

How do you know what to Believe? Research Paper, Web Page & Presentation

Distinguishing Evidence from Opinion

Do you believe in ESP? Alien visitations? Global warming? Why do you believe what you believe? Is there any evidence to support or reject your beliefs? How do you decide?

In this project, you are to choose some topic for which people have differing opinions about whether it is based on true fact. State your topic in the form of a question, such as: “Do ghosts really exist?” You then must do some research to discover evidence to answer your question. After

There are 3 components to this project: Paper, Web Page and Presentation.

THE PAPER!

Each person will write a well-written, 3-page typed paper according to the following format:

I. Introduction: The heading for this section should be a statement of your question, for example: “Are Ghosts Real?” This section should introduce the topic, give some background information, and state the question that you investigated.

II. Evidence For: This section should describe in detail the evidence that suggests that the answer to your question is “yes”. Include the sources of this information and reference sources according to the given format and situation.

III. Evidence Against: This section should describe in detail the evidence that suggests that the answer to your question is “no”. Include sources.

IV. My Opinion: In this section, state your opinion, and give a detailed description of why you feel that way. Discuss the evidence you cited in the previous two sections.

V. How Do You Know What to Believe? In this section, describe in general how we decide what to believe. What is the role of preconceived ideas? How important is the source of information in determining its credibility? Is seeing believing? How do you personally make decisions about what to believe? Can you ever be certain?

Paper Logistics:

Length: Approximately 3 pages text without pictures.

Type: 12-point font/double spaced/One inch margins

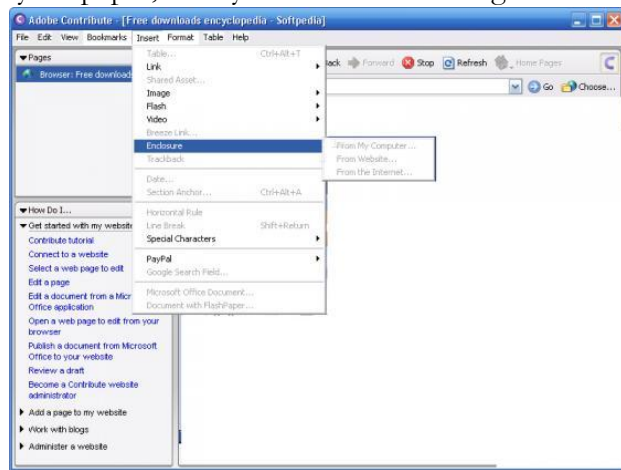
Sources of evidence cited are referenced properly (according to format on handout).



The Web Page

Put your information into web page form. Your web page should meet these requirements:

- ❑ Clear. Visually attractive
- ❑ Contains the five sections that correspond to your paper, clearly labeled with headings.
- ❑ Each section is not just the text from your paper—rather, the information has been put into “web-friendly” format.
- ❑ Able to link to each section using headings in contents column/frame.
- ❑ Ease of mobility around website: Able to go back to top after each section or link back to contents frame.
- ❑ Includes links to other, pertinent websites.
- ❑ Include pictures and graphics that benefit and enhance text. Shows creative flair.
- ❑ Sources of information fully identified.



THE PRESENTATION

Lead the rest of the class on a “Tour” of your website. Highlight what you feel are the most important aspects of each section verbally, and show off your technological achievement. Each person will have 5 minutes to present their website.

HERE IS A LIST OF SOME POSSIBLE TOPIC QUESTIONS:

- Does E.S.P. exist?
- Is it possible to predict the future?
- Do you believe in the Loch Ness Monster?
- Do you believe in Big Foot?
- Do you believe in The Abominable Snowman?
- Do you believe in Champ?
- Do you believe in Werewolves?
- Do you believe in Vampires?
- Do people really get abducted by aliens?
- Are ghosts real?
- Does astrology have any factual basis?
- Do the “out-of-body” experiences reported by people show us what death is going to be like? What happens when you die?
- Do you believe in reincarnation?
- How did humans get here? Evolution? Creation? Aliens?
- Are animals really intelligent? Do they “think”?
- Can plants “sense” things?
- Are the differences between men and women genetic or environmental?
- What causes homosexuality?
- Are Africans naturally better athletes? Are Asians really better at math?
- Was Stonehenge an ancient observatory or just a pile of rocks?
- Does I.Q. really measure intelligence?
- What causes drug addiction?
- Does marijuana cause memory loss?
- Do cigarettes really cause cancer?



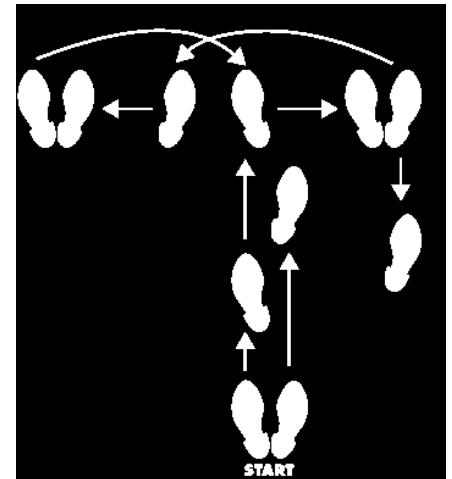
Are men more violent than women?
Do you believe in magic?
Are there mountain lions in New England?
Are there Wolves in New England?
Are wolf-hybrids too dangerous to be pets?
Is global warming happening? Is the climate changing?
Which is more important in determining what a person is like: genes, or upbringing?
Do “alternative” healing practices really work?
Is H.I.V. really the cause of AIDS?
Do seatbelts really save lives?

..... or come up with your own idea. (Please get it approved.)

How to Build a Website? Using Contribute

This program has a 30 day trial software, you don't need to know how to use the HTML language.

1. Set up Password with Steve
2. Go to web Address:
kids.compass-school.org/~your user name (first name and last initial)
(Don't use www)
3. Click on: Create Connection
4. How do you connect to your webserver? Secure FTP
5. Name of secure F'IP Server: kids.compass-school.org
6. Type Your user name:
7. Type your password: with Steve
8. Type your full name and email address. If you don't have one, use
username @kids.compass-school.org
9. On Web bar when it says forbidden, type the letters: HDYK
10. Edit page: type right into the page and then hit PUBLISH.



HDYK Essay Rubric		
Introduction (Paragraph I)	Comments	Points
The 5-paragraph essay opened with a catching hook.		
The introduction contained a well thought out, intriguing thesis statement that is connected to the theme of “How do you Know What to Believe” and demonstrates the position the paper takes on this issue.		
The essay has 3 main aspects that address or attempt to answer the question that the writer identified and briefly introduced them.		
The introductory paragraph neatly leads into the second paragraph.		
Body of the Paper (Paragraph II)		
This paragraph explores the three supporting facts/ideas that are FOR this belief and are connected back to the thesis.		
It contains examples, quotes, and supportive evidence.		
All sources are accurately quoted in the text and also in a reference listing.		
This body paragraph neatly leads into the next paragraph.		
Body of the Paper (Paragraph III)		
This paragraph explores the three supporting facts/ideas that are AGAINST the belief and are connected back to the thesis.		
It contains examples, quotes, and supportive evidence.		
All sources are accurately quoted in the text and also in a reference listing.		
This body paragraph neatly leads into the next paragraph.		
Body of the Paper (Paragraph V)		
This paragraph explores the three supporting facts/ideas that are FOR the writer’s belief/OPINION and are connected back to the thesis. They are stated it as if this fact is true. There aren’t any “In my opinion...” type sentences.		
It contains examples, quotes, and supportive evidence.		
All sources are accurately quoted in the text and also in a reference listing.		
This final body paragraph neatly leads into the concluding paragraph.		
Conclusion (Paragraph V)		
The conclusion creatively revisits the thesis statement and the three supporting pieces of evidence that were explored in the body.		
The conclusion creatively ties the paper back to the introduction and especially to the hook—making the paper a nice, neatly constructed package.		
This is not just a summary of what the writer said but a final articulation of what the writer hopes the reader has learned from reading this essay.		
Final Grade and Comments		

Website and Presentation Rubric

Category	Check plus (6 or 7 points)	Check (5 points)	Check minus (4-0 pts.)
Organization	Wow, well put together!	Easy to follow.	Can't find anything!
Functionality	All links work!	Most links work with a few glitches.	Oops, links don't really work!
Appearance	Looks professional! Can we hire you in the future?	Looks nice and isn't visually distracting.	Too busy? Too bland?
Written Content	Pulls reader in! Clear, informative!	Well done.	I don't understand what you're trying to say.
Length	Not too long, not too short, just right!	Nice. Could use a little more editing but gets the job done.	Too short—left me wondering... Too long—should be edited...
Class time/Efficiency	Work diligently everyday!	Worked diligently most of the time.	Teachers had to hound you to keep on task!
Flow	The class was hooked on your every word!	Your pace and tone met our needs.	We had difficulty understanding you and paying attention.
Clarity of voice	Were you born a public speaker?	Well done.	We had trouble following you... too fast or too slow?
Eye Contact	Were you born a public speaker?	Well done.	Always looked down or at the board/computer. Were we even here?
Comments			
<p>Final Score ____/30</p>			