

DEBATE: "Should We Bring Back the Woolly Mammoth?" • SKILL: Argument Essay, page 1 of 3

# Write an Argument Essay

**Directions:** Read "Should We Bring Back the Woolly Mammoth?" on pages 20-21 of the October 22, 2012, issue of *Scope*. Fill in the chart on page 21. Then follow the steps below to write an essay explaining your opinion on whether or not scientists should clone an extinct animal.

## STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Should we bring back the woolly mammoth? Consider what you read in the article as well as your own experiences. **Check the box next to the point of view you will support in your essay, or write your own opinion in the space provided.**

Yes! That. Would. Be. So. Cool.

No! Frankenstein, much?

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## STEP 2: FIND YOUR SUPPORT

Which of the items that you wrote in the "Yes" and "No" columns on page 21 support your opinion? What are other points that support your opinion? List three to five supporting items here:

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## STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think scientists should clone a woolly mammoth, summarize the reasons why some people disagree. If you believe it's a bad idea for an extinct animal to be cloned, summarize the reasons that some people think scientists should go for it.

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**STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR THESIS**

The thesis is where you tell readers what the essay is going to be about. The thesis should be a clear, strong statement of the opinion you stated in Step 1. The rest of your essay should support your thesis.

**Your thesis:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 5: WRITE YOUR HOOK**

The very beginning of your essay is called the hook because it "hooks" your readers' attention. The hook should relate to the topic of your essay, but it can take many forms. It can be an anecdote (a very short true story), a fact, a quote, or a rhetorical question (a question to which you don't expect an answer). Here are three ideas for hooks that could work for this topic. **Choose one of the ideas below, or use your own idea, and write a hook on the lines provided (1-3 sentences).**

1. ANECDOTE: Describe positive or negative results of the cloning of other types of animals.
2. SURPRISING FACT: Find a fact that will raise your readers' eyebrows. Several surprising facts are included in the article. You can also do some research to find one that is not included in the article.
3. RHETORICAL QUESTION: Ask readers if they think it's a good idea for scientists to experiment with nature in this way. Just because they *can* do it, does that mean they *should*?

**Your hook:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 6: SUMMARIZE THE ISSUE**

Let readers know a little about the issue you will be writing about. This is not your point of view; it's a very brief summary of the issue—in this case, the controversy over cloning a woolly mammoth.

**Your summary of the issue:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 7: START WRITING**

Now that you have the key ingredients for your essay, you are ready to start writing. On the next page, you'll find guidelines for how to organize your ingredients, as well as hints about what else you'll need to add.

**Directions:** Follow the guidelines below to write a strong essay on whether scientists should clone a woolly mammoth. You will use what you wrote on the first two pages of this activity.

### INTRODUCTION

Open with your hook from Step 5.



Write a transition sentence that relates your hook to the question of cloning a woolly mammoth. (See *Scope's* handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)



Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.



Finish with your thesis from Step 4.

### BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

Here's where you write your supporting points from Step 2. For each one, write 1-3 sentences that provide additional details. You can put your supporting points and detail sentences together in one paragraph, or you can break them into three paragraphs.

It depends on how much you want to write about each point. Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers tend to remember best the details that are presented last.

### ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument. Use what you wrote in Step 3. Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.

### CONCLUSION

Use 2-3 sentences to remind your readers of your main points.



Finish with a strong final sentence. Looking for an idea? Try referring to your hook, finding a quote, or inspiring your readers.

### READ AND REVISE

Use *Scope's* "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written. Make any necessary changes and write a second draft.