 2014.
- 10 Andre, Claire, and Manuel Velasquez.. "Of Cures and Creatures Great and Small." *Markkula Center for Applied Ethics*. Santa Clara University. n.d. Web. February 2014.

**Prompt for Essay 3:** *Many students are involved in school-related activities, such as sports, music, drama, and service and learning clubs. Your district school board is considering a measure to forbid students from missing class for these types of activities. This would include out-of-town games, concerts at elementary schools, or trips to another city. Write an argumentative essay in which you argue for or against such a measure.*

#### **Argumentative Essay 3: Excusing Students from Class for School-Related Activities**

"BLEEP," the loudspeaker blares, and the assistant principal's voice announces, "Members of the football team, the band and the cheerleading squad need to report to the foyer to leave for the game."

As several students triumphantly make their exits, the rest of the class looks on with envy. They wish they, too, could be emancipated. The teacher is inevitably irritated to have them leave. But is missing the end of a school day for a musical performance or athletic competition such a terrible thing? Students who are involved in these activities have worked hard to be in these special groups, and if they are advanced enough in the activity to be missing a tiny bit of school, then the time is well spent in this other field of expertise. The purpose of school is to educate students so that as adults they have the skills to help make the world a better place. Some of these students may very well be planning to continue their commitment to music or sports throughout high school, college, and even beyond, so involvement at this point can only enhance their education. Not everyone in a physics class has the inclination to become a physicist or engineer. Isn't it better to encourage students to be well-rounded, to explore different activities and talents, and to contribute to school life as a whole rather than make little robots whose sole talent is in taking notes?

Why do teachers always count a few students walking out the door as a “terrible disruption”? Students leaving school early for extra-curricular activities do not disrupt any substantial amount of others’ learning time. With all the other distractions that happen in a period, such as class discussions that go off in tangents, these students to leave is less than the time it takes for a teacher to discipline students for talking or being late to class. Students who must leave early for school-related activities must keep up their grades and they must not be disciplinary problems. In fact, if a student makes a D in a class or is sent to in-school suspension, that student forfeits the right to participate in the activity. This seems to me to be a great way to encourage students to do well in school, and so teachers would want to tempt more students to participate in these kinds of activities. Perhaps if more students were involved in these types of activities, there would be fewer disruptions due to misbehavior and fewer students with wandering attention. Too many teachers are exasperated with students leaving early, seeing it as a serious problem as well as an attack on their teaching. After all, these students will be missing the last half hour of this class. What about the curriculum? What about all the crucial information they will miss? Perhaps the teacher is also thinking of the extra time she will have to spend to get them caught up. However, these students already know that they are obligated to make up any work they miss, and the very fact that they are involved in activities which require a certain level of commitment and responsibility should convince teachers that the students can handle missing some class. Teachers should allow enough flexibility in their classes so that students who miss some class now and then are not penalized, while at the same time letting the teacher off the hook for being totally responsible for making sure every student does every assignment. This flexibility would also help when a student is absent due to illness. But one missed discussion, lecture, or assignment cannot possibly matter in the long run, and the long run is what a student misses class for. The student’s future - what they can do to help themselves and others as adults is what really matters, and for that, missing class for a few minutes may be the most important thing they can do right now.

Disruption? Detrimental to learning? I think not. Instead, imagine a new scenario, in which enlightened administrators and teachers not only concur that extra-curricular activities that require occasional absence on the part of students, but applaud and celebrate the opportunities they provide. Think about what would happen.

“BLEEP,” the loudspeaker blares, and the assistant principal’s voice announces, “Members of the football team, the band and the cheerleading squad need to report to the foyer to leave for the game.” As several students begin to move toward the door, the rest of the class begins a cheer, urging them to do their best and to win the game. The teacher stands at the door, proudly wishing them luck.

*Annotation: This essay’s style engages the reader and makes the argument stronger. Elaboration and examples also are interesting and convincing.*

*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>*