Name _____Period _____ Date_____

Unit 4:7 Research Essay Elements Group Work

Group #1: Organization Group

Your group's task is to take the "Cry, Wolf" essay (Activity Book 4.3) and work backwards by turning it into an outline. The process has been started for you. All group members should write down the group's thoughts.

I Introduction
      A. Attention getter: references to fairy tales and stereotypes we all form from our youth
      B. Ethos/motivation for writing: wolves have been persecuted in the U.S.
      C. Thesis: "However, in seeking to address a situation created by the human compulsion to control nature, we are again interfering with the natural order; and the very creatures we are trying to protect, we are harming."
      D. Preview (implicitly woven into the thesis statement)
          1. Humans have unsuccessfully tried to control wolves
          2. Humans have interfered with and hurt wolves' natural habitat
          3. Humans efforts have harmed the wolf population

 II. BODY
      A. Important Background on the Common (Mis)Perception of Wolves (starts bottom the first page)
          1. _____

          2. _____

          3. _____
      B. Government Reintroduction Program and Concerns With It
          1. Rancher concerns
             a. _____

            b. _____

if needed   (c.) _____

          2. Monetary concerns

            _____

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       3. capture and relocation concerns

          a. _____

          b. _____

          c. _____

III. CONCLUSION
     A. Essence of the thesis restated—in fact, on page 6 the true thesis comes out! Copy it down here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

     B. Review
        a. _____

          _____

        b. _____

          _____

        c. _____

          _____

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    C. Memorable Ending/clincher

_____

_____

_____

If time remains, discuss below whether you believed this process to be an empty exercise. If so, why? If not, explain what was important about this activity.
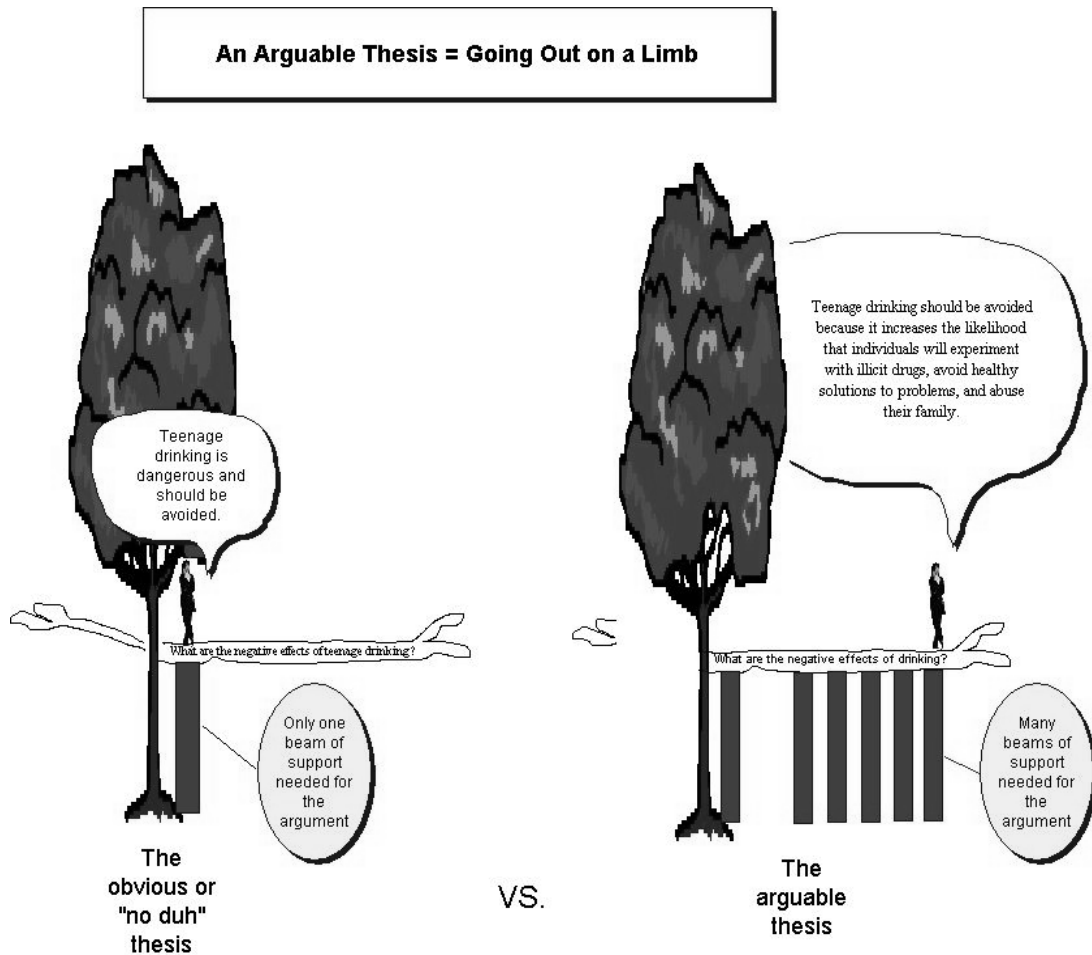

