

Name:

Teacher:

Class:

Date:

# OF MICE & MEN

## Argumentative Essay

At the end of the novel, *Of Mice and Men*, George shoots Lennie in the back of the head. George feels he has no alternative when Slim suggests, “But Curley’s gonna want to shoot ‘im. Curley’s still mad about his hand. An’ s’pose they lock him up an’ strap him down and put him in a cage.” If George doesn’t kill Lennie, Carlson or Curley might. And if they don’t kill him, Lennie will definitely go to jail for killing Curley’s wife.

In this argumentative essay you will discuss **whether or not mercy killing is just**. Remember, you will need to provide reasons and evidence to support your position.

**Learning Target:** I will be able to write \_\_\_\_\_ in an \_\_\_\_\_ of *Of Mice and Men*, using \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ my claims.

### Your Essay Should:

1. Include a clear **Thesis** that definitively **chooses a side** – Your job is to pick a stance and defend it.
2. Contains **5 paragraphs** – Introduction, *Of Mice and Men* Body Paragraph, Mercy Killing Body Paragraph, Opposing Claim Body Paragraph, and Conclusion.
3. Provide **Supporting Evidence** in the form of **Quotations** (properly cited using MLA Formatting).
4. Offer **Insightful Analysis** (at least two opinion sentences per quote) that supports your **Thesis**.
5. Present and refute an **Opposing Claim**.

Grading Rubric	8 Stellar	7 Good	6 Adequate	5 Inadequate
<b>Paperwork:</b> Library Peer Review, Rough Draft Packet				
<b>MLA Formatting:</b> Typed, 12pt. font, Creative Title, Double-spaced, Indented Paragraphs, Proper Heading, Header, Parenthetical Citations, <b>5 paragraphs</b>				
<b>Claim:</b> Addresses the prompt’s central question and clearly establishes a direct and focused thesis.				
<b>Evidence:</b> Chooses the most relevant evidence to support the claim and the topic sentences. Integrates quotes seamlessly with thorough background information. <b>5 quotes minimum</b> - 2 quotes for each body paragraph and 1 quote for refutation				
<b>Analysis of Evidence:</b> Analysis shows understanding of the topic and texts. Elaborates on evidence to prove claim. <b>Minimum 2 sentences per quote.</b>				
<b>Counterclaim:</b> Contains an effective counterclaim that anticipates and addresses the relevant counter arguments. Refutes the counterclaim with strong evidence and analysis. <b>Minimum 1 quote.</b>				
<b>Development:</b> Argument is focused and seamlessly transitions between paragraphs. The understanding of the claim builds throughout the paper and the concluding paragraph strengthens the argument. Contains an appropriate formal tone throughout..				
<b>Conventions:</b> Spelling, Punctuation, Capitalization, Italicized book title, Quotation Marks around article titles, No repetitions of “key” word/phrases				

# Organization

## Paragraph 1 (Introduction)

1. **Attention Getter** – Introductions establish the direction your writing is going to take. A good introduction grabs your reader’s attention and refuses to let go. But...what’s a good way to begin? Here are three options:
  - **Open with a Quotation** – “Legalizing euthanasia would help alleviate suffering of terminally ill patients. It would be inhuman and unfair to make them endure the unbearable pain” (M).
  - **Open with an Exaggeration** – Mercy killing is not merciful. It is murder.
  - **Open with an Anecdote** – Day after day you take care of your daughter, trying to alleviate her pain, her suffering. You hope and pray that she will get better, that her health will improve. But day after day the same results - a pleading in her eyes to put her out of her misery, a cry for help to end her anguish her suffering. You hope and pray that she will get better, that her health will improve. But day after day the same results - a pleading in her eyes to put her out of her misery, a cry for help to end her anguish.
2. **Necessary information** - Summarize or define Mercy Killing / Euthanasia
3. **Thesis** - Your thesis statement is the argument of the paper that needs to be supported by everything that follows. The thesis for an argumentative paper should make it clear which side of the controversy you are on.
  - **Example** – Mercy killing is a moral and just way to show compassion for a loved one in need.

## Paragraph 2 (OMAM Body Paragraph)

**Topic Sentence** - A topic sentence has a topic and a focus, or a limiting idea. Your topic is the **killing of Lennie** and your limiting idea is whether it was right or wrong.

