English for Academic and Professional Purposes

Module 4
Writing the Position Paper
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Module 4
Writing the Position Paper
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What I need to Know

For the learners

Hi, welcome to another module of this book. In this module, you will be writing different types of position paper. This will help you understand the problems, and issues of the world today. This will allow you to share your opinions, thoughts, and arguments and to reason with factual evidence. Rev up your writing skills, take a stand and assert your opinion.

This module will help you gain a better perspective on an issue, and will teach you how to develop a position paper. The aim of this lesson is to convince the reader believing in your argument. You will also be guided how to assert your argument in a particular issue.

Objectives
After going through this module, you are expected to:

1. Define what a position paper is
2. Identify situation in which a position paper may be effectively used in our present society
3. Gather manifestos and analyze the arguments used by the writers
4. Defend a stand on an issue by presenting reasonable arguments supported by properly cited factual evidence; and
5. Write various kinds of position paper

General Instructions
To have a good grasp of this module, do the following:

1. Read the selected readings provided in the lesson.
2. Understand the given issue and cultivate awareness for a better understanding of the world we live in today;
3. Finalize your position paper make sure to support your arguments. You can read other valuable reading materials that are relevant to your stance.
For the Facilitators:

1. Introduce the lesson on position paper. Engage learners to do the activities religiously, and let the learners carry the tasks at ease.

2. Do the What I Know: Instruct the learners to answer the questions to test how far they know what position paper is.

3. Do the activity What’s New: Activate the learners' schema by letting them answer the jumbled letters relating problems using technology and social media.

4. Allow students to read in What is It. Let the learners capture Francis J. Kong's opinion on smart technology.

5. Let the learners answer the activities on What's More. Check if they have understood the article. Deepen their understanding by completing the guided questions on what I have learned section.

6. Assign the students to do What I can Do activities whether they are ready to state their claims.
What I know

Test I. Directions: Read the following statements and choose the letter of the correct answer.

1. A position paper is sometimes called_____________.
   A. concept paper  B. technical report
   C. point of view paper  D. critique paper

2. The following are essential in writing the position paper, except
   A. Introduce the topic
   B. provide background on the topic to explain why it is important
   C. assert the thesis
   D. provide explanation but not the evidence

3. It is a one-sentence statement about the topic.
   A. thesis  B. argument  C. main idea  D. introduction

4. What source to use if you are doing introductory information and overviews?
   A. books, government reports  B. academic journals
   C. newspapers, magazines  D. directories, encyclopedias, handbooks

5. The following are asked to present a strong argument, except
   A. Is it a real issue, with genuine controversy and uncertainty?
   B. Can you identify at least two distinctive positions
   C. Is this a lengthy issue?
   D. Are you personally interested in advocating one of these positions?
You have learned in the previous module on how to develop a concept paper. It guides you to prepare a short summary that tells the reader about the project and its importance. It also prepares you to shape your academic writing skills. Now you are ready to step up.

**What’s New**

**Activity 1.1** Rearrange the letter to form words. Hint: problems and issues of today

1. P R E N S S I O D E
2. I N G Y U L L B Y C B E R
5. E S A M  X S E  E G M R R A I A

**What is It**

**LESSON 1** WHAT IS A POSITION PAPER?

**Key Points**

A position paper is an essay that expresses a position on an issue. It gives arguments that support the opinion of the writer based on the facts collected. Are you ready to express your opinion? How to organize your position paper? Follow these easy steps to develop your position paper. This outline helps you organize your paper as easy as 123.

**Introduction**

You have to introduce the topic, and then provide history or background of the issue. You may also describe the issue on-hand so do your research.
Body

You have to state the opposing argument by briefly describing them. You may also include details that support the opposing claim. Then, after writing the counter argument, now write your argument and give your point of view. Provide evidence that support your claim. Now you state your second argument followed by your third argument. Make sure to provide details that support the argument given.

Conclusion

Now, you can restate both sides of the argument, summarize the three arguments made in your essay. Lastly, provide a call for action.

Smart Technology is Here

- Francis J. Kong (The Philippine Star) - June 24, 2018 - 12:00am

Technology is changing things. Sometimes, we are so enamored with all the new gadgets and other shiny objects; we scrape up a lot of money from our hard-earned savings just to make sure we have them lest we lag behind.