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Group #2: The Thesis Statement
The "So What?" and "No Duh" Test

Whenever writing your research paper, you must be sure to choose a topic worth arguing about or exploring. This means to construct a thesis statement or research question about a problem that is still debated, controversial, up in the air.
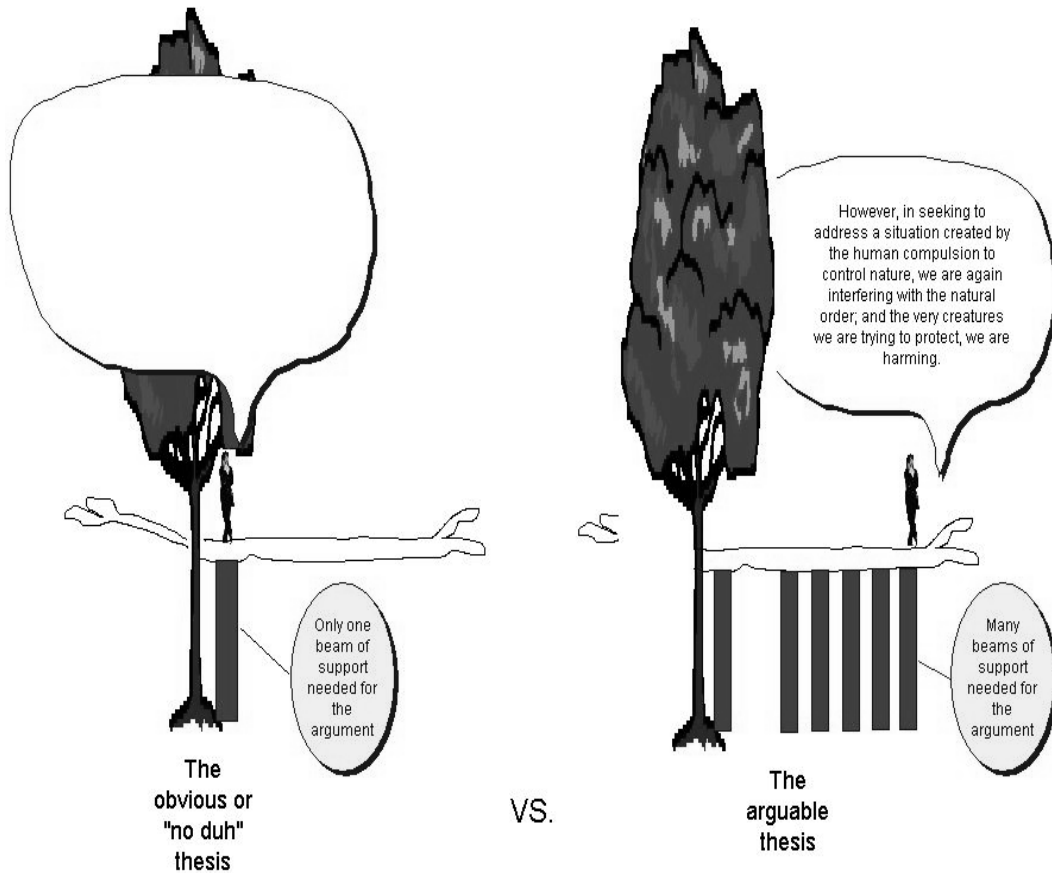So arguing that drinking and driving is dangerous-- while you could find a ton of evidence to support your view --would be pretty worthless nowadays. Who would want to read something they already knew? You wouldn't be persuading them of anything and all your work would be pretty meaningless.

An Arguable Thesis = Going Out on a Limb

Teenage drinking is dangerous and should be avoided.

What are the negative effects of teenage drinking?

Only one beam of support needed for the argument

The obvious or "no duh" thesis

VS.

Teenage drinking should be avoided because it increases the likelihood that individuals will experiment with illicit drugs, avoid healthy solutions to problems, and abuse their family.

What are the negative effects of drinking?

Many beams of support needed for the argument

The arguable thesis

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Your group's task, in the speech bubble below, is to turn the thesis statement from "Cry, Wolf" into a "No duh," "So what?" thesis. That's right: make it vague, too broad, and too non-controversial.

An Arguable Thesis = Going Out on a Limb

However, in seeking to address a situation created by the human compulsion to control nature, we are again interfering with the natural order; and the very creatures we are trying to protect, we are harming.

Only one beam of support needed for the argument

Many beams of support needed for the argument

The obvious or "no duh" thesis

VS.

The arguable thesis

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Group #2 continued: Imagine that you've decided to write your research paper on the personal impact of modern media technologies. You have learned through observing life that listening to the radio is a modern medium that would definitely have personal impact. After some brainstorming about your personal experiences and a bit of refining of your preliminary research, you've decided to write a paper on the impact music listening has on students' grades.

You come up with a thesis:
Music listening can affect students' grades.

