

CERCA Set: Government and Health

Worked Example, 11

PURPOSE

This is not a complete sentence and doesn't fit here. Your introduction should be a strong statement that clearly introduces your claim. This phrase only makes the subject unclear.

To give teachers an example of a "3" level of achievement on a ThinkCERCA assignment.

TEXT

Drop and Give Uncle Sam 20

CERCA QUESTION

Should our government become more or less involved in public health?

EXAMPLE STUDENT ESSAY

Powerful beginning.

This is not a complete sentence and doesn't fit here. Your introduction should be a strong statement that clearly introduces your claim. This phrase only makes the subject unclear.

Be more specific. By naming your sources, you add credibility to your essay.

There is an obesity epidemic in our country. Lots of people are overweight, and they are unhealthy because of it. Though obesity hasn't been rising lately. Some scientists have made some recommendations for combating the obesity problem. They think that people should be forced to eat better food, since they obviously won't do it on there own.

"their"

But what do YOU think? Your claim should be clear and obvious in the introduction.

Transitions are a great way to let your reader know what is coming in the essay, but this one doesn't fit here. This paragraph should be the first reason for your claim, supported by evidence. "First" would be better. This is the second paragraph, but only your first reason.

Also, sugar should be treated like tobacco. Because they are both harmful, they should both be regulated and taxed. Since people obviously won't stop eating unhealthy food, even though they know it is unhealthy, then the government is going to have to make it harder for them to get it by applying large taxes to it and regulating it like tobacco to force people to make healthy decisions that they won't make otherwise. All dangerous substances are regulated, and sugar is dangerous to our health, so it should be regulated, too.

Though there are some good ideas in this sentence, it is a run-on and would be better separated into two sentences.

You said this already.

Obesity is a societal problem, not an individual problem. People are overweight because it is so easy to get junk food. They are bombarded with opportunities to buy unhealthy food, so they do. It is easy. However, if it were taxed or made harder to buy, people would be less likely to buy unhealthy food. That's why some cities and states have created taxes on junk food. Government regulation is the only way that people are going to stop eating so much unhealthy food.

Cite evidence from the text. Giving specific information adds weight to your argument, and supports your claim better.

The government now pays a larger percentage of the health care costs

Exact statistics?

This is an opinion that is not supported with evidence from the text. Try to limit your reasoning to ideas that can be supported.

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Though this is often said when speaking, it should not be used as an adverb in writing. Use “extremely large” or something similar, but avoid “way” as an adverb.

of Americans (which is way huge), so they should have the right to regulate unhealthy habits, such as eating sugar. They can also subsidize fruits and vegetables. They could build more sidewalks to encourage people to walk and exercise more. All these regulations would make people healthier and would cost the government less money in health care costs.

There is no question that many Americans are unhealthy. The question is how to change it. Education, exercise, and taxes on junk food will all help. Unhealthy food is just like any dangerous substance. It should be regulated, taxed, and controlled so people can't get it so easily. Only then will people start to take control of their eating habits and become less obese. That's why people have to be forced to eat healthy foods until they get into the habit themselves. Since the government helped create the problem, they should help solve it, too.

While all of these ideas are true, be sure to state how they support your claim. Remind the reader what your claim is and how this supports your reasoning.

Much of this is repeated from earlier. You can use the conclusion to remind readers of the reasoning you used in your essay, but try to limit this to a brief summary, rather than repeat what was already said.

The portion of the text that you are referring to here is not referenced anywhere else in your essay. Do not include “new” information in your conclusion. The conclusion should include a strong restatement of your claim and a review of the support you presented in your essay, but not new information.