Technology does not only change things, it has transformed the way we lived and the rate of change is accelerating. Consider the changes that have happened over the years. After the years following the Civil War, there were a handful of technologies that reconfigured existence.

Thomas Edison’s light bulb extended the working day and may have created the workaholic.

The air-conditioner provided cool and comfort for hot and humid days and it pushed us indoors all day, causing the reduction of our vitamin D levels.

The jet engine have shrunken distance but increased the scope of business as in warfare.

Radio and television spread information on massive scales which penetrated homes and private spaces, and shaped culture.
Appliances sped up our tasks and chores, but reduced our physical strength. Computers reduced outdoor activities but, in its stead, created an industry called fitness gyms.

Smart phones became the universal device for almost every technology application, and at the same time have raised our stress and tension levels. Social media has been able to bridge people from across the world, yet has isolated the people nearest them.

This is strange but it seems like the more social media one uses, the less social he or she becomes.

Technology has now created new businesses that the world has never seen before. Suddenly, YouTube stars that would ever have had the slightest opportunity to flash their faces on the TV or movie screens and become overnight stars, and earn millions to the consternation of their parents who still believe that they should get a “real job.”

Even the way I go to sleep and the way I wake up from my sleep has been altered by technology. For the past two to three years, I have not physically set my alarm clock to the time I need to get up to start the day. I have always said, “Alexa, wake me up tomorrow morning at 6:15 a.m. to the sound of classical music.” And then, my A.I.-enabled cylinder that I purchased from Amazon.com will respond: “Alarm set tomorrow morning at 8 o’clock to classical focus on amazon music.” And it does.

Now, expect more of this to happen. More people will be talking to their devices. Google home products, Apple’s Home pod, and Amazon’s Echo are all competing in this field. This might pose as a challenge for people to be reminded that when they talk to humans, they should still communicate with grace and respect. With machines, one can be rude, impatient and be ill-mannered wanting to get the information we want but humans are not machines. I can be awakened by Alexa with its classical music playing and in my still foggy mind and half-wakefulness say, “Alexa, shut up: and it does stop. But can you imagine me talking this way to my clients or my family?

Smart technology is now similar to media in its ability to shape our lives in a thousand ways and in even more pervasive means. We have even witnessed the rise of fake news and false content, and have seen how many young people have become bashers and bullies, cussing and cursing in loud voices instead of improving their arguments through intelligent conversations to the benefit of no one but perhaps, to a handful of marketing people whose sole mission in life is to create noise, traffic, and click counts to raise up ad revenues for their sites. Technology can diminish emotional intelligence as those who are immersed in it become socially and emotionally lazy, thanks to all the screens in our lives.

Geoffrey Fowler already has a sinister name for this fake news and false contents in social media as he calls it: “counterfeit reality.” I guess what has happened over the years is that civilization driven by mass media and technology has replaced our preference from a culture of character to a culture of personality.

Technology will not go away. It is not a passing fad. Businesses will be challenged, jobs will possibly be replaced, and so we should learn it, know more about
it and most importantly use it for good and not as a means to justify the means and in many cases… the “mean-ness.”

Famous book author and professor Adam Grant whom I had the privilege of meeting and interviewing years ago says this beautifully:

“We could” – refers to the creativity we can employ through smart technology.
“We should” – refers to the ethical and moral decisions we need to consider in its usage.

I am interested in technology developments. I am sure it will improve many people’s lives, but the same materials can also be used to advance evil and harm. Therefore, we need to be reminded that technology is moral-neutral. It is still the heart of the person using it that matters. Use technology for what matters most and that is for the good — for everyone’s sake.

Source: https://www.philstar.com/business/2018/06/24/1827252/smart-technology-here#7dKHY4z5uOELqVFO.99

What’s More

Activity 1.2

1. What is the opinion of the writer about technology?
(State the writer’s position)

2. Do you agree with the writer? Why? Why not?
(Helpful Tip: Useful Expression in agreeing or disagreeing with the views of others. I agree with the writer’s claim that… I don’t agree with the authors ideas/thoughts… because…)

3. State the first argument of the writer?
The first argument of the writer is
4. What is the conclusion of the writer?
(Helpful Tip: Useful Expression in Drawing Conclusion Using the Work of Others Based on the writer, a connection can be made between...or As a conclusion...)

