

Persuasive Essay Enthymeme Worksheet

Fill out the following items regarding your upcoming essay:

1. Your Chosen Topic (from the approved list):

Are violent videogames dangerous?

2. Your Thesis statement in the form of an Enthymeme (see below for help):

Violent video games are dangerous because they lower empathy levels and increase aggressive behaviors in those who play.

Your enthymeme must include your stance on the topic, the word “because,” and then the main reasons why you hold that stance.

*SAMPLE ENTHYMEME: For example, if your topic is steroid use in sports, and you think they should be legal, your enthymeme might be: “**Steroids should be legal in sports because steroids allow athletes to test the very limits of human abilities.**” Let’s break this enthymeme into its parts: your shared term is “steroids,” your connector word is “because,” your reason is “steroids allow athletes to test the very limits of human abilities,” and your conclusion is “steroids should be legal in sports.” Your unstated assumption is what supports the logical connection between your conclusion and reason; here it might be “One important goal of sports is to test the limits of human ability.”*

Now, break YOUR enthymeme into its parts.

3. Shared term: “Violent video games,” “they”
4. Connector word: because
5. Reasons: Violent video games lower empathy levels and increase aggressive behaviors in those who play.
6. Conclusion: Violent video games are dangerous
7. Unstated Assumption: Lowered empathy levels and an increase in aggressive behaviors are dangerous.
8. List relevant support/evidence that upholds your enthymeme’s REASON:
 - a. Research: Jeanne Funk examined the relationship between exposure to violence

through media and real-life, and desensitization (reflected by loss of empathy and changes in attitudes toward violence) in fourth and fifth grade pupils (2003), and found that they lowered empathy and made players have more violent attitudes

- b. Personal experience: friends growing up would play violent video games up to 20 hours per week, and would also laugh at others' getting hurt in real life (anecdotal correlation)

9. List relevant support/evidence that upholds your enthymeme's UNSTATED ASSUMPTION:

- 1. A lack of empathy is a symptom of sociopathic or psychopathic disorders, both of which can use manipulation and reckless behavior to get what they want
- 2. Aggressive behaviors can quickly escalate to dangerous levels; look at bar fights, for example

10. Give a COUNTER-ARGUMENT (from an imagined critic's perspective) to your enthymeme's REASON and/or UNSTATED ASSUMPTION:

Just because someone might be sociopathic or psychopathic does not mean they will be dangerous; also, there are studies that show that violent video games actually reduce aggression in Japanese kids.

11. Your REBUTTAL to this counter-argument:

There are many ways to reduce aggression, so why take a risk and use violent video games when it is clear that there are cases where it can cause aggression and lack of empathy? Also, a lack of empathy does not necessarily cause danger in itself, but it should not be promoted, as the presence of empathy is connected more to a caring attitude toward others outside of yourself.