

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks: Argumentative Response

In an attempt to preserve the rights of the family, the National Institute of Health has given the Lacks family the right to be a part of a panel that will approve the research and use of the Lacks genome. However, this does not grant the family any financial compensation for the past or present use of the HeLa cells. [\[See video\]](#)

Focus Question: Should the family of Henrietta Lacks receive financial compensation for the use of her cells?

Sources

- Article: "[Henrietta Lacks and the Debate Over the Ethics of Bio-Medical Research](#)" by C. Spigner
- Article: "[A Lasting Gift to Medicine That Wasn't Really a Gift](#)" by D. Grady
- Article: "[HeLa publication brews bioethical storm](#)" by Ewen Callaway
- Article: "[Paying Patient for Their Tissue: The Legacy of Henrietta Lacks](#)" by R. Troug, A. Kesselheim, and S. Joffe

Step 1: Identify the writing task: _____

Step 2: Identify the two sides of the issue based on the focus question?

Side 1: _____

Side 2: _____

Step 3: On your own paper, create the chart below (one for each source) to help you gather and organize evidence for both sides of the issue. While reading, annotate the source, by recording your thoughts/observations/questions/definitions in the right column. After reading the entire article, identify a minimum of two pieces of evidence for each side in the left column. Not all evidence gathered will be used in your final response.

Source Title and Author:		Evidence (After Reading)	Annotations (Before Reading)
Side 1	1. 2. 3.		
Side 2	1. 2. 3.		

Step 4: Choose a position on the issue and state it in sentence form using words from the focus question? Remember, you can only argue one side of an argument and you must address the given prompt whether you like the topic or not! This sentence will be your claim.

Step 5: Review the evidence taken from the articles that support your position on the issue. Prioritize and label the evidence in order from the strongest argument to the weakest argument (number 1-8).

Step 6: Create a three column chart (see below) for the top three pieces of evidence from off the list

Evidence from Text (reason)	Source	Explanation of Evidence
Can be a direct quote or a paraphrase	The name of the source from which the evidence was taken. Mention article/book and author when referencing the source.	Explain how your evidence supports your position on the issue

Step 7: Review the evidence taken from the articles that support the opposing side of the issue. Identify a counter argument (what a person supporting the other side may argue) and create a three column chart (see below) to provide commentary to explain why this argument is flawed.

Counter Argument (Evidence)	Source	Clarifying Commentary
Can be a direct quote or a paraphrase	Name and Author of Source	Commentary that addresses and refutes the counter argument

Step 8: Use the format below to write a detailed response to answer the focus question. Response should reference sources and include clarifying commentary for each piece of evidence used. Response should include at least two pieces of evidence and a counter argument. Response should be typed and in MLA format.

- Topic sentence (claim)
- Evidence (minimum of two pieces of evidence that reference sources)
- Commentary (3 to 1 ratio)
- Counter Argument with clarifying commentary
- Restatement of Claim

Step 9: Have two of your peers read and assess your response using the rubric below. Comments must be provided for all points lost, and must be legible and specific. Peers are encouraged to make corrections directly on draft.

Expectations and Requirements	Points	Peer 1	Peer 2
Claim statement that clearly chooses a position and answers the focus question	2		
Provides a minimum of two pieces of direct evidence taken directly from source documents	2		
Contains a counter argument	2		
Counter argument includes clarifying commentary	2		
Source documentation is evident for each piece of evidence	3		
Response ends with a restatement of the claim	1		
Approximately a 25% to 75% evidence to commentary ratio is used to explain and expand upon each piece of evidence	3		
Overall response is thorough, concise, cohesive, and logical	15		
Spelling and conventions (including 1 st or 2 nd person references and informal language)	5		
Total Points	30		

Peer 1 Name: _____ **Ink Color:** _____ **Peer 2 Name:** _____ **Ink Color:** _____

Explain Point Loss:

Explain Point Loss:

Step 10: Assess your response based on the peer review. Comments must be in complete sentences, legible and specific.

Commentary based on Scores	One thing I did well	One thing I can improve on

Step 11: Make changes and corrections to your response based on peer and on self-assessment. Final draft needs to be in MLA format.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks: Argumentative Response Final Grade Rubric

Total Points (30 + 70) = 100	
-------------------------------------	--

- Source annotations and analysis (Steps 1-7): 10 points _____
- Peer review and self-assessment (Steps 8-10): 10 points _____
- MLA Format: 10 points _____

Final Draft: Expectations and Requirements	Points	
Claim statement that clearly chooses a position and answers the focus question	4	
Provides a minimum of two pieces of direct evidence taken directly from source documents	4	
Contains a counter argument	4	
Counter argument includes clarifying commentary	4	
Source documentation is evident for each piece of evidence	6	
Response ends with a restatement of the claim	2	
Approximately a 25% to 75% evidence to commentary ratio is used to explain and expand upon each piece of evidence	6	
Overall response is thorough, concise, cohesive, and logical	30	
Formal Language, Spelling, Grammar, and Conventions	10	
Points	70	

Body Section: Concerns

- Response is missing evidence and/or commentary, thus failing to fulfill the requirements of the essay
- Response does not contain enough or accurate evidence to support the claim
- Response contains extensive quoting but needs more supporting commentary. Try to quote more selectively and discuss specifically what you want your reader to see in a quotation
- Commentary is minimal and does not fully explain the purpose of the evidence
- Response include irrelevant details or discussion that is unrelated to the claim
- Response contains factual errors, either in the evidence or commentary
- Direct Quotations are awkwardly placed and do not transition smoothly into the prose
- Direct Quotations are not punctuated correctly
- Paragraph lacks cohesion (no structure) and lacks smooth transitions before and or between evidence and commentary

Word Choice and Sentence Style: Concerns

- Edit sentences for excessive or awkward wordiness
- Sentences contain informal diction, contractions and/or slang
- Response contains 1st person and/or 2nd person references