Description. Assignment Overview: Essay #2 (Argumentative – Death Penalty) skill: making an argument. Essay #2 will instruct you on the how’s and whys of argumentative writing: in particular, taking a position on a stance. Instead of reading to only gather information, you'll be reading to find evidence that a particular position is valid or is not valid. You’ll also begin evaluating the readings, taking into consideration such things as the bias of the speaker/writer and the basis (factual?/emotional?) of their arguments. the emphasis of this assignment isn’t on the topic but on the argument. In other words, it’s not your position that’s important; what really matters here is how well you prove to readers that your thinking on the issue is clear and logical. That said, our topic for this essay is the Death Penalty. You’ll be reading several sources on this topic and then developing your own position and arguments based both on the readings and your own thinking. When reading an argumentative source, remember that it is essentially a sales pitch: and as we all know, the buyer has to beware. Thus read ALL of these essays with a very questioning, very skeptical eye. “Argumentative Fallacies” Purpose of Essay This essay is designed to develop your reading and analytical skills and develop your ability to communicate your thinking clearly and logically to your audience. Since it’s so closely connected to your thinking, writing this essay amounts to a peek under the hood of your brain, a chance for readers to see how the engine’s running. Thus, you’ll be trying out several arguments and positions, disregarding those that, to keep the metaphor going, cause misfires. It’s this kind of malleable thinking, this sorting out of different possibilities and consciously choosing the ones which can be supported by evidence, that makes readers trust your judgment – and is thus the kind of thinking that you should strive for. The Writing Assignment: Essay #2- Write an essay that argues that capital punishment helps or hurts America. Another way to look at this question is to ask whether the death penalty is good for our legal system and society or if it harms them. Use statistics and facts to support your claims/opinions. Your facts should come from the required readings on the death penalty. Your goal is to convince readers that your position is reasonable and valid by using specific reasoning, evidence to support it, and then explanations of that reasoning. Your audience doesn't necessarily have to agree with you: your goal is to show them the thinking that is behind your opinion. Thus, this essay uses opinion, but an opinion based upon logic –opinions that are tested and considered before they are offered to the reader. People aren't persuaded with only one reason, and thus you will offer several different reasons to support your position. You will be using examples (both personal and from outside sources), descriptions, and stories to explain how these reasons support your position.