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5. If you were to write a position paper what will be your stance about technology?
(Helpful Tip: Useful Expression in presenting your own point of view... I strongly believe that... I think/contend that...)

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What I Have Learned

The position paper is an academic writing in which viewpoints are expressed. The goal of writing a position paper is to convince the audience, and that the arguments are valid, and substantial.

GETTING DEEPER!
Lesson:

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

What I want to say about the lesson:
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What I found out:
___________________________________________________________________
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Activity 1.4 Stating your Claims. Do you agree or disagree legalizing same sex marriages in our country? Why? Why not?

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Activity 1.5 Point your Reasons. What is your stand on the increasing rates of **TEENAGE PREGNANCY**? State your main idea or claim and supporting arguments on the table provided.

**Main Idea/Claim:** *(A claim is an idea or arguable opinion that you have come up with on a given issue)*

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

**Reason/Evidence:** *(Your reasons should support your claim and opinion based on facts)*
Activity 1.6 Know your Stand. Write a three-paragraph essay stating your position on the use of social media, will you consider it as a boon or bane?

(Write your own title)

Introduction: (In the introduction part you should capture the reader’s attention, define the issue given and state your claim.)

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Body: (State three arguments then cite the evidence supporting your arguments)

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Activity 1.6  Know your Stand.

Write a three-paragraph essay stating your position on the use of social media; will you consider it as a boon or bane?

__________________________

(Write your own title)

Introduction:  
(In the introduction part you should capture the reader's attention, define the issue given and state your claim.)

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Body:  
(State three arguments then cite the evidence supporting your arguments)

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Conclusion:  
(This part includes restating your claim, summarizing reasons and explaining why your stand/claim is worthy to read)

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Source: https://eng.ucmerced.edu/people/awesterling/SPR2014.ESS141/Assignments/rubric2.pdf
What’s New

What are the different issues in your school, community and country? And what is your stand about it?

Social Media

Smoking

Legalization of Divorce

Bullying

Giving of Homework to Students

What is It

Lesson 2

Defending a Stand on an Issue and Writing a Position Paper

Your claim is your position/stand on a particular issue, which is what you are going to defend in your position paper. You should base your claim on what you can prove on your evidences.
LET’S CLAIM IT!

The table below shows example of issues and its possible claims/stand or position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>CLAIM/STAND/POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL MEDIA</td>
<td>- Social media gives negative effect on students’ academic performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Social media is helpful to students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEGALIZATION OF DIVorce</td>
<td>- Divorce should not be legalized in the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Divorce will help unhappy couples to give themselves chance to love again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BULLYING</td>
<td>- Bullying affect students’ behaviour in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bullying will not affect students’ behaviour in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMOKING</td>
<td>- Smoking should be banned in public places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Smoking is a choice and people should have freedom to do whatever makes them happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOMEWORK</td>
<td>- Homework should be mandatory to students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Homework gives students less time for recreation and family time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TAKE NOTE!

To be able to defend your own stand on an issue, you have to take note of the following:

- Clearly identify the issue that you believe is affecting you and your community. You can have 2 or more issues.
- From the issues that you identified, take on a side that you can defend.
- Given the issues that you chose, identify other concepts or ideas that you can associate with the issues.
- Formulate statements that will express your stand towards the issues. These statements may convey the message that the issues are having negative effects on people and the community.
✓ Gather factual evidences to support your arguments regarding the issue. This evidence may be taken from official statement of the government agencies, political leaders and academic authorities.
✓ Make sure that your statements are strong enough to convince or persuade your readers into action to address the issue.

What’s More

Activity 2 - READING

Should Homework be Mandatory?

I can almost see many students nodding along with me as I ask this question. Younger generations overloaded with home tasks and numerous assignments have already raised this issue many times.

Yet, homework remains mandatory.

Is it fair or should it be cancelled?

I believe that homework should not be viewed as a mandatory part of education for several reasons.

