

Topic Exploration & Selection

nerdylittlebirdie.com
Teen Essay Guide

Step 1 - Create a list of topics you're interested in

Webpages with topic ideas: [Easy Essay Topics](#), [High School Argument Topics](#), [Challenging argument topics](#), [Funny argument essay topics](#), [100 Easy Essay Topics with Research Links](#), [100 More Argument Essay Topics](#), [KQED education site](#), [New York Times Student Writing Prompts](#)

<https://owlcation.com/humanities/Essay-Topic-Ideas>

<https://owlcation.com/humanities/150-Argument-Essay-Topics-with-Writing-Tips>

<https://owlcation.com/academia/College-Argumentative-Essay-Topics>

<https://owlcation.com/academia/Funny-Argumentative-Essay-Topic-Ideas>

<https://owlcation.com/academia/100-Easy-Argumentative-Essay-Topic-Ideas>

<https://owlcation.com/academia/Topic-List-for-Position-Essay>

<http://ww2.kqed.org/education/collections/do-now/>

Step 2 - Select interesting prompts

Copy/paste interesting prompts into a Word doc. Do this for about 15 minutes. You should select about a dozen. Write down *any* that pique your interest, whether you think it's an argumentative prompt or not. You can then look over them & evaluate whether the prompt could be tweaked into an interesting argumentative paper.

Step 3 - Highlight your top 3 prompts

The ones you find most interesting, know a lot about, or are most passionate about.

Step 4 - Select one for a topic

You should care enough about your topic to want to write about it. You'll be spending 4-6 weeks on it. Make sure you like it enough!

Keep this list in your binder for future potential essay topics.

More options to facilitate the topic selection process, **if needed.**

(Use one or as many as you need)

1. Do Topic Funnel, if needed, to narrow down from a big topic idea to something narrow enough for an essay. (TWJ chapter 6)

2. **BIG TIP! TURN IT INTO QUESTIONS!** If the topic is one word (i.e. video gaming), write out a series of interesting questions about the topic.
 - How many different ways can you frame questions around a topic?
 - What question(s) do you want to answer about your topic?
 - What details about it do you want to discuss? (But may not know)
 - What details can you discuss? (What do you know?)
 - Brainstorm lots of questions. The questions may come in handy for writing a thesis statement and helping direct research, so save them! They will help during the brainstorming session too. Identify the most interesting one(s). Some resources to help with this question-creating process...
 - A. H4HS “What is an Essay” chapter. Pages 82, 84-85 for more question prompts

 - B. Do steps 1 & 2 only in [this web page](https://owlcation.com/humanities/Easy-Ways-to-Write-a-Thesis-Statement-for-an-Essay). <https://owlcation.com/humanities/Easy-Ways-to-Write-a-Thesis-Statement-for-an-Essay>

 - C. Do steps 1 & 2 only in [the video found on this webpage](https://owlcation.com/academia/How-to-Write-a-Great-Topic-Sentence). <https://owlcation.com/academia/How-to-Write-a-Great-Topic-Sentence>

3. Big, juicy conversation while the parent takes notes.