

English 1A
Dr. Eigenauer

Argumentative Essay II

Hook Paragraph (1)

- A real story of someone who committed violence imitating something seen on the media.
- Example: Last March, Howie Schmall broke into his elderly neighbor's house, stole a few items, and murdered him in his sleep. The crime...

Generalization Paragraph (2)

- Because of examples like this, most people believe that... For example, Dr. Janet Lyons claims that "..."
- At least three quotations from reputable sources **SUPPORTING** the idea that media violence causes real life violence.

Summary of Opposition (3)

- This belief is typified by...
 - Summary of “Psychiatric Effects of Media Violence.

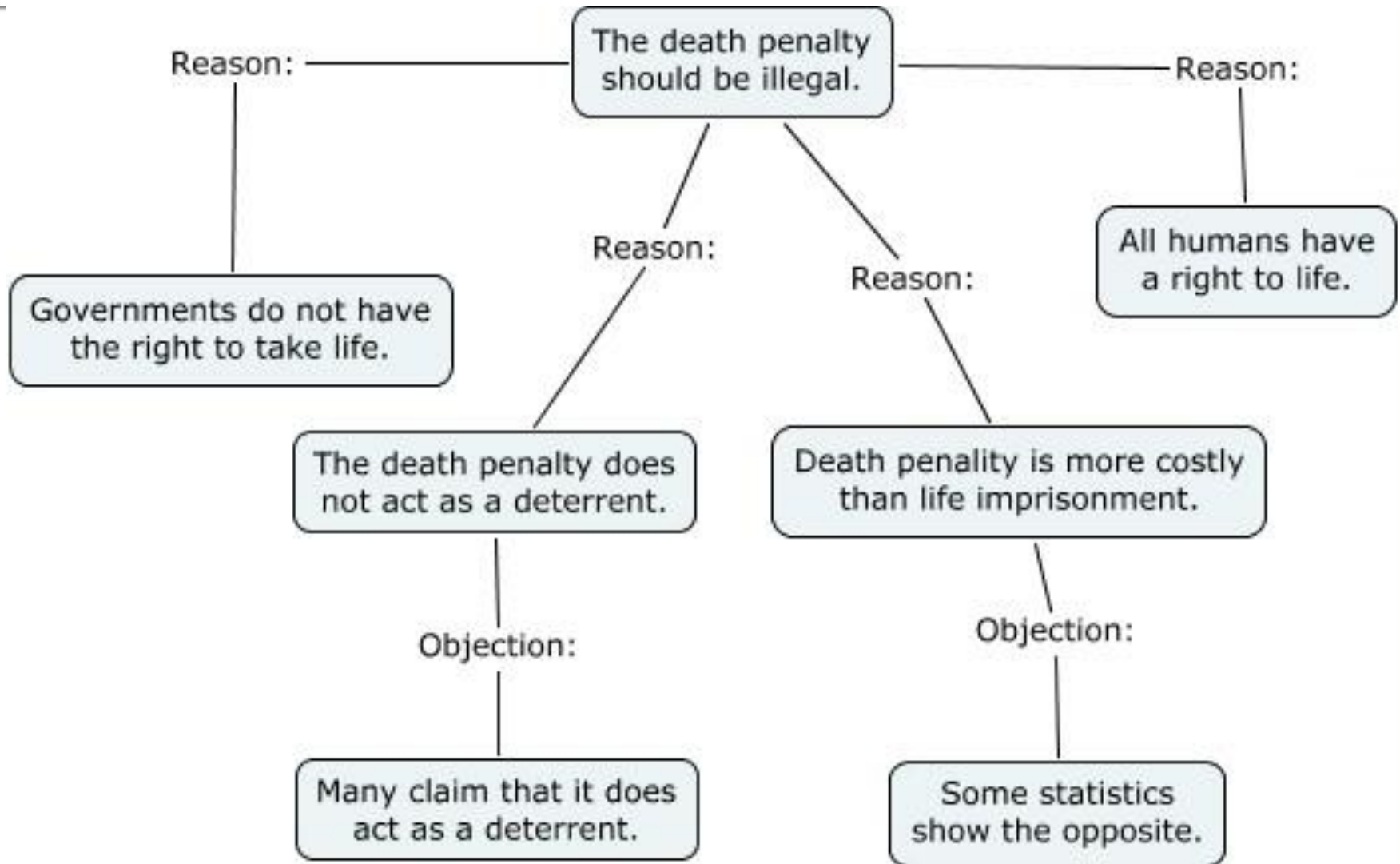
“My argument” paragraph (4)