First, children spend seven hours every single work day at school. That is a huge chunk of life, and with homework added on top of these hours, a child is left with no time to live his life to the fullest, socialize, or grow in other areas.

Second, sitting at your desk solving problems does no good to your health. Kids need time to get outside and have some fun, join a football league, or ride their bikes with friends around the block. Otherwise, children will be very smart but surprisingly weak physically.

Another argument against this position is that homework is not always the best way to obtain knowledge quality-wise. Students tend to ask their parents or siblings for help whenever facing difficulties. Busy parents not always willing to spend extra time explaining school material to their little one solve the problems themselves aiming to have more time for family, not lessons. As a result, the child will have the homework done. But that’s really not his work. So, the whole idea of dedicating time to self-education is lost here.

Finally, knowing that after classes you would still have to work at home makes a kid less concentrated at school. This results in short attention spans and difficulty to concentrate on something for too long.
All in all, homework should rather be an option. Students understanding that they are left behind at some subjects will take their time to go over the material at home. However, in other cases, they should have time after school for other activities.


Guide Questions:
1. What is the position paper about?

2. What is/are the claim/s of the writer?

3. If you were the writer, what will be your stand? Defend your answer.

What I Have Learned

In writing a position paper, you should take note of the following:

- consider issue/topic that is truly controversial at present and that it is worth discussing.
- knowing where you stand on a particular issue is essential in writing a position paper.
- base your stand on what you can prove on your evidences.

GETTING DEEPER!

Lesson:

What I want to say about the lesson:

What I found out:

From the issues in the chart below, defend your stand by writing a position paper with the intention of convincing your reader to support your stand. Write your position paper on the space provided for.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>STAND/CLAIM/POSITION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
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<td>Legalization of Marijuana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dating/PDA Among Students in School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Uniform</td>
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(Write your position paper here on the issue of your choice.)

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Assessment

Test I. Directions: Read the following statements and answer the following questions.

1. A position paper is sometimes called_____________.
   a. concept paper    b. technical report
   c. point of view paper    d. critique paper

2. The following are essential in writing the position paper, except
   a. Introduce the topic
   b. provide background on the topic to explain why it is important
   c. assert the thesis
   d. provide explanation but not the evidence

3. It is a one-sentence statement about the topic.
   a. thesis argument    c. main idea    d. introduction

4. What source to use if you are doing introductory information and overviews?
   a. books, government reports    b. academic journals
   c. newspapers, magazines    d. directories, encyclopedias, handbooks

5. The following are asked to present a strong argument, except
   a. Is it a real issue, with genuine controversy and uncertainty?
   b. Can you identify at least two distinctive positions
   c. Is this a lengthy issue?
   d. Are you personally interested in advocating one of these positions?

Test II.

1. In your own words, what is a position paper?

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2. List all possible issues/concerns that the country is facing today.

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3. In what ways you can develop your arguments?

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___________________________________________________________________
MODULE 4

What I Know

Test I.
1. B
2. D
3. A
4. D
5. C

What's New

Activity 1.1
1. DEPRESSION
2. CYBERBULLYING
3. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
4. TEENAGE PREGNANCY
5. SAME SEX MARRIAGE

What’s More

Activity 1.2
1. Answers may vary
2. Answers may vary
3. Answers may vary
4. Answers may vary
5. Answers may vary

Activity 1.3 Getting Deeper
Answers may vary

Activity 1.4 Answers may vary

Activity 1.5 Answers may vary

Activity 1.6 Answers may vary

Module 4 Lesson 2

Activity 2.1 Answers may vary

Activity 2.2 Getting Deeper
Answers may vary

Activity 2.3 Answers may vary
Assessment

Test I.
1. B
2. D
3. A
4. D
5. C

Test II.
1. The position paper is an academic writing in which viewpoints are explained and justified with valid arguments.
2. Answers may vary.
3. Answer may vary.
MODULE 4

References

Books


Online Sources

Kong, Francis J. “Smart Technology is Here”. [https://www.philstar.com/business/2018/06/24/1827252/smart-technology-here#7dKHY4z5uOELqVFO.99](https://www.philstar.com/business/2018/06/24/1827252/smart-technology-here#7dKHY4z5uOELqVFO.99)

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