Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel has said that indifference “is the epitome of evil.” His book *Night*, and the speeches we have evaluated in class, inspire us to never forget, to refuse to be indifferent or apathetic about the problems around us. There are many injustices happening in the world, some right in our backyard and some halfway around the world. There are many ways to effect change but all require action to be taken in some way. Think about ways you can evoke change in the world, even if it is just one small corner of it.

**YOUR TASK:**

1. **Choose** an issue you feel strongly about (global or local).
2. **Research** background information on the issue, as well as the various solutions that have been proposed (**3 sources are required**).
3. **Determine** YOUR position on the issue.
4. **Identify** who has the power to do something about the issue now.
5. **Using proper business letter format** (sample model provided), write a detailed persuasive letter which incorporates AT LEAST FOUR (On Level) or SIX (Honors) different rhetorical devices that employ three of the persuasive appeals (PATHOS, ETHOS, LOGOS, KAIROS).
6. Based upon your extensive research, use specific evidence to persuade your audience about your position on the topic. Explain why the issue is a problem, what you want to see changed, and what solutions you are proposing.
7. **Properly label** the FOUR (On Level) or SIX (Honors) required rhetorical devices and appeals used in the letter. Deductions will be made for incorrect labelling.
8. On a separate page, include a properly MLA formatted list of the sources you referenced in your letter. A model Works Cited is provided.
9. Turn in your final letter which will be returned to you with comments/suggestions. Once you edit your letter based on the teacher’s suggestions, you will provide an addressed envelope and a clean copy to mail.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDIT CHECKLIST FOR PEER FEEDBACK</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>IN PROGRESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND, and THESIS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter contains an attention-getting opening paragraph that clearly states why the issue is important and challenging to resolve. Opening should include a well-constructed thesis statement which clearly states your position on the topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The introduction should provide sufficient background information on the issue, including evidence (facts, statistics, dates, and relevant historical information). Student should not use rhetorical questions in the introduction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BODY PARAGRAPHS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each paragraph should have its own specific focus. Smooth transitions should be made from one idea to the next. Body paragraphs should not start with a quote.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your letter must effectively synthesize sources through smoothly blended quotations (direct, paraphrased or summarized) with no single direct quote exceeding two to three typed lines. Quotes should come from a variety of sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your letter identifies specific examples which reveal that the issue you are discussing is relevant to the affected community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While most of your letter will support your position, at least one paragraph must acknowledge (and subsequently refute) the opposing argument.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions, concerns, and suggestions articulated in the letter must demonstrate thorough research.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know your audience and adjust your tone and diction accordingly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The conclusion effectively finishes the letter’s ideas; it is not a restatement of your thesis. Conclusion should leave the reader something to think about. Discuss why the issue continues to be unresolved. Student should include specific, realistic, plausible solutions based on your observation and research.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RHETORICAL DEVICES and APPEALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter needs to be persuasive and correctly employ at least four (On Level) or six (Honors) different rhetorical devices. Letter should have components that appeal to all three (3) appeals – ethos, pathos and logos. Student should turn in a copy labeled with the required number of rhetorical devices.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REQUIREMENTS OF LETTER including professional GRAMMAR &amp; MECHANICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard letter format: 12 point font, Times New Roman, double spaced paragraphs one inch margins.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Length: no more than two single spaced typed pages (not counting Works Cited page). At least three citations are required for on level; five are required for honors. Proper English grammar, appropriate diction choice, spelling, punctuation, etc. is used throughout.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOURCES and MLA FORMAT—WORKS CITED PAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Cited page—proper MLA formatting which alphabetically lists only your referenced sources. Students must use at least three credible sources (Wikipedia and similar sites are not considered credible.) Point deduction if “Bibliography” used as title, if entries are not alphabetized by the first word, not double spaced, etc. See sample letters and sample Works Cited pages provided in class for help with format.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAMPLE Letter Format

