Objectives:

1. Students will research an issue in American society that influences one’s ability to achieve the American Dream.
2. Students will be able to write an argumentative essay that incorporates alternative and opposing views. Specifically, students will write an argument taking a position on the feasibility of achieving the American Dream in the twenty-first century.
3. Students will incorporate sources researched and referenced in their journals.
4. Students will organize their argument by developing claim and counterclaim paragraphs.
5. Students will create a Works Cited page which includes four sources from their research and two sources from either their current events journals or the American Dream Resource Packet (6 sources total).

Common Core Standard W.9–10.1:
Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Organizing the Argument Essay

Introduction: (5-6 sentences)-Summarize the nature of the debate surrounding the factor and its influence on the American Dream. Address the proponents and the critics to the debate. Then take a side. You will either argue that research reveals that achieving the American Dream IS or IS NOT feasible for Americans today when considering the factor you have chosen for your research.

Three Body Paragraphs (Your examples should include a mixture of logos and pathos found from your research).

- **Claim 1**: (8-12 sentences)-This paragraph should focus on the first reason why you have taken your position. You must incorporate/embed at least two specific examples from your research. These examples should come from different sources, and you should explain how each example either demonstrates that achieving the American Dream IS or IS NOT feasible. Transition to the next reason. (Your examples should include a mixture of examples of logos and pathos found from your research).

- **Claim 2**: (8-12 sentences)-This paragraph should focus on the second reason why you have taken your position. You must incorporate/embed at least two specific examples from your research. These examples should come from different sources, and you should explain how each example either demonstrates that achieving the American Dream IS or IS NOT feasible. Transition to the opposition. (Your examples should include a mixture of examples of logos and pathos found from your research).

- Acknowledging the opposition and developing a refutation (8-12 sentences)- This paragraph should acknowledge the opposing side/argument to this issue. Comment on the nature or the tension or conflict that exists between the proponents and critics of the factor you researched. You must cite one example from research acknowledging to the opposition, but then include one more example from research to demonstrate why the opposing argument lacks credibility.

Conclusion and proposal (6-8 sentences)- While referencing the conflict you addressed in body paragraph three, propose a solution to this issue. Develop a plan which includes concrete steps or actions stakeholders should implement to solve the problem. What should be changed? Reformed? How can society make improvements? How would the notion of achieving the American Dream be influenced as a result this proposal?
Factors that Influence the American Dream
(Choose ONE to research further for your argument)

- Poverty
- Hunger
- Homelessness
- Healthcare
- Employment
- Unemployment
- Home Ownership
- National Debt
- Consumer Debt
- Recession
- Political Corruption
- Discrimination (age, gender, race, culture, religion, disability)
- Wealth and prosperity
- Immigration Challenges
- Protection of the Homeland
- Military Services
- Right to Bear Arms
- Education
- Entrepreneurship
- Innovations
- Manufacturing
- Technological Advances
- Press and the Media
- Speech and Demonstration
- Religious Freedom
- Family
**Introduction**

**Summarize** the nature of the debate surrounding the factor (topic of your research) and its influence on the American Dream.

**Address the proponents and critics** to the debate. What does each side say about the factor’s influence on one’s ability to achieve the American Dream?

**Take a side.** Either argue that research reveals that the American Dream IS or IS NOT possible. **DO NOT SAY ‘I’**.

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**Body Paragraphs**

*(Research Examples should include a mixture of pathos and logos)*

**Claim 1:**

**State the first reason** in support of your position

**Research Example #1** (quotation with appropriate in-text citation)

**Commentary and analysis** of how the example furthers the argument of the essay.

**Research Example #2** (quotation from a new source with appropriate in-text citation)

**Commentary and analysis** of how the example furthers the argument of the essay.

**Transition statement** leading to the next paragraph
**Conclusion**

Reference the conflict you mentioned in the previous paragraph

Propose a solution to the problem. Include a detailed plan of how to address the problem.

How would the plan influence the notion of one’s ability to achieve the American Dream?
**Acknowledging the opposition and developing a refutation:**

State an argument that could be made by the **opposition** to your argument.

Research Example #5 from the opposition (quotation from a **new source** with appropriate in-text citation).

Commentary and analysis of how the example reveals the nature of the conflict that exists between proponents and critics.

State the reason why the oppositions argument in flawed.

Research Example #6 (quotation from a **new source** with appropriate in-text citation)

Commentary and analysis of how the example discredits the opposition and furthers the overall argument of your essay.

Transition statement leading to the conclusion.
Rubric for the Argument Essay (100 Summative Points)

9 (A 95-100)- Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for 8 papers and, in addition, are especially full or apt in their explanation of the factor and how it makes the dream possible or impossible and particularly impressive in control of language.

8 (A 90-94)- Essays earning a score of 8 effectively respond to the prompt. They refer to the research sources explicitly or implicitly and explain how specific quotations reveal the possibility or impossibility of the American Dream. Their prose demonstrates an ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not flawless.

7 (B 85-89)- Essays earning a score of 7 fit the description of 6 essays but provide a more complete explanation of how the factor makes the dream possible or impossible or demonstrates a more mature prose style.

6 (B 80-84)- Essays earning a score of 6 adequately respond to the prompt. They refer to research sources, explicitly or implicitly, but their discussion is more limited. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

5 (C 75-79)- Essays earning a score of 5 explain the factors, but they may provide uneven or inconsistent explanations of how the factor makes the dream possible or impossible. They may treat the prompt in a superficial way or demonstrate a limited understanding of the research or the prompt. While the writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, it usually conveys ideas adequately.

4 (C 70-74)- Essays earning a score of 4 respond to the prompt inadequately. They may misrepresent the research sources, inaccurately interpret them, or offer little discussion of how the factor makes the dream possible or impossible. The prose generally conveys the writer's ideas but may suggest immature control of writing.

3 (D 65-69)- Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria of the score of 4 but are less perceptive about the prompt or less consistent in controlling the elements of the assignment.

2 (D 60-64) Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate little success in responding to the prompt. These essays may offer vague generalizations with insufficient explanation of the factors. The prose often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing.

1 (E 50%)- Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for the score of 2 but are undeveloped, especially simplistic in discussion, or weak in their control of language.