

Persuasive Essay Assignment (Eng 151A)

Take a clear position **for** removing the victim from an abusive relationship and write a 5-paragraph persuasive essay supporting your position. Each body paragraph must be a *minimum* of 10 sentences, and the introduction and conclusion paragraphs must be a *minimum* of 5-6 sentences each. Remember, your primary task in this assignment is to provide ample evidence and explanation in order to convince your reader of the truth of your particular viewpoint regarding possible responses to domestic violence in America.

Read Elaine Weiss' "Why Don't These Women Just Leave?" essay about domestic violence on pp 682-685 of *The Writer's Workplace*. Then, write an essay of your own in which you develop a thesis argument that **defends women who decide to leave an abusive relationship**. As you make the case for your own position in the body of your discussion, I want you to directly refute **any 3** of the reasons Weiss offers up for *staying* in an abusive relationship.

After you have read her essay but before you begin writing your own, brainstorm several reasons you could use to support your own position, and then select 3 of those reasons to anchor each of your body paragraphs. Each body paragraph should **respond directly** to *only one* of her reasons as you outline your own contrary position.

Remember to try a variety of persuasive methods in your argumentation – good persuasive writing seeks to educate its audience about a topic as well as to persuade it of the righteousness of your position. The best strategy to achieve those two aims is to use a **variety of argumentative approaches** to convince us. These are the principal means of persuasion you should rely on (one strategy for this assignment might be to use one of the approaches below in each of your body paragraph discussions):

- Examples and Illustrations
- Definitions and Explanations
- Quotes and Research (*that is properly cited*)
- Facts and Statistics
- History and Anecdotes
- Opposing viewpoints

Reread Weiss' essay several times in order to identify her major reasons in support of staying in an abusive relationship – you will need to read carefully, making notes as you go in order to make sure you are clearly arguing against her specific positions in your own discussion. You may quote her essay as you make your own arguments in response to hers if you wish, and you may also do additional research on your own and cite that information as you refute her ideas. (Be sure to clearly identify any outside sources you use, and remember the "25/75 rule": a maximum of 25% of your paragraph should be dedicated to quotes or paraphrases of other people's speech and/or ideas, and the other 75% should be your own discussion, explanation and analysis.)

As always, please follow these guidelines:

- Use **academic language**: Write only in the **3rd person** (NO I or me, No you or your), write in the **present tense**, and Do Not use contractions or slang speech
- **Proofread repeatedly** for sentence completion and clarity. All sentences need to be complete, not fragments or run-ons. The verb tense must be consistent throughout the entire essay. All pronoun references and subject-verb agreement problems must be eliminated. There must be a clear thesis statement in the first paragraph. There must be clear topic sentences at the beginning of each internal body paragraph.
- In your body paragraphs, use **3 transition phrases** from the list on pp 512-513 in Chap 26: each phrase you use must be from a **different category**

After you type your final version of the essay, do the following **before you hand it in**:

1. In the left or right hand margin of your essay, **label the type of introductory paragraph** you have written (use the paragraph types modeled on pp 508-510 in Chap 26)
2. **Highlight each of the 3 reasons** you advance to support your thesis – there should be one highlighted sentence in each of the three body paragraphs
3. **Circle the 3 transitions** that you use (from the list on pp 512-513 in Chap 26)
4. In the left or right hand margin of your essay, **label the type of concluding paragraph** you have written (use the paragraph types modeled on pp 514-515 in Chap 26)