**Support** - The rest of the paragraph should support your position. Use examples and **quotes from the novel** as evidence.

## Paragraph 3 (Mercy Killing Articles Body Paragraph)

**Topic Sentence** - Your topic should be **mercy killing**. Your limiting idea is whether it is right or wrong.

**Support** - The rest of the paragraph should support your stance using **reasons, examples, and quotes from the mercy killing articles**.

## Paragraph 4 (Opposing Claim Body Paragraph)

**Opposing Claim** - Present the **opposing claim**, the point of view of people who do not agree with your claim. Use **quotes from the mercy killing articles** as evidence.

**Refutation** - The rest of the paragraph should acknowledge and refute the opposing claim. Use **quotes from the mercy killing articles** as evidence.

## Paragraph 5 (Conclusion Paragraph)

**Topic Sentence** - **Restate** your claim.

**Support** - **Review** your main points and then **round off** your essay by giving an idea of what would happen if the reader chose the opposing point of view. Be descriptive; paint a picture.

# Helpful Tools

**Effective Verbs for Introducing Quotations** – Use a **Variety of Verbs** for a more effective paper

Making a claim:	Questioning or disagreeing:	Expressing agreement:	Making recommendations:
Argues	Complains	Acknowledges	Advocates
Asserts	Contends	Admires	Calls for
Believes	Contradicts	Agrees	Demands
Claims	Denies	Does not deny	Encourages
Emphasizes	Questions	Endorses	Implores
Insists	Refutes	Praises	Pleads
Observes	Rejects	Reaffirms	Recommends
Reminds us	Renounces	Supports	Urges
Reports		Verifies	Warns
Suggests			

**Use stronger verbs than just *said, states, or writes!***

## Common Transitional Expressions

LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP	TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSION
Similarity	also, in the same way, just as ... so too, likewise, similarly
Exception/Contrast	but, however, in spite of, on the one hand ... on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, in contrast, on the contrary, still, yet
Sequence/Order	first, second, third, ... next, then, finally
Time	after, afterward, at last, before, currently, during, earlier, immediately, later, meanwhile, now, recently, simultaneously, subsequently, then
Example	for example, for instance, namely, specifically, to illustrate
Emphasis	even, indeed, in fact, of course, truly
Place/Position	above, adjacent, below, beyond, here, in front, in back, nearby, there
Cause and Effect	accordingly, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus
Additional Support or Evidence	additionally, again, also, and, as well, besides, equally important, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, then
Conclusion/Summary	finally, in a word, in brief, briefly, in conclusion, in the end, in the final analysis, on the whole, thus, to conclude, to summarize, in sum, to sum up, in summary

## Opposing Claim Sentence Starters

### Counterclaim Sentence Starters

- *Critics argue that...*
- *While it may be true that..., still...*
- *Other may say that... but one could argue...*
- *It may be true..., however...*
- *It is often thought...*
- *It is easy to think that... but when you look at the facts...*

# Example Essay

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Honors English 1; Period 1

24 January 2017

## The Ultimate Choice

**Introduction** Day after day you take care of your daughter, trying to alleviate her pain, her suffering. You hope and pray that she will get better, that her health will improve. But day after day you see the same results - a pleading in her eyes to put her out of her misery, a cry for help to end her anguish. Mercy killing, or euthanasia, is the act of putting a person or animal to death painlessly or allowing them to die on their own terms. **Mercy Killing is a moral and just way to show compassion for a loved one in need.**

**TS** In the novel *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, one of the main characters, George, faces a difficult situation when his best friend, Lennie, murders the wife of another character, Curley. **S** George must make a significant decision to either let Lennie continue to live and allow him to suffer through Curley's vengeance, or to prematurely end Lennie's life, and thus save him from endless torture at the hand of an enemy. George feels responsible for Lennie because of his promise to Aunt Clara to take care of him. Shooting Lennie was George's way of protecting him. After their problems in Weed, George hoped that Lennie learned his lesson and would stay out of trouble, but then he murdered Curley's wife. George knows that Curley will desire nothing more than to exact revenge on Lennie. **E** In his conversation with Candy he insists, "I ain't gonna let them hurt Lennie" (Steinbeck 95). **A** Curley is bitter and vengeful

