

PART I: THEORY

Unit 1: What is argumentative text?

Unit 2: How is argumentative text structured?

Unit 3: What reading skills are needed?

UNIT 1:

WHAT IS ARGUMENTATIVE TEXT?

OBJECTIVES:

- 1 Students recognise the cues that signal the argumentative text.**
- 2 Students are able to distinguish the argumentative text from the informative text.**

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WHAT IS ARGUMENTATIVE TEXT?

Browsing through newspaper, we see contents of different categories: editorials, politics, social news, arts and culture, science news, commentary etc. We can classify these different columns into two main categories, the informative text and the argumentative text. The first, which we have in the previous course dealt with, basically provides information, keeping the reader abreast of updates on events and situations. The latter which deals with this course reflects the writer's stance on a certain issue.

When reading an argumentative text, we should examine the writer's purpose, whether he wants to broaden our views on a particular subject, to convince us on an issue, to call for our action, to change our idea etc. Understanding the nature of the text and knowing the writer's intent in writing the text help us decide for ourselves whether to believe, behave or act as the writer attempts to persuade us to.

To read the argumentative text effectively, we must understand the fundamentals of the text. This unit deals with the nature of the argumentative text. We explore its distinctive features that render differences between the argumentative text and the informative text.

The argumentative text differs from the informative text in the following aspects:

1.1 ISSUE

When writing a text, the writer picks a topic and decides what he wants to write about such topic and how he plans to develop his piece.

With the informative text, the writer typically gives information about the topic which may come in a form of updates. For instance, if the writer chooses to write about the negative effects of television violence on children, he may develop his topic by listing evidence of negative effects inflicted on children of different ages.

With the argumentative text, however, the topic that the writer chooses to discuss tends to be controversial. There usually are different views on the topic. For instance, while most people agree that children should not be exposed to violence on television, many may be hesitant to support TV censorship. Many people prefer to make their own viewing choices whereas some people maintain that TV censorship is necessary.

The topic of the argumentative text is generally referred to as the **ISSUE** as it is essentially **ARGUABLE**. The subject of the informative piece is generally called the **TOPIC**.

1.2 THE GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE TEXT

Unlike informative text, whose main purpose is to give information, the argumentative text aims at expressing the writer's view on the issue and very likely persuading the reader to agree with him, to act in a certain way, to change position on the issue etc. For instance, such simple text as *'Sign Up for the Science Times Newsletter. Every week, we'll bring you stories that capture the wonders of the human body, nature and the cosmos'* certainly wants to sign up. In an article titled *'The Public have the Right to Decide'* the writer persuades the readers to veto television program censorship. An article entitled *'We must protect nature to conserve peoples' wellbeing'* clearly encourages the public to save the environment.

1.3 FACTS, OPINIONS AND THE WRITER'S OPINIONS

Facts are defined as *pieces of information that are known to be true* (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English).

Facts and opinions are used in both the informative and argumentative texts. Therefore, we can't distinguish one from the other by relying on whether or not the writer offers facts or opinions in his piece of writing.

Certainly, facts are abundant in reading selections we see everyday. Headline news aims to report facts; feature articles provide facts; results of the experiments cited in a research study are also facts.

Facts also appear in editorials, commentary, or op-ed articles which naturally reflect the writer's position. In using them, the writer strengthens his view, making his case more compelling.

Opinions are *ideas or beliefs about particular subject* (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English).

Opinions of experts are commonplace in news reports, feature articles etc. Usually, in the informative text, the opinions come either in the form of direct quotations or reported speech.

Opinions are abundant in editorials, commentary, op-ed articles. In the argumentative text, where the writer takes a stand on an issue, besides the opinions of authority, the writer's stand on the issue is *imperative*.

To sum up, facts and opinions are essential for and exploited in both informative and argumentative texts. Yet, they are used for different purposes. To understand their use, we have to first identify the writer's purpose. If the piece aims to give information, the given facts and opinions are used to support the topic. If the writer's position is identified, then the facts and opinions are used to support the writer's view and convince the reader.

1.4 LINGUISTIC FEATURES

Some words and phrases are typical of argumentative text. Recognising them facilitates our task in distinguishing an informative text from an argumentative text. Let's examine these features from the word level to the phrasal level.

1.4.1 WORDS

1.4.1.1 Verbs

Verbs are the first signals that help us determine if the piece is an argumentative text or an informative writing. The two main groups of verbs typical of argumentative writings are as follows.

