

### Essay #3: Proposing a Solution

**Assignment:** In the last essay we've argued about a lot of problems: gun control, foreign policy, the war in Iraq, etc. But please—let's stop all this arguing and start thinking what we can do about it! For this essay, I want you not only to identify a problem, but suggest a possible solution for this problem. This will be similar to the Arguing a Position essays only in that you will use the components of argumentation we have learned to convince your reader that the solution you propose is the best. For your essay, I want you to write an essay that communicates to your audience a problem and proposes a solution. Your essay should be between 3-5 pages.

**The Rough Draft is due Monday, 10/15. The Final Draft is due Friday, 10/26.**

**Audience and Purpose:** Your audience should be a person or group of people who have the power to make your solution happen. In this kind of essay, just writing to the general public would be pointless; yes they might care, but they wouldn't be able to do anything about it.

Your purpose for this essay is to define the problem, decide your position, provide clear and supported arguments for your solution, evaluate other possible solutions, address objections you anticipate from your audience, and argue which solution is better than the others.

#### Components:

- ◇ **Introduction.** Use one or more of the introductory strategies we will discuss in class.
- ◇ **Define the Problem.** What is it and why is it important? What might happen if this problem is not solved? What has been done in the past to solve it, and why did it fail?
- ◇ **Thesis.** State that something should/must be done and introduce what your solution is to make sure that it is solved.
- ◇ **Describe Your Solution.** What is your plan? What should be done to make it work? How should it be done? Why is your solution the best solution to the problem? Use several reasons here to convince your audience that you are correct, and also that a great deal can be accomplished if your solution is implemented.
- ◇ **Counterarguments to Your Solution.** What objections could be made by your audience about your proposed solution? Refute or concede to all of the objections, and tell why your solution is still the best solution despite objections, and why it is worth implementing.

- ◇ **Alternate Solutions.** What are 2-3 alternate solutions that have been tried, or that you have thought of? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Why is your solution better than these?
- ◇ **Conclusion.** Use one or more of the concluding strategies we will discuss in class.

**Sources:** Depending on your topic, you may or may not need to use sources to support your point. For example, if you were proposing a solution to the amount of bikes blocking the entryway of your dorm, textual sources may not be needed to present and support this solution. If you were proposing a solution to boost sales of your favorite magazine, you may or may not need sources. If you were proposing a solution to your Congressman about a certain problem, then you would definitely need sources to back up your thesis. Sources are not required for this essay, but recommended.

### Some Interesting Options:

- ◇ Write a fantasy-based essay. Propose a solution to a problem encountered by characters in your favorite television show or novel. How should Wile E. Coyote finally catch the roadrunner (or should he)? What does Harry Potter need to do to save the wizarding world by the end of the series? Soap operas are excellent sources for problems.
- ◇ Another option is to write a funny essay. Choose anything from pop culture to college or family experiences. What should the next color of M+M's be? What could you do about your noisy neighbors in your dorm? How are you going to get out of sitting at the kids' table this Thanksgiving? Be creative.

### Remember:

- ◇ Be connected to your problem—you have to really *want* to solve it
- ◇ Don't choose a problem that's too complex (either hard to describe or has too many contributing factors)
- ◇ Describe the problem so that the audience will understand
- ◇ Specifically state your solution and how it will work
- ◇ Convince yourself of your solution and you will be able to convince your readers
- ◇ Don't propose a solution that just won't work or doesn't make sense
- ◇ Acknowledge and refute counterarguments
- ◇ Present more than just your solution; compare your solution to 2-3 other possible solutions
- ◇ Don't present several solutions and then forget to tell your audience which is the best one
- ◇ Make sure your paragraphs are fully developed and have topic sentences and concluding sentences

**Good Luck! Have Fun!**