

Social Studies Position Paper Checklist

What is the purpose of a Social Studies position paper?

- To demonstrate your knowledge of the Social Studies curriculum in a sophisticated and organized manner

How?

- Analyze a source and demonstrate an understanding of the perspective(s) reflected in each source and its relationship to a particular topic (i.e. nationalism)
- Defend a position on the extent to which the perspective(s) reflected in the source should be embraced

Reminder: How to Analyze a Quotation

Explain the source

1. Discuss any background or contextual information that is important to understand the quotation. For example:
 - who is the author? where is he/she from?
 - the author's political, economic, and/or social views
 - important events that may have shaped his/her perspective
2. What is the message, intent, or purpose of the author/speaker without repeating the source?
3. 2-3 sentences "describing the meaning" of the quotation, as it relates to your topic (i.e. nationalism)

Identify the perspective

1. What terms, concepts, or ideas are involved?
2. Does the author accept or reject any terms, concepts or ideas?
3. Is there bias?

Provide Support

- Use direct quotations, facts from the source to support your interpretations

Format

Introduction

- ☐ Did you start the paper in an interesting way?
- ☐ Did you analysis the source?
- ☐ Did you explore the various positions on the perspective(s) reflected in the source?
- ☐ Did you provide a clear and concise thesis statement [i.e. the perspective(s) in the source – state the perspective--should be embraced to a great extent because of argument A and argument B.]?

Body Paragraphs (2)

- ☐ Do you have a clear argument [i.e. the perspective(s) in the source should be embraced to a great extent because of argument A. For example...]?
- ☐ Did you provide specific evidence (two examples) to support your argument (this is where you fill in the *for example* part seen above)?
- ☐ Are your arguments and evidence hard to counter; or, can the opposing position easily poke holes in your defense? If your position can easily be countered, come up with stronger arguments (or switch sides)!

Counter-Argument (optional)

- ☐ Did you take an opposing argument and show why it is flawed with specific evidence (i.e. some may argue that the perspective in the source should not be embraced because of counter argument A. They wrong in their belief because...)

Conclusion

- ☐ Did you summarize your main arguments in a concise, engaging manner? Do not introduce new information or arguments.
- ☐ Did you end the paper in an interesting manner?

Do not forget to proofread and edit your paper!