1.4.1.1.1 Hedge verbs

These are verbs that the writer chooses to spare a room for challenging or for errors in her claim; they indicate the writer's reservation. The writer may slip in such verbs as seem, appear, look like, tend etc.

1.4.1.1.2 Reporting verbs

Not only do reporting verbs tell us the source of information—either facts or opinions, but their use may also reflect the writer's attitudes on the issue. Therefore, you should know the shade of meaning that comes with each verb, whether it suggests the writer's agreeing, disagreeing or neutral position.

The chart below summarises how the the writer's choice of verbs reflects his view. Note that some verbs can be used without suggesting any particular position, hence, their existence in all three columns.

Against	Neutral	For
criticise, disagree, argue, maintain, question, doubt, insist, deny, warn	cite, state, point out, say, believe, observe, reveal, explain, argue, emphasize, demonstrate, discuss, mention	agree, argue, maintain, support, hope, insist, claim, confirm, recommend, stress, understand

1.4.1.1.3 Modal Auxiliaries

Modal verbs are such verbs as can, could, shall, should, ought to, will, or would that are usually used with another verb to express ideas such as ability, possibility, necessity, and permission (Webster Dictionary). Modal auxiliary verbs are fairly reliable indicators of opinion. When the writer employs these verbs, the readers know they are dealing with argumentative texts. In an informative text, the use of modal auxiliary verbs is scarce except when authoritative opinions are directly quoted. Regardless of the text type, employing modal auxiliary verbs shows that the writer or the person quoted expresses reservation or is being tactful in putting forward his arguments.

EXAMPLE I

French Fashion Signs Charter Against Anorexia

The document, backed by the Health Ministry, asks signatories to promote "a diversity of body representations" and "not to show images of people that could help promote a model of extreme thinness." (2)

<http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/24035647/>

'Could', a modal verb, which indicates possibility, is used here. The use of quotation marks, you indicates that the writer directly quotes what is stipulated in the document, be it anyone involved. The modal auxiliary verbs do not appear

EXAMPLE II

Less Airbrushing, More Reality

We need to inject more realism into the media's portrayal of women (and men). We should protect young boys and girls from unnecessary body image pressure, so retouching models should be banned for adverts aimed at children. For the rest, the advert should be honest and upfront about how much digital manipulation has taken place. Real-sized models should be promoted. (5)

The use of modal auxiliary verbs is much richer in this text. There are four should's —expressing obligation. The writer strongly voices her view of the necessity of the media in presenting realism into their depiction of women by her use of 'need to'. Her recommendations to ensure the well-beings and mental health of boys and girls and for the media to morally and realistically do their jobs by her use of 'should' which is somewhat strong but not as instructive as 'must'. Note, though, that in EXAMPLE I, the writer uses direct quotes but not in EXAMPLE II. This is because the writer talks about her own view.

1.4.1.2 Adjectives

Evaluative adjectives are adjectives that represent judgement or evaluation of things or matters (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English). Examples include *necessary, evident, important* etc. As argumentative texts by their nature reflect the writer's opinion, the writer takes liberties with evaluative adjectives.

1.4.1.3 Words with connotative meanings

Words are said to have two layers of meanings. One is its basic meaning; the other involves emotions or feelings that readers associate with the word. Such ties vary and depend on each reader's experiences, values, and cultures.

In informative texts, the writer reports a situation or retells a story objectively, in argumentative writings, the writer often consciously selects words with subtle meanings to convey his feelings, beliefs and opinions. In other words, the informative writing contains more words of 'neutral' meaning. The argumentative texts, on the contrary, exhibit more of words that suggest positive or negative meanings, reflecting the writer's favourable or unfavourable position towards the issue.

EXAMPLE III

Study the following words and put the word in the appropriate columns.

- 1 paparazzi, reporters
- 2 smell, scent, odor
- 3 stalk, follow
- 4 vain, confident
- 5 fanatic, enthusiastic, active
- 6 admire, obsess, adore
- 7 adaptable, impulsive
- 8 publicise, disseminate, contaminate
- 9 disabled, handicapped
- 10 vocal, direct, blunt

Negative	Neutral	Neutral/Positive
1. Paparazzi	Reporters	
2. Odor	Smell	Scent
3. Stalk	Follow	
4. Vain		Self-Confident
5. Fanatic	Active	Enthusiastic
6. Obsess	Admire	Adore
7. Impulsive		Adaptable
8. Disseminate		Spread
9. Handicapped		Disabled
10. Vocal		Direct

1.4.1.4 Adverbs

The same story may be interpreted differently from one person to another. One teacher who reasoned her student's tardiness irresponsibility because she has taught the student before and the student behaved in the same way may think 'she *certainly* gets up late again'. Another teacher who has taught the same student for the first time may be more reluctant to blame the student and think '*Maybe* she has some problems that keep her from coming on time'. both 'certainly' and 'maybe' are aspective adverbs that suggest certainty.

In argumentative pieces, the writer expresses his judgement in his use of some adverbs. The following are classifications of such adverbs. (Celce-Maria and Larsen-Freeman, 1999)

- a *Probability*: certainly, maybe, perhaps
- b *Usuality*: generally, typically, occasionally
- c *Frequency*: always, usually, often, sometimes, hardly/scarcely/seldom, never
- d *Presumption*: of course, obviously, clearly, evidently
- e *Desirability*: (un)fortunately, luckily, hopefully, regrettably
- f *Evaluatibility*: absolutely, deeply, even, ever, only, squarely etc. (Lombardo, 1998)

EXAMPLE IV

Many of these images are not realistic. As technology has advanced, adverts are ever more retouched, airbrushed and detached from reality. Spots and blemishes are removed, complexions made flawless, waists and legs made slimmer by digital liposuction. Yet these are the images that young – and ever younger – girls are aspiring to. (2)

Cindy Crawford famously said: "Even I don't wake up looking like Cindy Crawford." (4)

The two instances of the adverbs--ever and even--hint us toward the writer's position. One is the writer's opinion—on the group of female teenagers who are influenced by the so-called perfect images. To her the idea has affected younger and younger girls. The other's is Crawford's. The supermodel knows she appears to look perfect to the public's eye, but contrary to what people believe, she acknowledges that she does not look that way without the digital dress up.

1.4.2 PHRASES:

The characteristic phrases used in argumentative writings correspond to their relative part in the text. The passive constructions are also popular (It is considered less subjective when such structure is used).

The phrases that can be used for the **INTRODUCTORY** paragraph(s) are

- ✓ It is generally believed that...
- ✓ In approaching this issue, one should...
- ✓ Nowadays, it is scarcely possible to ...

The following are phrases for introducing the **BODY** paragraphs.

- ✓ The first aspect to point out is that...
- ✓ Let us start by examining the facts.
- ✓ Moreover, it is evident that ...
- ✓ It is certainly possible to claim ...
- ✓ The opponents often argue that ...
- ✓ One cannot forget, however, that ...

The following phrases can introduce the **CONCLUSION**.

- ✓ From these arguments one can conclude that ...
- ✓ The arguments presented prove/indicate that ...

Note that while students are advised to use these signal phrases when writing an argumentative piece, authentic writers do not rely much on these phrases.

1.5 SOURCE

Informative writings and argumentative writings usually appear in different sections. Therefore, the section from which the reader consults the text can also help us decide what kind of texts we are dealing with.

EXAMPLE V

Informative Text	Argumentative/Persuasive Text
Textbook	Letters to editor
News article	Editorial
Feature article	Journal
Book review	Commentary
Encyclopedia entry	Op-Ed article
	Opinion
	Essay
	Speech

We have thus far examined the features of informative text and argumentative text. Now, let's use the criteria covered to examine the following texts and decide which of the two texts is the informative piece and which the argumentative one.

PRACTICE I

French Fashion Signs Charter Against Anorexia

PARIS - French fashion industry representatives signed a government-backed charter Wednesday pledging not to encourage eating disorders and to promote healthy body images. (1)

The document, backed by the Health Ministry, asks signatories to promote "a diversity of body representations" and "not to show images of people that could help promote a model of extreme thinness." (2)

The charter was signed by groups including the French Couture Federation, the French Federation for Women's Pret-a-Porter and the Union of Modeling Agencies, as well as some representatives of advertising and media. (3)

The international fashion industry has drawn criticism for hyping the super-thin look, and concerns about anorexia have grown in France — and around the world — since the reportedly anorexia-related deaths of several South American models in 2006, including Brazilian Ana Carolina Reston. (4)