- Despite these claims, I will argue that...
 - FOUR reasons with supporting evidence why you do not accept that violent media increases violent behavior.
 - Each reason = one paragraph

Example Paragraph 4

- Despite these claims, I will argue that **the death penalty should be illegal**. To do so, I will show that **no government has the right to take life**. Even if a government had that right, however, the death penalty would not be helpful because **it does not deter criminals**, even though **many argue that it does**. In addition to not acting as a deterrent, I will demonstrate that **the death penalty is more costly than life imprisonment**. While the **justification from cost can be countered**, the argument that **all humans have a right to life** cannot.

A Map



BE EXCEEDINGLY CLEAR!!!

- Despite these arguments in favor of the death penalty, I will argue that the death penalty should be illegal. One important reason why it should be illegal is that it does not deter violent crime.

STATEMENTS are not enough

- Much data proves this point. For example, the national murder rate remained almost constant from 1976 to 1995 while the number of executions rose steadily. (footnote). The same is true of data from individual states. For example, in Texas... (more).

Spell it out for your reader.

- If the death penalty were a deterrent, murder rates would drop as executions increased. Because murder rates remain constant even when executions increase and when states permit the death penalty, it seems untrue that the death penalty deters violent crime. Therefore, it should be illegal because it has no deterrent effect.

Sample Paragraph

- Despite these arguments in favor of the death penalty, I will argue that the death penalty should be illegal. One important reason why it should be illegal is that it does not deter violent crime. Much data proves this point. For example, the national murder rate remained almost constant from 1976 to 1995 while the number of executions rose steadily. (footnote). The same is true of data from individual states. For example, in Texas... (more). If the death penalty were a deterrent, murder rates would drop as executions increased. Because murder rates remain constant even when executions increase and when states permit the death penalty, it seems untrue that the death penalty deters violent crime. Therefore, it should be illegal because it has no deterrent effect.

Sample Paragraph

- Despite numerous claims that capital punishment deters violent crime, evidence indicates the opposite. One expert, Dr. Jeffrey Fagan, claims that “There is no reliable, scientifically sound evidence that [shows that executions] can exert a deterrent effect....”¹ on criminals. In fact, for 17 years in a row, states with the death penalty have had higher murder rates than states without it.² Some believe that this is because criminals kill their victims so that they cannot testify against them in these states with harsher penalties.³ Consequently, even though it makes sense that the death penalty should make people avoid committing murder, the opposite is true. Therefore, the argument from deterrence is incorrect.

Sample Paragraph and Transition

- In addition to the argument from deterrence, death penalty proponents claim that the death penalty provides closure for victims' families. This is a powerful emotional argument. As one proponent says, "The only peace that the victims' families will ever know is when [the murderer] has been put to death. That is justice."⁴ However, a second murder will not right the first one. While murder is a terrible crime, execution—even of murderers—takes a life as well. Moreover, every execution runs the risk of taking an innocent person's life. Certainly the victim's family would not want to run the risk of a second innocent person dying, even if that risk is small. Obviously, the argument from closure is insufficient.

Showing Both Sides

- Despite these facts...
- Even though this evidence seems conclusive...
- Notwithstanding this evidence...
- Despite the fact that numerous factors can contribute to violent behavior...
- Despite this seemingly conclusive evidence...

Your choice

- ...continue believing... that
- ...continue affirming... that
- ...still insist... that
- ...remain convinced... that
- ...still blame... that
- ...insist on blaming... that
- ...still assert... that
- ...still contend... that
- ...still argue... that

They say

- They argue that...
- They claim that...
- They assert that...

Evidence

- They offer as evidence...
- They support their claims...
- In support of these claims, they...

Ending

- Obviously, they
- Clearly, they
- Evidently, they

Conclusion

- Even though it makes sense that watching media violence causes...