

Argumentative Writing – U.S. History B The Vietnam War

Directions: Historians often debate over the decision the United States made to enter the Vietnam War. This will be your opportunity to evaluate the United State’s decision to enter the war. You will use your textbook to read about the Vietnam War (pages 766-804). You will also need to read the following online articles:

<http://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/r/record-war.html>

The title of your essay will be “**The Vietnam War.**” You must make a claim of either “The United States made the correct decision to enter the Vietnam War” or “The United States should not have entered the Vietnam War.”

Step 1) Read through the pages in the text, and the online articles

Step 2) Review the vocabulary below

Step 3) Fill out the graphic organizer on the back

Step 4) Confer with a fellow student after finishing your outline/organizer going over each. Make sure you both have a **counter claim** and arguments.

Step 5) Write your essay taking 4 paragraphs to: 1) Explain the origins of the war in Vietnam, and state your claim (at the end of the first paragraph), 2) make arguments for it, citing evidence, 3) **identify a counter claim** and make arguments based on evidence, 4) Concluding paragraph summing it up

Academic Vocabulary

- a. *Claim:* the writer’s position on an issue
- b. *Argument:* Reason that supports the writer’s claim (several arguments needed in an essay)
- c. *Counter claim:* the opposite claim on the issue
- d. *Counter argument:* Reasons that support the opposite
- e. *Evidence:* Facts, information, details, etc that give credence to the argument/counterargument
- f. *Text:* article, book, video, website, speech, letter, document, dissertation, scientific or technical report, newscast, podcast, etc

Argument Writing

1. Topic: Think of this as a title – does not have to be a sentence.		
2. Claim: This is your stance, thesis, or position. You must write your claim in a complete sentence. (Everything else after the claim <i>must relate back to the claim</i> . No “extra” information that is off-topic!)		
3. Arguments These are broad, general, statement. (Include at least 1 counter-argument) Write as a complete sentence(s).	4. Evidence to support your argument These are specific, fact-based pieces of information. They may be listed as bullet points. Include more than one source of evidence, if possible. <i>Be sure to cite the source of each piece of evidence.</i>	5. Explain why How does your evidence support the argument on the left? How are they related?