Guidelines have been in place in France since the 1980s to regulate French modeling agencies, including mandatory medical visits for models under 16. (5)

In an attempt to promote healthy body images, the Madrid fashion show bans women whose body mass-to-height ratio is below 18, while Milan bans models below 18.5. (6)

Adapted from <http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/24035647/>

Less Airbrushing, More Reality

Open any magazine or newspaper, and you're bombarded with images of "perfect" women, advertising everything from cars to alcohol, deodorant to face cream. (1)

Many of these images are not realistic. As technology has advanced, adverts are ever more retouched, airbrushed and detached from reality. Spots and blemishes are removed, complexions made flawless, waists and legs made slimmer by digital liposuction. Yet these are the images that young – and ever younger – girls are aspiring to. (2)

The pressure to conform to such a narrow ideal of beauty can lead to unhappiness and low self-esteem for many women and girls. In some cases, this can contribute to eating disorders. Last year there was a worrying 47% rise in under-18s admitted to hospital for anorexia or bulimia treatment. Cosmetic surgery trends also give cause for concern, with breast enlargements and tummy tucks up 30% last year. (3)

Cindy Crawford famously said: "Even I don't wake up looking like Cindy Crawford." (4)

We need to inject more realism into the media's portrayal of women (and men). We should protect young boys and girls from unnecessary body image pressure, so retouching models should be banned for adverts aimed at children. For the rest, the advert should be honest and upfront about how much digital manipulation has taken place. Real-sized models should be promoted. (5)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/aug/05/women-adverts>

Directions: Complete the exercise that follows.

1.1 ISSUE or TOPIC

French Fashion Industry Signed Charter against Anorexia

1 Which of the following is the main idea of the text A?

_____ 1.1 A French government-back charter supporting healthy looks has been signed by its fashion industry.

_____ 1.2 There has been worldwide attempts to fight eating disorders and encourage healthy looks.

2 Could the idea in A.1 lead to disagreements?

—> No. Nobody is about to challenge the fact that this charter was signed.

3 What is the nature of the subject matter discussed in Text A?

_____ 3.1 Issue

_____ 3.2 Topic

Less Airbrushing, More Reality

4 What is the issue?

___ 4.1 Whether or not the media has influenced teens' self-esteem

___ 4.2 Whether or not the media has overly manipulated portrayal of women

5 Do you think everyone agrees that magazines cause all the problem stated in the text?

—> Probably not.

6 From # 5, what is the nature of the subject matter discussed in Text B?

___ 6.1 Issue

___ 6.2 Topic

1.2 THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE TEXT

1 Does the writer of Text A persuade the reader to act or to change their belief?

Negative. The reader is merely informed of what happened.

2 What is the writer's purpose in writing the text?

___ 2.1 Gives information

___ 2.2 Expresses opinion

1.3 FACTS, OPINIONS AND THE WRITER'S VIEW

The following statements capture the ideas from the two texts. Write in the space provided 'F' for 'fact' and 'O' for opinion and write 'F and O' for items that consist of both a fact and an opinion.

1.3.1 FACTS OR OPINIONS

French Fashion Signed Charter against Anorexia

___ 1 French fashion industry along with advertising and media signed a government-back charter.

___ 2 The charter requires the promotion of healthy body images and the limit of extremely thin model portrayal.

___ 3 The fashion industry has been blamed for encouraging extra-thin images.

___ 4 Deaths of anorexia-related models sparked concerns and brought about some measures in the fashion industry in many countries.

___ 5 In France, for girls under the age of 16 to become models, they need to pay a medical visit to ensure their health condition.

Less Airbrushing, More Reality

- ___ 1 Digitally manipulated images of women are commonplace magazines and newspapers.
- ___ 2 The technologies have been more advanced and the images have been manipulated than they were in the past.
- ___ 3 Real women do not look like those appear in the media.
- ___ 4 Many young girls aspire to become like these models.
- ___ 5 To these young girls, such looks are the norm of beauty .
- ___ 6 The pressure to meet the norm may cause unhappiness, low self-esteem and even eating disorders.
- ___ 7 Anorexia and bulimia admitted cases increased by almost 50% last year.
- ___ 8 The trend is worrying.
- ___ 9 Cosmetic surgery trends are troubling.
- ___ 10 Breast enlargement and tummy tucks was reportedly up by 30% last year.
- ___ 11 The real-life Cindy Crawford does not look as appeared on the magazines.
- ___ 12 Teenagers should be protected from unrealistic norm of 'beauty'.
- ___ 13 The adverts that target teenagers must not be retouched.
- ___ 14 The adverts that target other age groups must inform readers of their digital manipulation.
- ___ 15 Images of real-sized women should be promoted.

