



# ARGUMENTATIVE PAPER TOPICS

## GATHERING TOPIC IDEAS

The first step in finding a topic is to pay attention to issues and events happening around you by

- Browsing through periodicals (e.g. newspapers, magazines)
- Watching the news
- Listening to talk radio
- Conversing with different people about what issues are affecting them
- And taking time to reflect on issues that are affecting you

## SELECTING A TOPIC

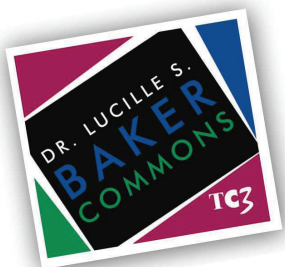
When choosing a topic for an argumentative paper, make sure that the topic

- Is interesting to you
- Involves conflicting viewpoints
- Is current and relevant
- Involves not only your personal sphere, but also impacts other people
- Is complex enough to be considered from different angles
- Is not cliché or too common (try to stay away from topics like “abortion” for example)

## REFLECTING ON YOUR TOPIC

Once you’ve chosen your topic, reflect on the emotions and thoughts you have about it. Keep the following ideas in mind:

- Make sure that your feelings about the topic don’t overpower your reasoning.
- Having mixed emotions and being undecided about your position is a good way to start. This most likely means that you can see both sides of the debate.
- Decide on what position to take only after considering arguments on both sides of the issue.



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# Prewriting Activity: Generating Arguments

1. What is your topic? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is this a topic/issue that you are interested in? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is this a topic/issue with two arguable sides or positions? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does it involve a current issue? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Using the T-chart below, write down at least 3 distinct arguments supporting each position. Each argument should approach the issue from different angles. As much as possible, the arguments on the left side should be directly “arguing with” the ones on the right.

Your argument question:

PROS	CONS
1. Angle: Argument:	1. Angle: Argument:
2. Angle: Argument:	2. Angle: Argument:
3. Angle: Argument:	3. Angle: Argument: