

**Figure 6.1.**

**Libby Ancheta's 5-paragraph Theme Assignment and Position Paper Guide**

**Taking a Stand (50 points)**

**Pro/Con Outline Rough Draft:** 5 points, Due \_\_\_\_\_

**Socratic Forum Participation:** 10 points, Due \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Paper:** 35 points, Due \_\_\_\_\_

**Assignment Summary:** Henry Wirz, the main defendant in the Andersonville Trial, was sentenced to hang for his role in the death of thousands of Union POW's at Camp Sumter in Andersonville, GA. At the end of the play many of you questioned the verdict and the punishment. We further discussed capital punishment in a Socratic forum after reading "Should the Death Penalty be Abolished?" Hopefully, the assignments we have completed have led you to take a stand on capital punishment, either for or against. In this position paper you need to clearly state your position, and provide support for it. Follow the position paper guide titled *How to Write a Position Paper*.

**Purpose:** To take a position on an issue

**Writer's Role:** You will be writing as yourself

**Audience:** The teacher

**Form:** (over) [See How to Write a Position Paper]

**Length:** Five paragraphs with a minimum of 300 words, word count at the end

**Focus Correction Areas: (FCA's)**

1. Followed all directions: 10 points
2. Sufficient and strong support of thesis: 15 points
3. Evidence of effort (i.e.: Few, if any errors in spelling and mechanics): 10 points

**Final Copy:** Legibly write in blue or black ink, on every other line, front and back.

Typing paper will be provided for you. For additional space, add your own paper.

**If you type:** Times New Roman, Double-Spaced, 14 point font.

Prior to turning in your final copy, read the content to yourself to check for errors and clear communication. Also provide a word count at the end.

**Order:** Outline, rough copy, final copy, and this prompt sheet.

### **How to Write a Position Paper**

The purpose of a position paper is to take a stand on an issue. It should be clear from your paper what your position is on the issue. For this paper the topic is capital punishment.

**Step 1:** Read the article in class and fill out the pro con sheet

**Step 2:** Take a stand: decide your position. This needs to be stated in your thesis

**Step 3:** Pick three claims that support your position.

**Step 4:** Pick one claim that is a counter argument to one of

your three supporting claims. This is an argument that does not support

your position. This is a point someone against your views would bring up.

However, you will use your supporting claim to refute it.

**Step 5:** Write your rough draft, then final copy, following the guide below.

### **First Paragraph: Introduction**

- Introduce the topic. Make sure to gain the reader's interest so that they will be interested in reading your essay
- Provide background on the topic and explain why it is important
- Take your stance: Show your position. You do this with your thesis statement.

Remember to start broad on the topic but definitely within the context of the topic, and then gradually lead to your thesis.

### **Body Paragraphs (For this essay you will have three)**

- Use one of your points of evidence in each paragraph to support your claim/prove your thesis true.
- In one of your three body paragraphs you need [to] refute a strong counter claim. You must take their argument serious and not mock it, but present well thought out facts showing that you have researched the topic (both sides) and therefore know what you are talking about (i.e., - Some people opposed to capital punishment believe that life long prison sentences are a viable option instead of

the death penalty, however this costs the tax-payers money and keeps the prison populations higher.)

**Last Paragraph: Conclusion**

- Restate your stance
- Draw everything together by supporting your introduction (restating your stance) and your body paragraphs in a strong manner
- Do not introduce any new information

Make sure you use signal words throughout your essay to introduce your essay, transition between paragraphs, and conclude your essay. A hand-out of signal words is being provided.