1.3.2 THE WRITER'S VIEW

1 Can you identify the writer's opinion on the topic?

No. We don't know what the writer feels about this. We can't say if he welcomes this move or disapproves of it.

What does the writer think about the subject matter?

- ___ a) The media's manipulated presentation of women is deceiving.
- ___ b) Teens should focus their attention to improving their quality not their looks.

Less Airbrushing, More Reality clearly exhibits the writer's stance. She objects to the idea of manipulating images of women. Teenagers who aspire such body image have eating problems, dissatisfaction with themselves, and low self-esteem. This is the writer's angle. Imagine what the fashion industry or the media would have to say. More to the point, would they agree that images cannot be retouched or airbrushed? In other words, whether portrayal of women should be left intact or can be manipulated is the 'issue' that definitely raise disagreements among different parties: the fashion industry, markets, photographers, medical professionals, academia, parents, the public etc.

We can see from the examples that in Text A, there would be no one to challenge the fact that the charter was signed by related parties in the fashion industry. Yet, when it comes to Text B, we may imagine some, for instance, the media, could maintain that airbrushing is anyhow needed in order that pleasant and ideal pictures of women can be presented, yet feminists could vehemently argue that such presentation disrespects women, misplacing feminine virtues.

1.4 LINGUISTICS FEATURES

The following examples, taken from the two texts, illustrate the use of these linguistics features. We can see the interplay of verbs, modals, evaluative adjectives, words of connotative meanings as well as adverbs put in good use.

Let's start with *French Fashion Industry Signed Charter against Anorexia*

EXAMPLE VI

...(1)

The document, backed by the Health Ministry, asks signatories to promote "a diversity of body representations" and "not to show images of people that could help promote a model of EXTREME thinness." (2)

'Extreme' (thinness) is an evaluative adjective, but appears in the quotation marks.

...(3)

The international fashion industry has drawn criticism for HYPING the SUPER-THIN look, and concerns about anorexia have grown in France — and around the world — since the reportedly anorexia-related deaths of several South American models in 2006, including Brazilian Ana Carolina Reston. (4)

Super-thin is the other evaluative adjective found and it's the writer's own word. There's yet 'hyping'—publicise extravagantly. writer's position on this move.

... (5)

While the writer reports the situation of the international fashion industry in her own terms, her word choices of 'hyping' the 'super-thin' look subtly reflects her attitude on the issue.

Yet, we can maintain that the text is the informative text as its main purpose is to inform the reader of the move by involved parties toward the catwalk of healthier models rather than criticism of the fashion industry.

EXAMPLE VII

Less Airbrushing, More Reality

Open any magazine or newspaper, and you're bombarded with images of "perfect" women, advertising everything from cars to alcohol, deodorant to face cream. (1)

Many of these images are not realistic. As technology has advanced, adverts are ever more retouched, airbrushed and detached from reality. Spots and blemishes are removed, complexions made flawless, waists and legs made slimmer by digital liposuction.

The writer shows her disapproval of digitally enhanced images of women in the media by using bombard which means give too many of. In this context, she feels that

Quite a few adjectives including '(not) Realistic, detached, flawless and slimmer' are employed to describe how image manipulation or in her coined words 'digital liposuction' created 'unreal' images.

Yet these are the images that young – and ever younger – girls are aspiring to. (2)

The pressure to conform to such a narrow ideal of beauty can lead to unhappiness and low self-esteem for many women and girls... (3)

Cindy Crawford famously said: "Even I don't wake up looking like Cindy Crawford." (4)

We need to inject more realism into the media's portrayal of women (and men). We should protect young boys and girls from unnecessary body image pressure, so retouching models should be banned for adverts aimed at children. For the rest, the advert should be honest and upfront about how much digital manipulation has taken place. Real-sized models should be promoted. (5)

In paragraph 5, the use of modal auxiliary verbs is abundant. There are four 'should's expressing recommendations. The writer calls for the well-being and mental health of boys and girls to be depicted and the media to morally and realistically do their jobs by her use of 'should', which is somewhat strong but comparatively less instructive than 'must'.