First Name Last Name  
123 Sesame Street  
Your City, ST, 00000

Date

(Title) The Honorable (Rep/Sen) First Name Last Name  
Company/Organization Name  
Street Address  
Secondary Street address if there is one  
City, ST, 00000

Dear (Full name, include title if necessary),

You start by setting your margins at 1.0 inches all around. Then you start typing at the top of the page. Do not hit return and then begin typing. In order to make your letter cleaner, keep all of your text on the left margin as shown in this example. Do not indent. This looks more professional if you do it this way. Keep your font to Times New Roman or a serif (means it has feet) font. Garamond is also okay. Use 10-12 point but no larger and no smaller than that. Thus, no 13 or above font sizes.

Put one line of space between paragraphs and as shown above. Be sure that you go in and spell check and read over everything. If your letter has errors it makes you look less professional. Be sure, though, that you not only spell check, but that you read over your entire letter so that you see things that the spell check will not find. For example, spell check will not often find the problem if you use an incorrect homonym such as if you use their instead of there. Mixing these up is bad, will make you seem less educated and thus, less credible, and will lessen the effectiveness of your letter.

Be sure to incorporate your sources throughout the letter. Use at least five (5) quotations from at least three (3) different sources. On a separate page you will need to include the list of the works cited. An example of how to be persuasive and include information from sources: According to the National Institute of Health, “smoking harms nearly every organ of the body.” Even though many people are aware of this fact, they still continue to smoke and that adds to the staggering explosion of health care costs in America. Researchers at Santa Clara University state that “the tab for cigarette smoking totals over $65 billion annually” and references the American Medical Association’s recent revelation that “at least 25 cents of every health care dollar is spent on the treatment of diseases or disabilities that result from potentially changeable behaviors.” Those who still choose to smoke escalate the cost of health care and thus should be charged much higher insurance rates. Americans who make healthier choices should not be punished for those who ignore warnings and ruin their health on purpose.

Make sure your letter is concise and has impact, do not go over four full pages. Be sure to research and cite background information, offer an explanation of the current nature of the problem, explain why you believe it is an important issue that needs to be addressed, and then present a proposal (offer concrete ideas what you believe needs to be done). In the last paragraph, reiterate the course of action you want to see taken by the person to whom you are writing. If you write a good letter, when you are finished, it will fill the paper up just like this one does. Be sure that you include a mixture of ethos, logos, and pathos. When your letter is complete, it should utilize lots of rhetorical devices (On Level: 4; Honors: 6).

Sincerely yours,

(Hit enter twice so you leave yourself space to sign your name and then type)

Your full name  
(If you have any qualifications like being an office of your class or a club and you think it will help establish your ethos, then include your title on this line.)
SAMPLE Works Cited


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content and Organization</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The introductory paragraph begins with an original, attention-getting statement that hooks the reader.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The introductory paragraph clearly presents a thesis that identifies the issue of controversy in an informative way.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first body paragraph gives clear background information about the history of the controversy.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body paragraphs include clear topic sentences that organize the body of the paper.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body paragraphs offer direct quotations as support but are no more than 10% of the paper.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body paragraphs offer accurately summarized and appropriately paraphrased information, presenting a balanced, unbiased view.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The concluding paragraph restates the thesis and major supports.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The concluding paragraph brings the essay to an interesting, effective close by adding insightful commentary about the significance of the controversy and its relevance to today’s society.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signal phrases introduce sources as needed, and the reader has a clear understanding of the sources of information.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The letter follows a clear pattern of organization and paragraph development, using appropriate transitions between and within paragraphs.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Letter presents a coherent argument that shows synthesis of research and not merely listing of facts.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Letter has at least 1-2 paragraphs that explain the proponents’ side of the issue.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Letter has at least 1-2 paragraphs that explain the opponents’ side of the issue.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Literacy</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is evidence of thorough, balanced information from credible sources.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct quotations are embedded effectively and smoothly, parenthetically citing sources following MLA guidelines.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Works Cited page is correctly formatted and matches the paper.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanics and Usage</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The letter has been proofread thoroughly and thus has few, if any, errors in spelling, grammar, capitalization, or punctuation.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The letter has strong sentence structure and variety that allow ideas to be precisely presented.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The letter maintains an unbiased, formal tone: 3rd person, no contractions.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The letter is properly formatted, includes properly formatted in-text citations, a Works Cited page, and is typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced.</td>
<td>Superb</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final Comments:**
ORGANIZER FOR WRITING A PERSUASIVE LETTER

