

Choosing a Controversial Policy Topic

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Is it currently being debated by specific groups of people? In other words, if it's a "dead" issue, it probably won't work.

Can you identify specific groups of advocates on both sides of the controversy? If not, can you at least find a person who represents the interested parties?

Can you find at least five pieces of evidence for each side in PHC library? If not, how will you have enough evidence to support your claims?

Can the controversy be stated as a particular policy proposition?

The proposed policy of _____ should be adopted to solve the problem of _____.

For example:

The proposed policy of banning the sale of automatic weapons in America should be adopted to solve the problem of increasing rates of mass slayings.

(This exercise lends focus to the manner in which you approach your topic, which will, in turn, lend focus to your speech. If you cannot phrase your topic idea this way, dump it and find a new one, or check with me!)

ABOUT THE ASSIGNMENT:

You will give two speeches in which you will fully analyze the problem and then argue for one particular solution to the problem. In other words, you will first objectively analyze both sides, and then state and defend your case for the best answer to this significant policy controversy. After you deliver your speech you will have an opportunity to address audience questions and/or cross-examination.

POINTERS:

Begin researching immediately.

Find a debate that is actually occurring in the *real world*. (Don't sit back in your armchair and dream up something.) You may be able to articulate a significant earth-shattering dilemma that nobody has begun debating yet, in which case you will be able to locate little or no supporting evidence!

MORE SPECIFICS TO FOLLOW