In paragraph 3, the writer disagrees with the ideal of beauty set forth by possibly designers, photographers and the media. Her view of beauty obviously embraces healthiness and naturalness. For these

In paragraph 4, interestingly, the writer uses famously which carries positive meaning. This, however, effectively suits the writer's purpose in arguing against manipulation of image. The writer quotes the supermodel Cindy Crawford saying that she does not look as gorgeous as seen on the covers of the magazines. Touting such admission, the writer carefully chooses famously to describe Crawford's statement. Also, we see the adverb 'even', where the supermodel admitted that her gorgeous look on the cover of a magazine doesn't come naturally.

To sum up, *Less Airbrushing, More Reality* has a lot more of the characteristics of the argumentative text than *French Fashion Signed Charter against Anorexia*.

PRACTICE II

Directions: Use the guidelines above to examine which of the following texts is an argumentative text.

Buying School Homework – Who Are The Takers?

It is shocking to hear that students in the height of their laziness and distractions have begun to buy papers for submission in their school assignments. Gone are the days when you spent time to excel in your studies giving up even the simplest of enjoyments and ensured that you do not miss out on even few marks in class assignments. (1)

Buying school homework is the worst thing that can ever happen. The very aim of making students learn the subject and a skill is completely lost with students adopting such mean practices. (2)

You have the whole life to enjoy! School time is meant for you to harness the basic skills of life and make yourself the deserved to get the best in life. You can enjoy as well! Finish your studies in time and there you go enjoying, both with the sense of satisfaction and happiness. (3)

But today's American youngsters prefer buying work than doing it! It's a shame!! Whom do you think you are cheating? No one but your own self! There are close to 183 million

sites offering to sell term papers. Outsourcing as a concept is having the worst of transformations where students outsource their homework to some third person and pay for the crap offered by them. This is no way for a healthy competition. (4)

Websites such as www.acceptedpapers.com and www.perfectpapers.com are the so called paper mills that offer to write papers on behalf of students and sell the same to them for a price as high as \$8 per paper. These paper mills offer to write essays for students within their time deadlines. They also make statements like "an evening out with your friends is more important than writing an essay for your school assignment" (5)

Talking to some educationalist and teachers, this is what they had to say. Carol Zoref a teacher at Sarah Lawrence College New York commented that such articles are too awful to read and was sure her students will any day write better. She also said that the paper had too many grammatical mistakes and vocabulary mistakes and that the students do not even get something worth the price they pay. (6)

Educators when asked about the trend of buying term papers by students, all they had to say was that students simply wasted their time and their parent's money and finally ended up learning nothing and cheating themselves. (7)

A high school teacher was of the opinion that having been through the student's day to day writing, it was very easy for them to identify a different work submitted by them and hence the students will be easily caught. (8)

The same technology which offered the students to help writing papers for them has also helped teachers find the same through internet. All the teacher needs to do is copy paste a paragraph from a suspicious paper into the Google search box and there you have the website from which the paper was lifted. (9)

You achieve nothing by not even trying to do something. In short teachers and educators feel sad for students who have resorted to such cheap tricks to meet their deadlines, instead of working hard for them. (10)

In Us, Some Students Buy -- Not Try -- To Excel At School

President Barack Obama may have hammered home a message of noses-to-the-grindstone as the secret to success at school in his speech to US students this week, but some American youngsters prefer buying their homework to doing it. (1)

A Google search for "buy term paper" turned up 183 million sites, some of which, such as acceptedpapers.com, offer to write students' papers for them when they are "unable to be creative for an essay" or would "rather enjoy a night out than write a book report at the library." (2)

Another service, perfecttermpapers.com, offers hard-pressed students "non-plagiarized research papers and term papers within your deadline written by qualified American writers" for prices starting at around eight dollars. (3)

Perfect Term Papers says it understands the needs and worries of students -- things like "how difficult is it to begin writing term paper/research paper when an evening out is equally important" or "when you might drop-dead the next minute due to exhaustion." (4)

The dozen "paper mill" websites visited by AFP provide samples that would-be clients can consult online to verify the high quality of work that will be produced, in the student's name, by the essay-writing services. (5)

Or, in some cases, the not-so-high quality of work. (6)