STEP 1 - READ MODELS. Ask the following questions as you read the models:

✓ What is the situation, current issue, problem, etc. the writer addresses?
✓ What is the writer's opinion on this subject?
✓ Where is the opinion stated in the letter?
✓ How does the writer give support for that opinion?
✓ What technique(s) does the writer use to persuade the reader?
✓ How is information arranged?
✓ What is the tone of the letter? What techniques are used to develop this tone?
✓ What action, if any, does the writer want the reader to take?

STEP 2 - DECIDE ON A TOPIC - Ask yourself the following questions to help decide on a topic:

▪ What would I like to see happen at home, at school, in the community or the nation?
▪ What changes would I like to see at the home, school, community, or national levels?
▪ What changes in policy would I like to see in a business, a television network, government, etc.?
▪ Do I have a complaint or concern about a restaurant, store, or product?
▪ Once I have identified some possible topics, ask is the desired change or expectation realistic and/or feasible?
▪ Do I have a passionate interest in the topic? Is it truly important to me?
▪ Can I relate to it personally?
▪ Am I willing to learn more about the issue before writing about it?
▪ Do I know or am I willing to find out who the appropriate audience is for my letter?

STEP 3 - STATE THE DESIRED OUTCOME

In one sentence, state your opinion on the subject and the outcome you desire.
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

STEP 4 - DETERMINE AND ANALYZE THE APPROPRIATE AUDIENCE

Writing the letter to the right person is a key factor in achieving the outcome you desire. Letters written to the wrong person often end up in trashcans with no action taken.

To help determine the appropriate audience, ask the following questions:

☆ Who has the authority to make this happen? _________________________________
☆ Who has some influence over others who have the authority to make this happen?

___________________________________________________________________________

☆ Within a business or government agency, which department or individual is the appropriate target for the letter? _________________________________

Once you have identified the appropriate audience, you need to analyze the reader.

☆ What does this reader already know about the topic? What information should I provide?

___________________________________________________________________________

☆ What opinion does the reader have now on the subject?

___________________________________________________________________________
What objections might this reader have to my request?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

With what aspect of my opinion might the reader identify?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

What approach might I take to get the attention of this reader?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

STEP 5 - PLAN THE SUPPORTING DETAILS

To determine the kinds of information you might use to develop your ideas and accomplish your tasks, answer the following questions:

➢ What facts, statistics, examples, or illustrations will help the reader see the importance of changing his or her position?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

➢ What information can I give the reader to make his/her position uncomfortable?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

➢ What are the counter arguments that your reader may have when considering your position?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

➢ What information can I include that will negate the reader’s counter arguments (objections)?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

➢ What personal appeal will most likely cause the reader to take action?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

STEP 6 - DO THE RESEARCH

Often persuasive letters lack substance. Student writers tell how they feel about an issue or situation and what they would like to see done, but they fail to persuade anyone else to share their point of view. In order for persuasive writing to be successful, you need to do the necessary research. You need to find facts and illustrations to support your argument. Also look for ways to address potential concerns/resistance of your reader.

This information might come from:

- Personal experience
- Other situations or examples from the past or present
- Statistical information from surveys or personal interviews
- Other primary or secondary research
Student writers have a tendency to present information without ever considering the needs of their reader. In order to change someone's opinion and/or influence that person to take some action, you, the writer, MUST keep the reader in mind. Before drafting, you need to consider different ways of presenting your case and then develop a plan. You should think about what type of appeals and strategies will be most effective in reaching your audience.