because Lennie had crushed his hand and made him look weak in front of the other ranch hands. George understands that if he doesn't step in, Curley will make Lennie suffer an unbearable death. **E** Once Curley finds out that it's Lennie who has killed his wife, he angrily warns, "'I'm gonna get him. I'm going for my shotgun. I'll kill that son-of-a-bitch myself. I'll shoot 'im in the guts'" (Steinbeck 96). **A** Curley confirms George's worst fears. His hatred and anger for Lennie are so intense that there is no room for empathy. **C** By shooting Lennie in the back of his head, George offers mercy to his friend.

**TS** Mercy killing helps to alleviate the suffering of someone who is terminally ill. This type of death is humane. It is empathetic. It is just. **S** In the article "No Evil in His Act", an 88-year-old man named William Dresser was accused and prosecuted for murdering his terminally ill wife. His wife "had fallen at home and suffered permanent paralysis" (Damon) and desired to no longer live. **E** In order to end his wife's anguish, "William Dresser bought a handgun at a pawn shop, loaded it with four rounds and brought it to her hospital room...He gave her a kiss while she slept and shot her in the chest" (Damon). **A** Dresser's act was not malicious and it held no ill intent. His only wish was for his wife to end her life on her terms. **E** In his support of euthanasia, Dr. Maisie M argues that, "Legalizing euthanasia would help alleviate suffering of terminally ill patients. It would be inhuman and unfair to make them endure the unbearable pain" (M). **A** Mercy killing begins and ends with the compassion of a loved one who wants to provide a peaceful escape from an incurable disease. This decision is not easy, but it is the right decision. **C** It is also a decision is that only the patient and those that know him or her best can make.

**OC** Some people might argue that mercy killing is still killing. That "...murdering another human cannot be rationalized under any circumstances" (Damon). And that life is precious and should be valued, no matter how much or how little a person has left. **R** A person's life should be treasured and not carelessly thrown away. But if they are sick and living a life of agony, it should be their choice about when to die. It should be on their terms and no one else's. "Euthanasia should be a natural extension of patient's rights allowing him to decide the value of life and death for him" (M). And if a person like George or William Dresser steps in to help facilitate a more peaceful death for his loved one, then his action should not be viewed as selfish, but rather selfless. "William Lyle Dresser killed his wife, but he is not a murderer...He saw his wife of 63 years immobile in a hospital bed, paralyzed from the neck down, suffering with no hope of improvement, facing a short existence not remotely resembling a life she cared to live. So he ended that life. And he ended that suffering'" (Damon).

**Conclusion** Mercy killing, simply put, is merciful. It takes into account the desire of the afflicted, giving him or her the right to death with dignity. A death void of pain and suffering, of misery and anguish. A peaceful death. A desirable death.

# Symbols

**Introduction** - Make sure to include the following components: Title of the novel, author's name, plot summary in relation to the topic (**1-2 sentences**), necessary background information about the topic of mercy killing, and the **THESIS** (the argument of the paper).

**TS = Topic Sentence** - Each body paragraph must begin with a topic sentence. A topic sentence has a topic and a focus, or a limiting idea.

**S = Summary** - Provide readers with the necessary background information (at least **1-2 sentences** in order for quotes to make sense) on each text you are analyzing.

**E = Evidence** - Context (Who said the words? Where are they said? When are they said? Are they in response to someone? Are they describing something?) + Quote.

**A = Analysis** - Provide an analysis of how each quote supports your argument (at least **2 sentences per quote**).

**C = Concluding Sentence** - This sentence not only needs to wrap up your paragraph, it also needs to transition well into what you will be talking about in your next paragraph.

**OC = Opposing Claim** - Present the opposing claim, the point of view of people who do not agree with your claim. Use quotes from the mercy killing articles as evidence.

**R = Refutation** - Acknowledge and refute the opposing claim. Use quotes from the mercy killing articles as evidence.

**Conclusion** - Restate your claim. Review your main points and then round off your essay by giving an idea of what would happen if the reader chose the opposing point of view. Be descriptive; paint a picture.