Perfect Term Papers posted a sample paper on artificial intelligence, which began: "Intelligence, in any form, is the computational part of the ability to accomplish particular task or achieve goals in the life." (7)

"The main problem is that despite of advancements, we still cannot distinguish in general what kinds and levels of computational procedures you want to call intelligent," the paper continued. (8)

And a paper comparing Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" to J. D. Salinger's "Catcher in the Rye" posted on dreamessays.com began with the line: "The forthcoming of American literature proposes two distinct Realistic novels portraying characters which are tested with a plethora of adventures." (9)

"This paper is just too awful to read. I would be mortified if one of my students handed it in," said Carol Zoref, who teaches a course at Sarah Lawrence College in New York called "Narrative Design," which often deals with Huckleberry Finn. (10)

The paper was "overflowing with grammar mistakes, vocabulary mistakes, and nonsensical repetition," Zoref told AFP. Her advice to a student who submitted it would be "to get their money back." (11)

Students who buy their papers are not only wasting their money but are naive to think they might pull the wool over their teachers' eyes, educators say. (12)

"What gives it away for me is that the writing is so very different from the daily work the student has been turning in," high school English and writing teacher Marilyn told AFP. (13)

These days, too, the source that has given students easy access to papers written by others, the Internet, has also made it easier for teachers to check to see if the essay was written by the student who submitted it. (14)

"I take a selection of the text of a suspicious paper and paste it into the Google search box or turnitin.com," said Marilyn, who withheld her last name. (15)

"If it is a copied paper from the Internet, the exact paper service is one of the hits on my search," she said. (16)

Zoref agreed that it would be easy for a teacher to tell if a term paper were a student's own work or the product of a paper mill. (17)

"Every student has a musical quality to their writing. Passing off someone else's writing as your own -- it's like Ella Fitzgerald trying to sing like Aretha Franklin. (18)

"They have different musical qualities and their own unique voices and when they start to sing like someone else, you know it's just not their tune," she said, adding: "Like the president said, there's no excuse for not trying." (19)

<http://news.abs-cbn.com>

EXERCISE

1.1 ISSUE or TOPIC

1 Which of the two texts is the 'argumentative text'?

Hint: Which text shows the writer's stance?

Buying School Homework – Who are the Takers?

2 Identify the issue in the text that you consider an 'argumentative' text.

Hint: What would the teacher say about buying papers for schoolwork?
What about the students—what would their excuses be?

Should students take an easy way out by buying school papers?

1.2 THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE TEXT

1 Which text seeks to persuade or convince the reader to change his view and/or his act?

___ a *Buying School Homework – Who are the Takers?*

___ b *In US, some students buy -- not try -- to excel at school*

2 What is the writer's purpose in writing the text?

___ a to give information

___ b to express his opinion

1.3 FACTS, OPINIONS AND THE WRITER'S VIEW

1 Copy one fact and an opinion from each text. For the opinion, also state whose opinion each is.

2 In which text is the writer's position on the issue evident?

___ 2.1 *Buying School Homework – Who are the Takers?*

___ 2.2 *In US, some students buy -- not try -- to excel at school*

1.4 LINGUISTIC FEATURES

1 "But today's American youngsters prefer buying work than doing it! It's a shame".

Buying School Homework – Who are the Takers?

Identify the word or phrase that suggests 'personal opinion'. Whose opinion is the statement?

- 2 "What gives it away for me is that the writing is so very different from the daily work the student has been turning in," high school English and writing teacher Marilyn told AFP.

In US, some students buy -- not try -- to excel at school

Identify the word or phrase that suggest 'personal opinion'.

Note: We can see that *Buying School Homework – Who are the Takers?* is filled with linguistic features that we have looked at. Moreover, the writer's view on the issue of buying school homework is clear from the onset.

Before we move on to **UNIT 2: HOW IS THE ARGUMENTATIVE TEXT STRUCTURED?**, let's take note of the following.

- 1.1 *The topic usually draws different views. Therefore, it is referred to as the 'issue'.*
- 1.2 *The main purpose of an argumentative text is to express the writer's view on a particular issue.*
- 1.3 *The piece 'must' contain the writer's opinion, stated or implied, to qualify as an argumentative text.*
- 1.4 *The use of certain types of verbs, adjectives, adverbs also suggests the piece is an argumentative one.*
- 1.5 *Texts of the argumentative nature include editorials, opinions, commentary etc.*