Appeals and techniques used: _______________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

STEP 8 - DEVELOPMENT of the DRAFT – Remember to cite everything that is not your own words!

A. **ATTENTION GETTING DEVICE**-
   - *Imagery* - the words or phrases a writer selects to create a specific, concrete detail.
   - *Anecdote* - a short story told to illustrate a point
   - *Startling fact or statistic* - a fact or statistic that will shock the reader
   - *Quotation* - use words of a well-known individual

B. **BACKGROUND INFO** - *Cite at least two pieces of background, quote from two different sources*
   - What does the audience need to know about the subject?
   - Why should the audience be concerned about the subject?
   - What is the historical background of the issue? Are there pertinent laws, court cases, etc.?

C. **CLAIM** – statement of your position on the topic; commit to your stance

D. **PERSUASIVE BODY PARAGRAPHS** - the majority of your letter.
   - Present the main arguments supporting the thesis statement and acknowledge the strongest opposing point of view and present counter-arguments. (single sided typed with space between paragraphs).

   Present your arguments by appealing to ethos, logos, and pathos and use many rhetorical devices.

   (Honors: 6; on-level 4).

   Make sure the research you cite in this portion should **come from at least 2-3 different sources**.

   (unlike a literary analysis essay, you will not use parenthetical citations, you should use in-text citations)

E. **COUNTERARGUMENT and REFUTATION**: Anticipate your reader’s opposing viewpoints and refute those arguments with research and to convince your reader that your viewpoint is valid and correct. Try to use at least 1-2 sources here so this section also appears fully researched.

F. **CONCLUSION** - Summarize your points and present a CALL TO ACTION!!! Offer a specific, detailed supportable solution to the issue so your reader clearly knows what you are proposing
**DEVICES and APPEALS**

Use AT LEAST (6- Honors, 4- On-Level) RHETORICAL DEVICES in your letter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>personal experience</th>
<th>academic diction</th>
<th>repetition</th>
<th>deductive reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>expert testimony</td>
<td>active voice</td>
<td>parallelism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>historical allusion</td>
<td>facts/statistics</td>
<td>direct address</td>
<td>and many more . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imagery</td>
<td>cause/effect</td>
<td>juxtaposition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comparison</td>
<td>analogy</td>
<td>antithesis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metaphor/simile</td>
<td>anaphora</td>
<td>inductive reasoning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPEAL to LOGOS**: valid reasons + EVIDENCE (facts, statistics, anecdotes, logical reasoning, examples, expert opinion).

- Analogy - a situation familiar to the reader is compared with one the writer wants to focus on (example: mandatory AIDS testing is compared with McCarthyism or the Salem witch trials)
- Cause-and-effect relationships - one event is proven to be the cause of another
- Facts, example, and illustrations - used to support or explain a given situation or idea
- Logical arguments, %, #
- Judgments or opinions - used to support ideas that cannot be proven

**APPEAL to PATHOS**: Help the reader become personally and emotionally involved in the argument by appealing to feelings within the audience such as:

- Physiological needs such as food, drink, and shelter
- Psychological needs such as the need to be loved or to be attractive, accepted, or successful
- Emotions such as love, guilt, loyalty, pride, self-esteem, sense of belonging, security, pity, etc.

**APPEAL to ETHOS**: You can achieve credibility as a writer and researcher by:

- Treating the reader as an equal
- Avoiding illogical thinking and present your argument in a well thought out clear way
- Make your reader consider the ethical arguments and make a choice about whether or not there are issues of right or wrong
- Showing a clear understanding of the topic
- You also need to consider whether you will present your points in order of most important to least important or least important to most important.
- Incorporate expert testimony – use the credibility of your sources to help strengthen your arguments

**When deciding which appeal to, consider these questions:**

* What benefit will result from my reader considering my most powerful argument first? Last?
* What negative effect might result?
* How can I best get and keep the attention of my reader?