

## Essay 1: Causal Argument

Write a two- to three-page (500-800 word) essay that persuades an audience to accept your explanation of the causes of a trend, event, or other phenomenon. Within your essay you should examine alternative explanations or opposing views and present your reasons for rejecting them.

You can frame your issue as either a puzzle or a disagreement. If a puzzle, treat your audience as neutral: they have no prior answer to your causal question in mind. If a disagreement, consider your audience hostile: they endorse a causal explanation different from the one you will present.

The evidence in your argument should come primarily from your own experience and observations. So pick an issue that you find genuinely interesting and that will require little or no formal research. Feel free to consult with me in selecting your topic.

You should not need a Works Cited page for this paper, but you should format your document in MLA style. See <http://drmarkwomack.com/mla-style/>: “Document Format.” (If you *do* need to cite outside sources, consult “Anatomy of a Citation” and “Documenting Sources” on my website.)

Make your prose as clear and concise as possible. Don’t waste my time and yours trying to sound impressive. Organize your paper as a Classical Argument, with a self-announcing structure and an explicit thesis.

**Initial Draft Due:** Saturday, October 11

(Bring THREE copies of your essay to class.)

**Revised Draft Due:** Saturday, October 18

(Bring your Revised Draft, your Initial Draft with my comments on it, and all the Peer Critiques you received to class in a folder.)

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**Initial Draft Due:** Thursday, October 9

(Bring THREE copies of your essay to class.)

**Revised Draft Due:** Thursday, October 16

(Bring your Revised Draft, your Initial Draft with my comments on it, and all the Peer Critiques you received to class in a folder.)