Especially after researching, you realize it's a "No duh" thesis. Your next task as a group is to transform this into an arguable thesis. Let's say that after some thought about your opinions on the issue (maybe combined with some preliminary research), you've discovered the following:

- ✓ Music listening does impair some students' productivity.
- ✓ Music listening is a beneficial activity for some students
- ✓ Many parents and/or librarians are unaware that this is possible

In the space provided, transform the thesis into a provocative, arguable thesis sentence with previews that needs a well-hewn research paper to prove:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hopefully what you've seen from this example is the ultimate difference between a thesis statement and a research question. Fill in the blanks:

A research question like "Does music impair student learning?" hovers above the fence like an inquisitive bird, a third party trying to decide which side is really more inviting given all the evidence.
However, a _____ (fill in the blank) lands on one side of the fence and tells the other why its side is better.

Unit 4:7 Research Essay Elements Group Work

Group 2 (continued):
Come up with a "Top 3 Things to Remember about the Thesis Statement" list:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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Group #3: The Writer's Voice Group

Taking the Wind Out of the Writing

Introduction: As you read "Cry, Wolf" (Activity Book 3.3), you could tell that the writer crafted the writing in a compelling and engaging way. Unlike narrative writing, where the writer's voice is front and center, the voice in research writing tends to subtly lurk in the background. Nevertheless, voice remains just as important.

Your task: After someone reads the passage aloud, discuss your opinions of the piece: What did you think about the writing, specifically its voice?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Together come up with single-word description of the voice in this passage: exciting? interesting? emotional? personal? engaging? sincere? Or something else?

_____

Discuss the ending's strengths: How would you score this for voice using the Six-Trait Scoring Guide for voice (a handout you received early in the semester)? Explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Group 3 (continued): Your next task is to review the criteria for strong voice and rewrite the passage from the end of "Cry, Wolf," attempting to "voice it down." Your goal is to earn a "1" in voice on the Six-Trait Scoring Guide. That's right: make it poor.

       The majestic gray wolf—skillful predator, nurturing family member—has been misunderstood to the point of endangerment. Fear, hatred, and the need to control the wolf's untamable wildness created an environment in which slaughter was not only accepted, but advocated. There is no doubt that human beings bear responsibility for the protection of these magnificent creatures. However, the awe and admiration that have replaced the fear and hatred have not removed the human need to control. When this need to control results in tactics that are invasive and disregardful of the wolf's own nature, the very wildness we all seek to preserve becomes endangered.

Your "voiceless" version, one that does its best, nonetheless, to retain the essential information of the above:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If time remains, come up with a…
"Top 3 Things We Learned Today About Voice" list

1._____

2._____

3._____ _____

Unit 4:7 Research Essay Elements Group Work

GROUP #4: WORD CHOICE GROUP: Making Your Word Choice the Right Choice

Each group member will come up with a word he or she likes, for whatever reason--sound, meaning, length, etc. For instance, Mr. Tompkins likes the word *façade*.

_____'s word: _____

_____'s word: _____

_____'s word: _____

_____'s word: _____

In "Cry, Wolf," as a group find a sentence with lively verbs and copy down the sentence where they were found. Then rewrite the sentence using bland verbs. Underline the verbs. Discuss the difference. (Do—er, rather, *complete*—this process twice.)
ORIGINAL:

_____

_____

_____

REWRITTEN:

_____

_____

_____

ORIGINAL:

_____

_____

_____

REWRITTEN:

_____

_____

_____

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Group #4 (continued): In "Cry, Wolf," find a specific and effective **noun** and copy down the sentence where that noun is found. Now rewrite the sentence using an unspecific and ineffective noun, pronouns, or noun phrases. Underline the noun and/or noun phrase. Discuss the difference. (Perform this thing—er, *process*—twice.)

ORIGINAL:

_____

_____

_____

REWRITTEN:

_____

_____

_____

ORIGINAL:

_____

_____

_____

REWRITTEN:

_____

_____

_____

Unit 4:7 Research Essay Elements Group Work

Group 4 (continued): In "Cry, Wolf," find a sentence with effective **modifiers (adjectives)** and copy down the sentence where they were found. Now rewrite the sentence using ineffective modifiers (adjectives). Underline all the modifiers (adjectives). Discuss the difference. (Perform this hard—er, challenging—process twice.)

ORIGINAL:

_____

_____

_____

REWRITTEN:

_____

_____

_____

ORIGINAL:

_____

_____

_____

REWRITTEN:

_____

_____

_____

Each group member will choose a different sentence from "Cry, Wolf" that employs lively verbs, specific and effective nouns, and effective modifiers. Each group member will then circle the lively verbs, underline specific and effective nouns, and double underline effective modifiers (adjectives).

_____' SENTENCE:

_____

_____

_____

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Unit 4:7 Research Essay Elements Group Work

_____' SENTENCE:

_____

_____

_____

_____' SENTENCE:

_____

_____

_____

_____' SENTENCE:

_____

_____

_____

If time remains, come up with a…
"Top 3 Things We Learned About Word Choice Today" list.

    1. _____

    2. _____

    3. _____